

I Shall Seal the Heavens

(我欲封天)

Book 4

Five Color Paragon!

Er Gen

(刘勇)

Story Description:

Shall Seal the Heavens is currently one of the most popular xianxia stories in China. It is about a failed young scholar named Meng Hao who gets forcibly recruited into a Sect of Immortal Cultivators. In the Cultivation world, the strong prey on the weak, and the law of the jungle prevails. Meng Hao must adapt to survive. And yet, he never forgets the Confucian and Daoist ideals that he grew up studying. This, coupled with his stubborn nature, set him on the path of a true hero. What does it mean to “Seal the Heavens?” This is a secret that you will have to uncover along with Meng Hao!

Original Story can be found here: [Link](#)

Chapter 314: Art of Righteous Bestowal

In the years to come, the Cultivators outside the basin of the Rebirth Cave would be unable to forget the events they had witnessed.

In their memories, they would always be able to see that shooting star flying out from the fog within the basin. It seemed to be ablaze with heaven-shattering fire, emitting a bright glow that they would never be able to forget.

Within that flame and glow was, of course, Meng Hao.

Legacy Apprentice of the Violet Fate Sect; fourth Grandmaster of the Southern Domain, Pill Cauldron; owner of the Sublime Spirit Scripture; inheritor of the Blood Immortal legacy. Any one of these would be enough to make a Cultivator famous.

But for all of them to be embodied in a single person... would cause that person to become a legend in the Southern Domain.

By now, Meng Hao was absolutely a legend. His Cultivation base was not very high, and he had not been in the Southern Domain for a very long time. That didn't matter, though. He could not prevent himself from shining brightly; from that day forward, he was like the sun in the noon sky!

No one would be able to forget that shooting star, nor the massive image of the roc which appeared in the air. The roc was massive, and Meng Hao seemed to make up its nucleus. It shot out from the basin, flying over the staring Cultivators.

They watched him soar out from the basin, charge through the blockade of Nascent Soul Cultivators from the Ji and Li Clans, and shatter through the swirling sealing spells. The seals collapsed behind him as the shooting star and the roc soared through Heaven and Earth!

Thousands of kilometers off in the distance, they disappeared from the region of the Rebirth Cave, fading off over the horizon.

Soon after, a vortex appeared, into which he flew. Then he was truly

gone.

The Cultivators from the Violet Fate Sect, including the two Spirit Severing Patriarchs, looked off into the distance as Meng Hao disappeared. They saw with their own eyes that he had made it to safety, and, deep in their hearts, heaved sighs of relief.

Wu Dingqiu stood there, a complicated look on his face. In his heart, he sighed with emotion, thinking back to Meng Hao in the State of Zhao. He thought about the first time he'd seen him, and the events regarding the iron spear.

It seemed like a dream. As he thought back to it all, Wu Dingqiu almost couldn't believe it was real.

Eccentric Song looked up into the sky, and his expression was as emotional as Wu Dingqiu's.

Next to him was Song Jia, who had appeared some time earlier. She was silent as she looked off toward the horizon. As she watched the man who was ostensibly her husband, and yet with whom she had never exchanged even a single word, her furrowed brow revealed the bitterness that she had been unable to dispel throughout the years.

Patriarch Violet Sieve also looked on silently. He shook his head with a bitter smile. The Black Sieve Sect was quite familiar with Meng Hao. Because of the events in the ancient Blessed Land, and the matter of Ultimate Vexation bonding him as master, the Black Sieve Sect was truly in a hopeless deadlock with Meng Hao.

However, regardless of any of that, Meng Hao, wearing the face of Fang Mu, had dared to swagger back into the Black Sieve Sect and engage in an alchemic battle. Then he even concocted pills for them.

As Patriarch Violet Sieve thought of all of these things, he felt admiration deep in his heart.

The members of the Solitary Sword Sect, the Golden Frost Sect and the Wang Clan all had various expressions on their faces. Fortunately, Wang Tengfei was not present; if he was, his complicated emotions would

overwhelm him like floodwaters.

Throughout the years, all of the five great Clans and three great Sects had unknowingly become familiar with either Meng Hao or Fang Mu.

Han Bei sighed. Images of Meng Hao and Fang Mu spun in her mind, gradually overlapping with each other, to create an image of a man in a red robe, wearing a mask, lifting his head and laughing toward the Heavens. It created a truly profound impression on her.

Wang Youcai was also silent as he thought back to Mount Daqing, and Yunjie County.

Chu Yuyan bit her lip, unable to determine what exactly she was feeling. It seemed that inside of her was pain, melancholy, and disappointment. It was like something had slipped through her fingers. She felt as if... she had suddenly lost something.

Ye Feimu lowered his head, refusing to look up into the sky. However, within his eyes was the glow of stubbornness. He had faith that Meng Hao would rise to prominence in some other location. That meant that he could not slack off. There would be a day in the future when the two of them would meet again; when that day came, he would gain victory over Meng Hao in the Dao of alchemy.

Chen Fan let out a light sigh. He now knew that he and his little Junior Brother from the Reliance Sect had long since begun to tread vastly different paths.

In his heart, he held deep admiration for Meng Hao. He didn't envy his identity, but rather admired his life. It seemed that Meng Hao's life was... vastly more wonderful than his own.

"Perhaps, he is a true Cultivator...." murmured Chen Fan.

A look of astonishment blossomed in Li Shiqi's eyes. She thought back to what the mysterious Patriarch had told her the day she left the Sect to come here.

"Will we meet again?" she thought with a slight laugh.

Some distance away, Xu Qing was gazing off at the horizon. “We’ll definitely meet again,” she murmured inwardly. Her personality was simple, and her features cold. She wasn’t very intelligent, but her stubbornness ran much deeper than the average person.

Her stubbornness was such that it transformed into a promise.

“I’m waiting for you....” she said in her heart. Then she sighed.

The Milky Way Sea divides the Nanshan Continent into two parts: east and north, west and south.

The Great Tang in the Eastern Lands, the Qiang Di flute of the Northern Desert, the outstanding heroes of the Southern Domain, the totems of the Western Desert.

The Great Tang in the Eastern Lands is known for its power, the Northern Desert for its intrepid barbarians, the Southern Domain for its many outstanding heroes. As for the Western Desert, well, it is known as the Barbarian West with its Western Devils. In fact, its name actually represents madness.

Chaos is the normal state of affairs in the Western Desert. There are no Sects there, only countless Tribes. Some Tribes formed alliances, and then larger coalitions of power.

Because of the infertility of the land, and the scarcity of resources, as well as the deplorable condition of the environment, the Western Desert Cultivators lived a life of merciless killing. They cultivated the power of their totems, longing for the day when they would take over the Southern Domain.

The two great wars between the west and the south had resulted in great sealing spells that separated the two powers. The regions left unsealed became the Black Lands. They belonged to the Southern Domain as well as the Western Desert. As such, there was more freedom there, as well as more ruthlessness.

Some areas there were infertile, but some were the opposite, creating a

polarizing effect. Killing occurred at the slightest pretext, causing the land to constantly be filled with the reek of blood.

At this very moment, at a spot roughly a day's journey from the Black Lands in the Southern Domain, was a vast plain overgrown with weeds. It was midday, and a bleak wind blew across the leaves, causing them to rustle slightly.

Suddenly, a vortex suddenly appeared, with a gaping mouth like that of a black hole. As it appeared in mid-air, it emitted no sound.

The sudden appearance of a vortex like this would naturally arouse quite a bit of attention. However, few Southern Domain Cultivators ever came to this area.

Moments later, someone emerged from the vortex of the black hole. He staggered forward, then looked back at the vortex, causing his white hair to whip around his head.

On his forehead could be seen a mark that looked both like a scale and a feather.

This was none other than Meng Hao.

Using the powerful momentum of the roc, he had activated his good luck charm to teleport away from the region of the Rebirth Cave, to reappear here.

He floated in mid-air, watching the vortex disappear, a look of confusion covering his face. Everything around him was quiet, except for the sound of the wind.

After some time passed, he produced a jade slip, and looked down at it with a serious expression. Having confirmed his current location, he let out a sigh. He turned toward the direction of the Violet Fate Sect and gave a deep bow.

He held the bow for the space of several breaths. When he looked back up, the confusion in his eyes was gone, replaced instead with determination.

“I spent roughly ten comfortable years in the Violet Fate Sect,” he murmured quietly. “I’ve almost forgotten what it’s like to live life as a lone Rogue Cultivator.” He waved his right hand, causing a violet-colored seed to fly out and burrow into the ground. Suddenly, the dirt heaved, and a mass of thick vines flew up to circle around Meng Hao.

He sat down cross-legged in their midst. Eyes glittering, he passed his will into the vines, and they surged forward, carrying him toward the Black Lands.

He closed his eyes as he traveled as quickly as possible away from the Southern Domain. He would not allow any delays. However, his Cultivation base was unstable at the moment, and he had been seriously injured. His life force and longevity had been restored somewhat by the scale-feather. However, what remained was still less than a sixty year cycle.

Unless it were absolutely necessary, Meng Hao had no desire to waste or consume it.

“I’ll be in the Black Lands soon; once I’m there, I can find a suitable place to treat my injuries.... It’s impossible to say for sure how long it will be before people from the Ji Clan come looking for me to kill me.” His expression was calm as he traveled along, sitting cross-legged atop the vines. He permitted them to move forward at the fastest speed possible, which allowed him to spend some time tending to his wounds.

He slapped his bag of holding to produce the copper mirror. He glanced at it for a moment, then put it back.

“As soon as I reached Core Formation,” he thought, “I got the feeling that all I had to do was calm myself and cast my sense into the mirror. With that, I would be able to awaken the spirit within.... Unfortunately, the circumstances were far too dire at the time.” He wasn’t sure what would happen when the spirit within the item emerged. Now, his mind was not at peace, so it wasn’t the best time to attempt to communicate with it; he would wait until after he was fully healed.

Next, he produced Ji Hongdong’s bag of holding. The first thing he

noticed was a magical sealing mark on its surface. It wouldn't be easy to open. After a moment's consideration, he put it back. With the flick of a hand, he next produced a small bell.

This bell was the magical item Ji Hongdong had used. Meng Hao examined it for a moment, then closed his eyes and focused on dealing with his injuries.

As of dusk of the following day, he had encountered nothing startling or dangerous. Meng Hao's vines carried him into the Black Lands, which was an easily identifiable area. The ground here was black, as were most of the plants that grew in the area.

This was the reason it was called the Black Lands.

However, the instant Meng Hao entered the Black Lands, the ancient voice of the Demon Sealing Jade suddenly appeared in his mind.

"An Immortal of the Ninth Mountain; the pinnacle of brushwork; magical symbols of all creatures; collapse of the Heavens.... The power is fused within this land, transformed into destruction, and filled with Demonic life force. This land... can be used to cultivate... the art of Righteous Bestowal!"

Meng Hao's mind shook, and his eyes immediately snapped open.

He snatched out the Demon Sealing Jade; as soon as he touched it, an ice-cold Qi poured into his fingers, filling his mind. It transformed into a mnemonic, a unique divine ability of the League of Demon Sealers!

Righteous Bestowal, impart Demonic power upon any living creature!

Chapter 315: The Immortal's Cave of Huang Daxian [1]

[tl: [1] = Huang Daxian's name in Chinese is 黄大仙 huáng dà xiān. Huang is a surname which also means "Yellow." Da means "great" or "grand." Xian means "Immortal." So literally his name could also be "Grand Immortal Huang".]

It was dusk in the Black Lands. The sky was pocked with darkness, the land beneath was pitch black. Everything felt desolate.

No mortals could be seen; it was difficult for them to survive in an environment like this. This area was occupied for the most part by Cultivators. If you did occasionally encounter mortals, they would be descendants of Cultivators Clans, powerfully built, with hearty Qi and blood.

When Meng Hao entered the Black Lands, he looked back for a moment, and a flash of suspicion appeared on his face. For some reason, he had the feeling that upon entering this land, there was some sort of invisible thread attached to his body that had been covered up.

Before entering the Black Lands, he had been unable to detect it; however, as soon as it was covered up, he could.

Meng Hao muttered to himself thoughtfully as the vines carried him forward at high speed. Moments later, he cleared his thoughts. His eyes glittered as he cast his Spiritual Sense about.

The region three hundred meters in all directions suddenly appeared in his mind.

"I need to find a quiet place where I can recuperate.... I remember that Zhou Dekun [2] was taken to the Black Lands.... Furthermore, there should be information about the Eyeless Larva [3] here. I wonder if I'll be able to refine one." Meng Hao once again produced Ji Hongdong's bag of holding. The magical symbol on it was by no means weak. Meng Hao was able to suppress it slightly, but was unable to open the bag. He could tell

that if he was able to suppress the seal for long enough, then he would be able to.

[tl: [2] = Zhou Dekun was the old Furnace Lord from the Violet Fate Sect that Meng Hao initially hated but eventually befriended. He was kidnapped by Black Lands Cultivators and never seen or heard from again.]

[tl: [3] = The Eyeless Larva was talked about mostly in Chapter 165]

A long time passed, after which Meng Hao once again closed his eyes. He allowed the vines to continue forward without rest. Soon, more than a month had passed.

Occasionally he would encounter some Black Lands Cultivators. They were for the most part skinny and bony, with an intensely fiendish Qi. They were usually alone, or rarely, in groups of three or five. To Meng Hao, most of them seemed like lone wolves.

This was very different than the Southern Domain.

It seemed people here were used to treading the line between life and death. The only way to ensure continued existence was to soak one's hands in blood.

However, despite their ferocity, when the local Cultivators saw Meng Hao, their pupils would constrict. Meng Hao's white hair was very conspicuous as it billowed around his head. Combined with the paleness of his face, it left people with a very ghastly impression.

When you added the vicious-looking vines, the entire picture was one of powerful maliciousness. Meng Hao emanated the Qi of Core Formation, as well as the reek of blood. Anyone who saw him would immediately come to the conclusion that he was someone not to be trifled with.

Even some Cultivators of the same level as he, after sensing the Qi of his Cultivation base, would hesitate for a moment and then get out of his way.

In the Black Lands, killing was a constant part of life, and it was common to see bodies laying about.

As Meng Hao traveled, he saw dozens of vicious magical battles between Cultivators. He also saw quite a few deaths. Based on his observations, he quickly came to a better understanding of the Black Lands.

What he found the strangest was that after a month passed, despite his constant vigilance, no one from the Ji Clan came in pursuit of him. He couldn't help but think of the invisible thread that had been covered up the moment he entered the Black Lands.

He hesitated for a moment, uncertain of exactly what was going on. "Could it be that the thread appeared after I killed Ji Hongdong? Is it a mark that the Ji Clan can use to track me down? If that's the case, why would it be covered up when I entered the Black Lands?"

Time slowly passed. Soon, another month had gone by. Compared to the Southern Domain, the Black Lands wasn't very large. As he traveled, though, Meng Hao found that there weren't very many cities, which made everything seem much further spread out.

Nearly everything was empty and desolate. The soil was pitch black, permeated with oppressive, deathly stillness. Even fewer places were filled with spiritual energy. Thankfully, Meng Hao currently didn't have any strong requirement for spiritual energy. One day as he sat cross-legged on the vines, he suddenly opened his eyes to look off into the distance.

With his Spiritual Sense, he could see a short mountain about forty kilometers away, as well as a simple Immortal's cave. The Immortal's cave wasn't located within the mountain, but rather, underneath it, almost like a burrow. Next to the mountain was a spring, the waters of which had pooled together to form a cistern.

The waters of the cistern were muddy and foul, and the whole area was littered with animal droppings and weeds. The place looked abandoned. If Meng Hao weren't specifically looking for a place to rest and restore his health, he would most likely have overlooked a location like this.

"Actually, it's not that bad," he thought. He transmitted his will to the vines, and they moved off in the direction of the short mountain.

Soon thereafter, he arrived in the area. He approached on foot, allowing

the vines to burrow down into the soil and conceal themselves.

Meng Hao walked through the weeds, passing the cistern. As he did, he noticed a small, black creature drinking from its waters. It looked up at him, emanating a cruel and vicious air.

Meng Hao ignored it, flying up in the air to inspect the mountain. Afterward, he flew toward a wide fissure on the surface of the mountain, a look of satisfaction on his face.

The jagged fissure led downward, and it took only a moment for the main door of the Immortal's cave to appear in front of him. Meng Hao waved his hand, causing the door to tremble, then slowly open.

The Immortal's cave wasn't large; almost everything inside was covered in dust. Apparently it hadn't been occupied for some time, although some Qi of the fifth or sixth level of Qi Condensation still lingered inside. It appeared that the original owner of the cave didn't have a very high Cultivation base.

After looking around for a moment, Meng Hao flicked his sleeve, causing a wind to spring up that instantly cleared away the dust and the damp.

Next, he sat down cross-legged and took a long, deep breath. A thoughtful look filled his eyes, after which his hand flashed in an incantation gesture and he waved his finger toward the main door. It slowly closed, after which magical symbols appeared on it, sealing it.

"My injuries are currently about fifty percent healed. I really was seriously hurt this time...." He produced some medicinal pills, consumed them, and then closed his eyes to meditate. Slowly but surely, his injuries began to recover.

As a Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy, he was naturally able to concoct the optimal pills for treatment of his own injuries.

Time passed slowly and peacefully. It was quiet inside the Immortal's cave, and dark as well. He sat alone for some time. When he finally awoke from his trance, he opened his eyes and looked out at the darkness. For

some reason, the events from his time in the Violet Fate Sect appeared in his mind.

“The Ji Clan....” A bright glow appeared in his eyes, which he closed once again.

Three months slowly went by, although Meng Hao wasn’t very aware of the passage of time. His wounds were mostly recovered now, at least eighty percent so. According to his calculations, within a few months, he would be completely recovered, and back at the peak state he used to be in. In fact, he might even be able to make a bit of progress.

The absolute strangest thing to him was that in the past three months there hadn’t been the slightest bit of pursuit on the part of the Ji Clan. Meng Hao couldn’t help but draw some of his own conclusions about this.

He suddenly thought of something. “Could it be because of Master...?” He thought silently about this for a while.

Finally, he sighed, closed his eyes, and continued to focus on his injuries. After a moment, though, his expression suddenly flickered, and he focused his attention outside of the Immortal’s cave.

About fifty kilometers away from the short mountain was an emaciated man of about thirty years of age, walking along with utmost caution and prudence.

His Cultivation base was not very high, perhaps at the sixth level of Qi Condensation. A savage gleam could be seen in his eyes. Were this the Southern Domain, few people of the same level would be able to come out victorious against this man.

“I really struck it unlucky this time,” grumbled the man through gritted teeth. “What the hell was that place anyway!? Kept me trapped for two years!” His eyes flitted about as he proceeded at top speed toward the small mountain.

Seemingly out of routine, the man took a circuitous route toward the small mountain, glancing this way and that the entire time. Assured that he was in no danger, and seeing no one following him, he hopped into the

fissure and made his way down.

“From now on, I’m never going to that damned place ever again. Thankfully, even though I was trapped for two years, at least my life wasn’t in danger. Anyone else would most likely have been killed.” He sighed, muttered to himself as he climbed down into the fissure. Having seen so much death, he had reached the point where he was perhaps not numb, but at the least took it all as a normal part of life.

“Unfortunately, I still have no medicinal elixir,” he muttered. “However, considering that I have my own Immortal’s cave, I definitely count as someone who has a lot of luck.” Looking complacent, he relaxed a bit. Finally, he was back to his Immortal’s cave, where he could rest. He lifted up his right hand and produced a command medallion which he tossed toward the door.

His eyes immediately went wide as he watched the medallion clatter to the ground. The main door of the Immortal’s cave didn’t budge.

“Is it broken?” he thought, gaping. He walked forward, picked up the command medallion, and then looked over it carefully. He was about to try to use it again, when suddenly he noticed some marks in the dust on the ground that made it obvious the door had been opened recently.

Fury immediately burned in the man’s eyes. How could he not understand that his Immortal’s cave had been stolen by someone!

“I don’t know where you came from, you stupid ignoramus!” he immediately shouted. “But this is the Immortal’s cave of Grandpa Huang! Get the hell out of there this instant!” In his estimation, the spiritual energy in the Immortal’s cave had long since dried up. High level Qi Condensation Cultivators would obviously have little interest in it, let alone anyone more powerful than that.

Furthermore, he had occupied this Immortal’s cave for many years. Sure, some people had attempted to take it from him before, but all of them were people of a lower level than him, and he had exterminated each and every one. In the end, he was definitely the master of this tiny Immortal’s cave.

However, now it seemed obvious that in the two years he'd been away, someone had indeed come to seize it.

“Open the door! Your granny! This is Grandpa Huang’s territory, and Grandpa Huang’s Immortal’s cave. Everyone in the entire area knows that I’m the Eight-armed Dragon King, Huang Daxian!”

Within the Immortal’s cave, Meng Hao frowned. The place had looked abandoned before; he’d never imagined that someone was actually living here....

“You’ve got some big aspirations and the guts of a leopard to try to steal Grandpa Huang’s Immortal’s Cave!” howled Huang Daxian. Seeing no response coming from inside, he gave a cold snort and then began to perform an incantation with his right hand. He stretched out his finger, and, face flushed, sent a tongue of fire shooting out. It transformed into a Fire Globe which shot toward the main door of the Immortal’s cave.

A boom filled the narrow fissure, after which Huang Daxian immediately began shouting again, “Open the door! You damned....”

Before he could finish speaking, the main door quietly opened a sliver. Huang Daxian gave a cold harrumph, congratulating himself on intimidating his opponent with his magical technique. He was filled with fury, but he didn’t immediately charge inside. A look of caution gleamed in his eyes.

He slowly opened the main door. Inside, he saw that there was no dust; instead, Meng Hao sat there peacefully.

Seeing Meng Hao alone, he said, “Your grann...” However, in the midst of his fury, he suddenly looked into Meng Hao’s eyes. Within their profundity was an icy dignity.

His hair was completely white, and he emanated a shocking, terrifying aura. His skin was pallid, as if he needed more blood to make it look normal again.

All of this caused Huang Daxian to feel as if a bucket of cold water had just been dumped onto his head. He immediately began to shiver.

“Fellow... um, Fellow Daoist....”

Chapter 316: Meng Hao's Virtue

"Uh... Fellow Daoist...." Huang Daxian could not stop the pounding of his heart. His face was pale white, and as he trembled, he pasted a benevolent smile onto his face. Without even thinking about it, he began to edge away.

"Haha, greetings.... What a lucky coincidence that we meet each other. Fellow Daoist, if you want to live here, well, no problem... no problem." Body quivering, Huang Daxian immediately made to leave.

However, as he did, Meng Hao's calm eyes swept over him, coming to rest on his feet. A tremor ran through Huang Daxian's body. He didn't dare to move even an inch. Beads of cold sweat began to bead up on his forehead and then drip down his pale face. It seemed almost like as soon as Meng Hao's gaze landed on his feet, they suddenly didn't belong to him any more.

Eventually, Meng Hao's gaze rose up and he looked Huang Daxian in the eyes. Huang Daxian's brain felt like it was convulsing, as if his soul had fled his body. An intense feeling of dread completely submerged him.

"Foundation Establishment.... This is definitely Foundation Establishment...." The most powerful person Huang Daxian had ever faced in his entire life was of the Foundation Establishment stage. The terror he felt because of Meng Hao was nearly unfathomable; this in turn caused him to think of the most powerful person he had ever seen.

Before Meng Hao even said a single word, a flopping sound could be heard as Huang Daxian dropped to his knees, his face devoid of blood.

"Senior, please spare my life. Sir, I spoke rashly just now, I was mistaken. Senior, you are a great man, and truly magnanimous. Please spare my life...." Huang Daxian's appearance was that of the ultimate supplication. The back of his garment was already soaked with cold sweat.

Meng Hao hesitated for a moment. There was no need to cause trouble for this tiny Qi Condensation Cultivator. Furthermore, if the Immortal's cave did indeed belong to the man, then it meant he truly had stolen it.

As soon as Huang Daxian saw his hesitation, it immediately filled him with even more terror.

“He wants to kill me!!” he thought. “I’m finished. Finished! I’ve heard of these Foundation Establishment Cultivators. They kill people all the time, and I’ve even heard that some of them have the habit of eating raw human flesh....” As he thought of this, Huang Daxian’s vision suddenly began to grow dim. His heart filled with grief and indignation. He suddenly realized he would rather stay stuck in the place he had just escaped from than be here. At least there his life hadn’t been in danger. But now....

Suddenly, Huang Daxian gave a start. He didn’t want to die and therefore, several ideas suddenly sprang to being in his mind. Just as it seemed Meng Hao was about to say something, Huang Daxian let out a shout and said, “Eee? Is this actually my Immortal’s cave? How strange, it seems the spiritual energy here is much too dense! Furthermore, everything is so glittering and translucent; it really feels like the dwelling place of an Immortal!

“Senior, you truly are an amazing person! See, this Immortal’s cave used to be so ordinary, but once you started living in it, your presence lent it a graceful glitter. It’s like some sort of Celestial wonderland!” Hearing Huang Daxian’s words caused Meng Hao to gape.

His gaping caused Huang Daxian’s sprit to be roused. It seemed he had managed to grasp hold of a chance at survival. Therefore, he went at it with even more gusto.

“After seeing this Immortal’s cave, I don’t think I could possibly ever calm down!” He looked around at the extremely ordinary Immortal’s cave as if he had seen some type of miracle. His eyes filled with passion and reverence. “Now I suddenly understand what I have been missing, which is nothing other than your stubborn persistence in cultivation, sir, as well as your transcendent temperament which gives birth to such impressive dignity.

“Sir, you truly have the air of a transcendent being. I really can’t help but

bow to you in my heart. With each bow, my excitement rages out of control, and even my Cultivation base leaps with joy!" The more he spoke, the more excited Huang Daxian became, until spittle flew from his mouth. He seemed to be sparing nothing in his efforts to ingratiate himself to Meng Hao.

Meng Hao stared, dumbstruck, and once again hesitated for a moment. Finally, his face began to grow red.

"I was thinking," gushed Huang Daxian, "perhaps this is the will of Heaven. The will of Heaven has caused senior to appear here. Sir, I have no other request than to simply be able to stand in front of you and be touched by your Immortal Qi. Senior, I beg that you allow me this one request." Glistening teardrops poured down his cheeks as he stared earnestly at Meng Hao, looking feverishly hopeful.

All of his words had caused Meng Hao's scalp to grow numb. He had always thought he had learned quite a bit about flattery back in the Reliance Sect, and was more than equal to the task. However, he suddenly came to the realization that there were many more capable people in the world than him.

One such person existed here in the Black Lands.... Unfortunately, such words were useless on Meng Hao. He looked at the Cultivator standing in front of him, his expression solemn.

The solemnity immediately caused Huang Daxian's heart to tremble once more. Bracing himself, he spoke once again.

"Senior, you have another virtue, your greatest, and that is, when the moment of truth arrives, you are not swayed by flattery. All fawning words are like a slight breeze hitting a mountain. If you wish to get angry, you get angry. You are efficient and decisive. You are truly a great hero, a towering figure."

At this point, Meng Hao couldn't take it any more. He laughed, and the laugh loosened some of the pressure that had been weighing down upon him because of all of the events back at the Rebirth Cave.

Interrupting any further ass kissing on the part of Huang Daxian, Meng

Hao said, "Very well. I'm accustomed to quiet. Since this Immortal's cave belongs to you, I won't occupy it for free. Whatever you require, I will provide to you as rent."

Huang Daxian's head was soaked with sweat, but finally he felt somewhat relaxed inside. In order to save his own little life, he had used all the mental power he could muster; hearing Meng Hao's words just now, how could he possibly speak out any sort of requirement?

"Senior, since you've taken a liking to this Immortal's cave, how could I possibly ask for anything? Sir, there's no need, really. Please live here without any hesitation whatsoever."

Meng Hao looked at Huang Daxian for a moment, muttering to himself for a moment. What he lacked most now was Spirit Stones. He slapped his bag of holding to produce a Qi Condensation Pill that was not marked with a pill cauldron.

This was a Qi Condensation Pill that he had concocted a very long time ago, and was of ordinary medicinal strength. It was one of the types he had concocted before becoming famous, and he actually didn't have many left in his bag of holding.

As he pulled the pill out, Meng Hao got the feeling that it wasn't very much to offer. He was about to put it back and pull out something else, when suddenly he heard ragged panting.

Huang Daxian's eyes went wide, and he was breathing heavily. He stared fixedly at the medicinal pill in Meng Hao's hand, his eyes filled with intense anticipation. His body trembled, not from fear, but from excitement.

To him, the medicinal pill appeared to be shining and beautiful, plump to the extreme. Its appearance instantly filled the entire Immortal's cave with thick spiritual energy.

The spiritual energy enveloped the Immortal's cave, immediately causing all of the pores on his body to open up; his Cultivation base immediately seemed to grow, causing Huang Daxian's mind to spin.

“Medicinal... that’s a medicinal pill!!” His mouth and tongue were dry, and he seemed to have lost his faculties, as if at any moment he might lunge forward and try to snatch the pill away from Meng Hao.

In his entire life, he had only been fortunate enough to consume one medicinal pill. That was long ago when he was with his Master. Upon receiving a serious injury, he and his Master had fled. On his death bed, his Master had bequeathed him with a dark, bumpy medicinal pill.

That medicinal pill had been highly valued by his Master. It was also the first medicinal pill Huang Daxian had ever eaten, and, in fact, the only one.

However, that pill had absolutely no way to compare to the one he was looking at right now. One was the Earth, the other was the Heavens!

The Black Lands were barren and the Cultivators there lived arduous lives. Medicinal plants were not easy to grow, and there were virtually no alchemists, therefore, medicinal pills were extremely hard to come by. Of even more relevance was the polarization of the Black Lands. One half of it was part of the Southern Domain, the other half was of the Western Desert. Cultivators here either never saw medicinal pills, or, like Huang Daxian, caught sight of one once or twice in their lives.

Generally speaking, Cultivators here relied on medicinal elixirs, which were created by repeatedly breaking down medicinal pills until they formed a liquid. Such medicinal elixirs were not incredibly effective, but they were something that Black Lands Cultivators couldn’t live without.

“Senior, are you... are you going to give me that medicinal pill?” asked Huang Daxian, his voice quavering. He stared at the pill, panting.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. He had been in the Black Lands for several months, but hadn’t had much dealings with the outside world. He had seen much while traveling, and had come to understand quite a bit; however his thinking regarding the value of objects was still based on his time in the Southern Domain.

Now, he understood everything. He waved his hand, sending the medicinal pill flying into Huang Daxian’s hands.

“One medicinal pill to rent your Immortal’s cave for a period of time,” said Meng Hao coolly.

Huang Daxian clutched at the medicinal pill as if it were some sort of treasure. He looked at Meng Hao, his face filled with intense veneration. He bowed deeply, then remembering how Meng Hao had said he valued quiet, suddenly was worried that Meng Hao might change his mind. He quickly took his leave, hurrying out of the Immortal’s cave. When he was away from the short mountain, he took a deep breath, and his eyes gleamed with the excitement he had been holding back just now.

“I’ve struck the jackpot!” he thought. “This medicinal pill... it’s a miracle!” He hurried away, preparing, not to consume the pill, but to break it down into medicinal elixir, which could be used for quite some time.

Meng Hao sat cross-legged in the Immortal’s cave, his eyes filled with thoughtfulness. His experience with the Qi Condensation Cultivator had helped him to realize how scarce resources really were for the impoverished Black Lands Cultivators.

“I still have quite a few medicinal pills in my bag of holding,” Meng Hao thought. “Most are marked with a pill cauldron, but I can erase that. Considering my lack of Spirit Stones, though, I need to be careful. There are no alchemists in the Black Lands, so a sudden influx in medicinal pills would definitely arouse suspicion.” He continued to think about the matter for a while. He had left a bit of Spiritual Sense on the Qi Condensation Cultivator; if the man tried to plot against him, he could immediately activate the Spiritual Sense and kill him.

Eventually, Meng Hao closed his eyes and focused once again on treating his injuries. As far as the damage to his longevity, Meng Hao wasn’t too worried about it. That problem would be easy to solve, either with the Outlander Pill or the Primordial Heavenly Replenishing Pill, one of the three great pills of the ancient Dao of alchemy. [1]

[tl: [1] = The Outlander Pill was one of the gifts given him by Grandmaster Pill Demon in chapter 294. According to Pill Demon, it can suppress the Resurrection Lily one hundred years, increase longevity by

one hundred years, and facilitate Cultivation base progress. The Primordial Heavenly Replenishing Pill was the pill introduced by Chen Jiayi in the alchemy battle in chapter 253, and then analyzed by Meng Hao in chapter 265. It can significantly extend longevity.]

Time passed, and eventually, Meng Hao's wounds were fully healed. He opened his eyes, which glittered as he retrieved the copper mirror from within his bag of holding.

"Upon reaching Core Formation, the spirit within this copper mirror should awaken." He looked at the mirror, which he had acquired all those years ago in the Reliance Sect; it had been with him all the way until this day.

Now, it was time for the spirit within to awaken!

Chapter 317: I am an Ancient Celestial Bird!

You could say that without this treasure, Meng Hao would not have the Cultivation base he did. Nor would he have been able to travel to the Southern Domain, or join the Violet Fate Sect. He would still be in the State of Zhao, floating with that old turtle Patriarch Reliance, off in some unknown location.

Memories flitted through Meng Hao's eyes. So many things had happened since he had acquired this copper mirror that so loved to emit Qi to browbeat creatures of fur and feather. Furthermore, it had a Heaven defying ability of duplication.

Then there was the painful abhorrence the meat jelly showed toward it. The meat jelly had gone so far as to take the form of a parrot, in which it constantly chattered and gnashed its teeth.

Meng Hao thought back to the time he had left the Blood Immortal Legacy tournament, and had touched the blood-colored mask. Thanks to the Li Clan Patriarch, he had almost lost control of his mind; it was only the bird call from within the copper mirror that had enabled him to avoid calamity.

[tl: The event with the blood-colored mask happened in chapter 137]

Then there was the time in the ancient Blessed Land, when the power of the copper mirror had enabled him to step foot into the square cauldron, despite the fact that he did not possess an ancient bloodline.

[tl: The event regarding the cauldron was in chapter 158]

The instant Meng Hao had reached Core Formation, he had felt a Qi awakening within the copper mirror.

"Parrot...." he said, his eyes glittering. His Violet Core began to rotate as he drew on the power of his Cultivation base. Guiding it with his will, he sent it through his right hand and into the mirror.

The mirror gradually began to emit a mysterious glow. The light grew more intense, and then suddenly the meat jelly flew out from the blood-colored mask in his bag of holding. It emerged in a beam of light, and the face of the old man appeared on its surface.

Its eyes glistened with stubbornness, determination and sincerity, as if it were about to face its greatest enemy. Its expression also contained a bit of holiness, as if it were its mission to participate in a great battle that would decide the fate of all the stars in existence.

“Evil archenemy, you finally appear,” it said, its face filled with a sacred air. “I’ve been waiting for you for a very, very long time. This time, the first thing you’ll see when you awaken is me. I will definitely convert you. I will bring you back from the path of wickedness.” The meat jelly actually seemed a bit less long-winded than before. A pedantic air slowly began to grow thicker and thicker around it.

Ignoring the meat jelly, Meng Hao concentrated, focusing on his Cultivation base and sending a continuous flow of power into the copper mirror, which seemed like a bottomless pit. Time slowly passed by, and soon Meng Hao was using nearly sixty percent of his Cultivation base.

It was then that the glow in the mirror exploded out. A phantom image began to appear above the surface of the mirror.

It was still very blurry.

“Come out, my archenemy!” said the meat jelly solemnly. “Come out! We are destined to fight this battle. Come out! Uh... hey, Meng Hao, push a littler harder. He’s almost out!”

Hearing the meat jelly’s voice caused Meng Hao to remember something, and he cleared his throat. Actually, one of the main goals in causing the spirit to emerge from the mirror was because he wanted it to deal with the meat jelly. Perhaps it would be able to suppress the thing’s chattering.

He took a deep breath, and then sent out more power from his Cultivation base. Seventy percent, eighty percent, ninety percent....

The image above the mirror began to grow clearer. It was now obviously the shape of a bird. It was covered with colourful feathers, gaudy even. Its eyes were closed, and it had a curved beak and sharp claws. Actually, it's appearance wasn't perverted in the way the meat jelly's had been when it assumed the parrot form. Instead, it exuded an air of extreme, wild arrogance. Even asleep, the arrogant Qi seemed to buffet against Meng Hao's face.

"What an evil Qi," said the meat jelly, trembling. "That's it! That's its Qi. The appearance is dead on! This is my archenemy. This is my mission in life. I will convert it!" The air of holiness swirled around the meat jelly even more thickly.

Meng Hao suddenly felt weak inside. It caused him a bit of alarm; perhaps it hadn't been the best decision to call to the spirit after having just recovered from his injuries. If he sustained any injuries now, then he wouldn't be able to provide the power the copper mirror needed. That would result in further nasty injuries to himself.

Time passed. Just as Meng Hao's Cultivation base was almost completely pouring into the copper mirror, suddenly, a shrill cry echoed out from within. It contained vast arrogance and immense bossiness.

The sound of it echoed about, in such a way that would cause any living creature that heard it to bow in veneration.

As the cry echoed out, the parrot above the mirror suddenly opened its eyes. A bright light shone out, along with a blast of Qi that felt like Immortal Qi; it emanated out, filling the entire Immortal's cave.

It had a blank look in its eyes, as well as an archaic air. It only took a moment for haughtiness to appear; clearly, its body was that of a small bird, but anyone who looked at it would get the feeling it could split the Heavens and rend the Earth in two.

Even the very air in the area seemed to grow thicker.

The meat jelly emitted a howl that made it difficult to determine whether it was excited or furious. It immediately appeared directly in front of the parrot and looked it dead in the eye. "Look at me, my archenemy.

Do you see who I am?"

The parrot looked back at the meat jelly, and a cool look of contempt appeared. Its expression was arrogant to the extreme as it tilted its head back to look at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao didn't move or say anything. He took a few steps back, looking at the parrot and meat jelly, and also working on recovering his Cultivation base. Based on his experience with the meat jelly, he figured that his best course of action was to first observe what was going to happen.

The meat jelly gave an angry howl, then it flickered, moving to block the parrot's line of sight.

The meat jelly stared at the parrot, and as it did, it seemed all enmity bubbled up. "Archenemy of my life, the Heavens have opened their eyes, and seen fit to allow us to meet again. You are evil! Immoral! So tell me, do you remember me?" The color of the meat jelly's body changed into a turbulent blur as it shouted, "Speak! Why don't you speak!? You wicked, perverted bird! Why don't you speak!" It had waited many years; now the parrot was here in front of it, but wasn't responding.

Then.

"Are you crazy? Screw your sister, bitch!" squawked the parrot, its face filled with impatience.

Immediately, the meat jelly's eyes began to gleam; this reaction on the part of the parrot seemed to be in line with the wickedness it remembered.

"Cursing at people is wrong," said the meat jelly solemnly. "You've sinned yet again!"

"Screw your granny! Screw your aunt! Screw your other granny! Screw your uncle! Screw your grandkids! Screw your sister, bitch!" The parrot slowly said one sentence after another, ignoring the suddenly trembling meat jelly. It flapped its wings a few times, and then flew up into the air, making a few circles around the Immortal's cave. Eventually, it landed on Meng Hao's shoulder and looked over at him arrogantly.

“So, you’re my master in this world? Remember my name, Lord Fifth. I’m an ancient Celestial bird. After being born, I was revered and respected. Even the Heavens bowed their head to me. Before I was born, no living creature wore clothes. After I was born, who dared not to? Before me, no spirit creatures had fur or feathers. After my birth, great aspirations burned, and furred and feathered beasts were required in Heaven and Earth. After that, which creatures in the world dared NOT grow furs or feathers!

“On the outside, I permit you to call upon my name,” it said arrogantly. “When the name of Lord Fifth is spoken, all living creatures become terror-stricken. No one will dare to offend you. That is because within the entire world, in and out of the Heavens, if anyone offends me, I screw them to death!” Its domineering air leaked out, filling the area. However... Meng Hao had a strange look on his face. From his perspective, he was looking at nothing but a colorful, boasting bird.

Off to the side, the meat jelly solemnly said, “Boasting is immoral! You’ve sinned yet again! I will convert you!” An air of righteousness shot out from it toward the parrot. However, as it neared, a look of disdain filled the parrot’s face, and its arrogance grew even thicker, as if it were the boss, and the Heavens were its assistant.

Looking at the meat jelly, it said, “Years ago, countless almighty beings refined the Milky Way into a statue for me in the Flaming Mountains. Do you want to know why? Long ago, deep within the Star Sea, I forced thirty-thousand Great Peace virgin Daoist nuns to bathe in front of me. Do you want to know why they agreed?

[tl: Flaming Mountain =
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flaming_Mountains#Mythology]

“Countless years ago, who was the greatest bully in all the stars? Furthermore, do you remember the fatso who ambushed you that one time, and then kowtowed to me for a hundred thousand years? Do you want to know where he is now? Do you want to learn how to count past one, two, three?” The parrot’s words came out slowly, and as they did, the meat jelly slowly began to stop moving. By the time the parrot finished, it

was staring mutely, its faced filled with conflict. However, it still seemed able to suppress its curiosity.

The parrot eyed the meat jelly with a look of utmost haughtiness. “If you want to know, then you need to behave a bit better in front of Lord Fifth. Bitch, I haven’t seen you for years, and yet you’re still completely retarded!”

Witnessing all this, Meng Hao suddenly realized how the parrot was able to deal with the meat jelly. The meat jelly was incredibly curious, and this was actually its greatest weakness.

That having been said, Meng Hao had the feeling that the personality of this parrot was a bit different than that portrayed earlier by the meat jelly. He wasn’t able to sense any perverted air on it, only wild arrogance.

It was at this moment that the parrot’s beak suddenly clicked, and a suspicious expression appeared on its face. It looked around for a moment, then flew into the air, circling a few more times around the Immortal’s cave.

“Eee?” it said suspiciously as it flew around. “This isn’t right. What smell is that?”

This immediately aroused the curiosity of the meat jelly, and it also began to look around dubiously. When it saw the parrot seemingly sniffing for something, a popping sound suddenly rang out as it transformed into a big white dog. It pushed its nose into the ground and began nosing about, wagging its tail.

“What the heck is it?” the meat jelly asked after sniffing around for a while. “I don’t smell anything! What are you smelling?” It looked up curiously at the parrot.

“You don’t understand crap! It doesn’t matter if you turn into a dog, you wouldn’t be able to smell anything. I’m an ancient Celestial bird, esteemed in all the Heavens! These black colored lands have a very curious Qi. I’ve already determined what it is. Amazing! Incredible! Ahh, now I understand what’s going on.” The arrogant look on its face made it seem as if it understood everything within Heaven and Earth.

The meat jelly's face twisted with unbearable curiosity. It seemed to itch with anxiety. Apparently it didn't matter which form it took, it wouldn't be able to detect this supposed Qi.

Off to the side, Meng Hao watched the commotion. Hearing the dialogue between the two, he suddenly thought back to the words spoken by the Demon Sealing Jade when he entered the Black Lands, and felt a twinge of excitement.

"So what's so special about this place?" he asked.

The parrot glanced back at him; the look said that it was an ancient Celestial parrot, and that it didn't need to explain anything to him. It continued flying around, a look of arrogance on its face, as if it were matchlessly unique in all Heaven and Earth.

Meng Hao frowned and then coolly said, "Well, anybody can brag. If you don't know the answer, there's no need to go about pretending like you do." He was of the Core Formation stage. On his path to becoming a powerful expert, and having experienced what he did at the Rebirth Cave, he was able to speak his words in a completely dull tone, as if he weren't the least bit upset, and also completely confident in himself.

His words caused the parrot to immediately stop in mid-flight. All of the colorful feathers on its body stood on end, and it glared at Meng Hao, looking as if it had been woefully dishonored.

"I don't know? I'm an ancient Celestial bird! I know about the Immortals above and the mortals below! You think there's something Lord Fifth doesn't know? I know everything!"

"You really don't need to boast," replied Meng Hao quickly. His heart trembled, and his eyes shone with a strange light.

Chapter 318: Have Faith in the Lord Fifth, Gain Eternal Life!

“Lord Fifth knows!”

“You don’t know!”

“Arrrrrhhhh! Fine!” squawked the parrot, flapping its wings. “You shall know how powerful an ancient Celestial bird is!” The parrot’s eyes had turned green; its dignity had been questioned! A multicolored light suddenly blazed out from it, filling the entire small mountain in the space of a single breath.

Then, the light returned, as if it had collected something from within the mountain. The light gathered together, transforming into a pile of black soil the size of a fist.

“See?” said the parrot arrogantly, its voice shrill. “The secret of these black-colored lands can be found within this very mountain. This was refined out by me, Lord Fifth, personally!”

Off to the side, the meat jelly watched in a daze, completely quiet, as if it had just been enlightened. Despite its apparent sudden realization, however, it quickly grew more curious.

“What the heck is it?” it said. It rolled its eyes as it considered Meng Hao’s words from just now, and then the arrogant posturing of the parrot. Suddenly, it felt very excited and gushed, “You’re trying to use that crap to fool us, you old bird! You don’t have any idea at all what it is!”

The parrot looked scornfully at the meat jelly. This time, it didn’t react at all like it had toward Meng Hao, causing the meat jelly to stare dumbfounded.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered as he looked closely at the soil, which was actually a dark purplish-green. Just looking at it, he didn’t see anything unusual; in fact, it seemed quite ordinary.

“You don’t even know where this random clump of mud came from, and

yet you dare to claim that you're omniscient?" said Meng Hao coolly. It seemed that the parrot... didn't like to be provoked by people.

Even though the meat jelly had tried this method moments ago, to no effect, Meng Hao decided to try it out one more time.

Even as the words were leaving his mouth, the parrot's colorful feathers stood up on end, a green light shone from within its eyes, and a white Qi began to seep out from the top of its head. It seemed that its dignity had been seriously slighted, something it couldn't accept in its arrogance.

Apparently it could ignore whatever the meat jelly said, but not even the slightest bit of provocation from Meng Hao.

"You dare to look down on Lord Fifth!?" shrieked the parrot furiously. "Lord Fifth is an ancient Celestial bird! There's nothing I don't know! Mountains and Seas, the Heavens, who doesn't know that if you have faith in the Lord Fifth, you can attain eternal life!? You listen to Lord Fifth, buddy. This stuff is Immortal Sense soil! Many years ago, an almighty member of the senior generation painted a talisman out amidst the stars. He threw it down, with the intention of sealing this particular planet. However, someone else blocked it, and as the talisman entered the planet, it was burned into ash.

"However, that almighty ancient had an exceedingly high Cultivation base, and therefore, the magical symbols he painted contained divine abilities. Even though it became ash, it still contained the power of an Immortal. The ash fell down onto this very land. That's why the soil in this place is black, because the land here contains the remnants of that burned talisman! I, an ancient Celestial bird, saw all this happen, so many years ago. How could I possibly be mistaken!?"

After hearing all this, Meng Hao's pupils constricted, and his heart trembled.

A Cultivator who wielded power great enough to be able to paint magical symbols among the stars, and use them to seal an entire planet.... Before the events at the Rebirth Cave, Meng Hao would not have easily believed that such a thing could be true. But after seeing Choumen Tai, he

now had a much greater understanding of such matters.

Right now, he breathed deeply as he looked at the incensed parrot, having already been seventy to eighty percent convinced of what it was saying.

“Some almighty person capable of painting a seal that can lock down a whole planet, that’s just shocking,” he thought. “But for someone to interfere with it, to burn it and cause the ash to create the Black Lands... well who was that?” At the moment, the character Ji was hovering in his mind.

“It can be hard to distinguish illusions from reality,” said Meng Hao coolly. “That’s a nice story, but who knows whether it’s true or not?” Actually, Meng Hao was mostly convinced already, but he allowed no change of expression to appear on his face.

The parrot looked even more enraged. It flew around in circles around the Immortal’s cave, glaring at Meng Hao. Then, it opened its mouth and spit out a glowing green light which shot toward Meng Hao.

It happened so fast that Meng Hao had no chance to dodge. The green light entered into him through his forehead, transforming into information that branded itself onto his mind.

The information consisted of a few hundred characters. They were complex, but after examining them, Meng Hao realized what it was: a vision technique.

“Use this technique, and look again! This Celestial technique has been branded onto you, so there’s no need for enlightenment or study. Just use it!” The parrot glared at Meng Hao, apparently unwilling to rest until Meng Hao believed what he said.

Meng Hao closed his eyes. When he opened them, the pupil of his right eye shrank. As it did, he felt as if Cultivation base power were suddenly being emitted out of his right eye.

In an instant, it felt as if his Cultivation base were withered, causing Meng Hao to feel quite alarmed. Suddenly, a strand of the Immortal

spiritual energy within his body went toward his right eye, fusing with it.

He felt a stab of pain in his right eye, and tears flowed out of it. His vision grew blurry, but then cleared. Now, the world as he viewed it through his right eye looked very different, although it was hard to describe exactly how.

He looked down at the violet-green clump of soil.

Even at first glance, Meng Hao's mind was shaken. Slowly, strands of golden-colored Qi became visible, floating up from the soil and congealing in the air to form faint magical symbols. The symbols, of course, were golden-colored; furthermore, they emitted an intense pressure that only Meng Hao was able to sense.

Under the influence of the pressure, the magical symbols seemed to transform into tiny people. All of them floated there in front of Meng Hao, and they appeared to be painting something.

There was only a tiny bit of pressure, but it caused Meng Hao's mind to fill with a roaring sound, and his Spiritual Sense to grow unstable. He suddenly closed his eyes, cutting off his vision and thus ending the technique. Even still, his face was pale, and it took him a while to recover his senses. When he opened his eyes, his right eye was filled with veins of blood.

"Well, did you feel it?" asked the parrot haughtily. "Lord Fifth knows everything. This is nothing but a clump of dirt with a bit of magical symbols in it. If you had encountered the ash created by the true Immortal Talisman that year, you wouldn't have been struck absentminded, you would have been struck dead!

"You know, soil like this is everywhere in this black-colored land. You can't say there's a huge amount, but there is quite a bit. People like you who can actually gaze upon the will of the Immortal Talisman, well, let's just say you're as rare as phoenix feathers and unicorn horns. Were it not for the fact that this area is suppressed, it wouldn't have lasted until now.

"If this soil is taken away from this land, then it will become useless. Oh, and let me tell you another secret. If you possess enough fortune and luck,

you can collect more soil like this, and then you might gain enlightenment regarding some of the divine abilities within the magical symbols of that almighty senior. Now, please repeat after me in a loud voice: Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life! When the Lord Fifth appears, who dares to cause strife! Many years ago, countless people chanted these very lines!” It looked at the pale-faced Meng Hao even more egotistically, apparently more and more convinced of how powerful it was.

Meng Hao ignored the parrot. “Such powerful Qi... especially considering this is just a tiny clump of soil. And yet, it contains such shocking power. To think that there is more of this dirt throughout the Black Lands....” He began to breathe deeply, and his eyes glowed.

He suddenly thought of the words of the Demon Sealing Jade.

“An Immortal of the Ninth Mountain; the pinnacle of brushwork; magical symbols of all creatures; collapse of the Heavens.... The power is fused within this land, transformed into destruction, and filled with Demonic life force. This land... can be used to cultivate... the art of Righteous Bestowal!”

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. The method for cultivating the art of Righteous Bestowal already existed in his mind. During his time focused on healing his injuries, he’d had no time to work toward enlightenment, but having seen this clump of soil, he suddenly found himself lost in thought.

Time slipped by. Soon, half a month had gone past. The parrot and the meat jelly had disappeared somewhere, and were no longer in the Immortal’s cave. The interchanges between these two old enemies usually involved the meat jelly provoking the parrot in some way. However, the parrot was always able to respond with only a few words that would send the meat jelly shrinking in on itself.

Meng Hao was focused on the art of Righteous Bestowal. Occasionally he would use the vision technique to examine the soil; each time he would come up lacking in some aspect of enlightenment or another. As he continued to study it, he would sometimes take out Ji Hongdong’s bag of

holding. The magical sealing symbol was still there, but it was growing weaker. After a few attempts at breaking it, Meng Hao got the feeling that it wouldn't be long before he would be able to open the bag.

Time slowly passed. Other than research, he spent his time thinking. He didn't consume the Outlander Pill that Master had given him. True, it could extend longevity, but more importantly, it could be used to suppress the Resurrection Lily.

He could only consume three in his life, and did not wish to squander those opportunities.

As for the Primordial Heavenly Replenishing Pill, it could also extend longevity, but he only had one. At the moment, he didn't have enough Spirit Stones to duplicate a copy, so after a moment's thought, he sealed it back up. At the moment, he was completely recovered; his longevity was significantly shortened, but it wasn't an extreme emergency.

For now, what he was most worried about was the Heavenly Tribulation that would come with his Perfect Gold Core. Right now, he had all the ingredients he needed to make the Perfect Core Pill, except for one plant.

The plant he needed wasn't extremely rare; Meng Hao guessed that even in the Black Lands, he would most likely be able to get ahold of one.

However, after thinking for quite a long time about the Heavenly Tribulation, Meng Hao still had no idea how he would deal with it, other than the meat jelly.

On one particular day, after gaining a bit of enlightenment regarding the Celestial soil, Meng Hao's mind suddenly quivered. He sent his Spiritual Sense out roughly fifty kilometers out from his Immortal's cave. There, he could see Huang Daxian, very cautiously leading a group of grim, malevolent-looking Foundation Establishment Cultivators in his direction.

"Seniors," he said in a low voice, "up ahead, the four of you will be able to see the place where that guy is staying." His nose was bloodied, and his face swollen, and it seemed he was even missing a few teeth. His expression was very dispirited.

“Cut the crap,” said one of the four Foundation Establishment Cultivators with a cold snort. “Keep leading the way!”

“I really want to see if this guy truly has the superhuman abilities you claim!” said another. “And then there’s the supposed medicinal pills!”

The four Cultivators’ eyes glittered with avarice. Among the four, one was surprisingly of the great circle of Foundation Establishment. The other three were in the mid Foundation Establishment stage. These four held sway over the region with iron fists, and they were quite well-known. Their bodies were festooned with what could almost be called totem tattoos, very similar to those of Western Desert Cultivators, although not quite the same.

The four of them exchanged glances and began to converse in hushed tones.

“We’ll need to be careful. With so many medicinal pills, he must not be an ordinary person. Make sure not to damage his bag of holding before he dies, otherwise this trip will have been in vain.”

“Right. We’ll all attack at once, and wipe him out. Don’t give him a chance to destroy his own bag of holding before that!”

Huang Daxian looked furious, but didn’t dare to say anything other than to mumble in agreement with them.

Meng Hao retracted his Spiritual Sense. Huang Daxian was branded with his Spiritual Sense, so Meng Hao was aware of all of his activities, including the disaster he had brought upon himself because of the medicinal pill, and how he had been captured.

If he wanted to, Meng Hao could just exterminate all of them. However, after thinking about the Celestial soil which contained the Celestial talismanic symbols, he changed his mind and allowed Huang Daxian to lead them here.

“I need enough Celestial soil. The more the better. That will increase my ability to achieve full enlightenment.” Meng Hao closed his eyes.

Chapter 319: A Booming Voice from the Rubble

It requires a bit of time for Foundation Establishment Cultivators to travel fifty kilometers.

While he waited for them, Meng Hao sat meditating. He had now gained more experience in researching the art of Righteous Bestowal. As far as enlightenment regarding the Celestial soil, there was no need to be anxious. It would require slow and steady progress. By gradually increasing his collection, he would have time to study it properly. In that way, he would be able to slowly supplement whichever magical symbols he lacked.

He currently sat cross-legged, examining his Violet Core as it slowly rotated. In the blink of an eye, it would send out massive amounts of Qi threads throughout his body, and then they would retract.

It was like lightning; extend, retract, a cycle. This allowed him to burst forth with a type of Cultivation base power completely different and far more formidable than that of the Foundation Establishment stage.

“Master said that after reaching Core Formation, I would be able to fuse the Everburning Flame with my Core. Then I would be able to utilize my personal alchemic flame....” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. To accomplish that would of course require painstaking effort in secluded meditation.

He hadn’t even been in the Black Lands for a year, and yet his time spent recovering in secluded meditation had led to a complete lack of mental focus. However, the matters of the Celestial soil, the art of Righteous Bestowal, igniting his alchemic flame, and Ji Hongdong’s bag of holding were all things that he needed to allocate time for now that he was in the Core Formation stage.

Because of his concerns of being tracked down by the Ji Clan, he was constantly on guard. This entire time, he hadn’t been able to relax. However, he already had an inkling as to why no one from the Ji Clan had

come after him yet.

He made his decision. “It seems I need to stay in secluded meditation for a bit longer. When I’ve accomplished everything I need to, I can go out and track down the final medicinal plant I need to make the Perfect Gold Core Pill.”

He lifted his head, and within his eyes could be seen a cold glow. His lips twisted into a meaningful smile that had a touch of a demonic air. It seemed to be filled with frigidness.

At the moment, the four Foundation Establishment Cultivators were flying through the air toward the short mountain. They approached without hesitation, and reached the fissure in the mountain in only a moment, and then shot down inside.

Huang Daxian’s face was pale and fear filled his heart. However, he also had an idea. Gritting his teeth, voice trembling, he loudly said, “Just... just down here....”

The Foundation Establishment Cultivators looked at him with killing intent springing from their eyes. “Quiet!” said one.

The four of them reaching the bottom of the fissure in an instant. They looked at the Immortal’s cave, and their expressions changed to fill with vigilance.

This was because the door of Meng Hao’s Immortal’s cave was not closed. Instead, it was wide open, allowing them to see Meng Hao sitting inside cross-legged. He slowly raised up his head; his expression was that of complete calm.

He wore an ordinary green robe, but considering how it strikingly framed his white hair, it immediately caused an intense fear to push down onto their hearts.

In addition, his face seemed devoid of any blood. That, combined with the icy coldness of his gaze, made the temperature in the area seem to instantly plummet beyond freezing.

The four Foundation Establishment Cultivators all gasped. Meng Hao’s

appearance immediately caused an intense feeling of crisis to rise up inside of them. It made the man sitting in front of them seem to be, not a Cultivator, but an ancient wild beast. His gaze seemed as if it would consume them whole.

Cold sweat immediately began to pour down their foreheads. Their mouths and tongues went dry, and their minds seemed almost lost. They stood there, not moving a muscle.

Meng Hao didn't say anything. Deathly silence filled the mountain fissure; not even the sound of breathing could be heard.

The silence gradually transformed into an intense pressure, as if the entire mountain were weighing down on the hearts of everyone present. The feeling seemed to place them at the border between life and death; Meng Hao's gaze filled them with the profound impression that if they moved, they would be dead instantly.

Finally, though, one of the four Foundation Cultivators, the one with the lowest Cultivation base, couldn't take the pressure any longer. Unable to stay standing there, he let out a howl and shot upward toward the mouth of the fissure.

Even as he began to fly up, Meng Hao lifted the finger of his right hand. "Pipe down."

Two words, one sentence, and a miserable shriek rang out. A corpse fell down to land directly in front of the three other Foundation Establishment Cultivators, causing their faces to grow even more white, and their bodies to tremble even harder.

The corpse that had just fallen down had a bloody hole on its forehead, out from which fresh, red blood gurgled. The corpse's eyes were wide open, and clearly filled with dread and despair.

The scene transformed into a new pressure that caused the remaining three Foundation Establishment Cultivators to be filled with awe. Although they had done their fair share of killing, they knew that it wasn't a simple thing to be able to slay a Foundation Establishment Cultivator. All of them instantly began to shake violently.

“Core Formation.... This guy is definitely in the Core Formation stage!”

“Dammit, why did we have to provoke a Core Formation expert!?”

The three of them exchanged glances filled with bitterness and desperation.

Huang Daxian was trembling even harder than they were, and anxiety filled his face. He had guessed that Meng Hao was powerful, but he had never imagined that his power had reached the level that he could exterminate a mid Foundation Establishment Cultivator.

Some time passed, and the three Foundation Establishment Cultivators grew so nervous and frightened that it seemed their hearts might explode. Being forced to wait such a long time under the threat of death was something that ordinary people usually can't endure.

Finally, another among the remaining three couldn't take it any more. Seeing that Meng Hao had long since closed his eyes, the middle-aged man gritted his teeth and suddenly flew up into the air. At the same time, he crushed a jade slip, which caused a mist to surround his body and explosively increased his speed. As he seemed on the verge of making his escape, Meng Hao didn't move; he didn't even open his eyes. A look of excitement appeared on the face of the escaping Cultivator, causing the remaining two to hesitate momentarily and consider following him.

Suddenly, the rocks on either side of the mountain fissure suddenly seemed to loosen. A dark violet vine suddenly erupted out, emanating an intense viciousness. The end of the vine split into a jagged, gaping, bloody mouth. The Foundation Establishment Cultivator let out an astonished scream as he was instantly swallowed up whole as if by a giant snake. After swallowing the man down, massive amounts of gooey fluid flowed down the vine. At the same time, even more vines burrowed out through the mountain rocks.

There were dozens of them, writhing about. They sealed off the mouth of the fissure, and then stretched out to point in the direction of Huang Daxian and the remaining two Foundation Establishment Cultivators.

Huang Daxian's face was pale white and completely blank.

The two Foundation Establishment Cultivators were left panting. The scene just now replayed in their minds, and suddenly they had the intense sensation that they were currently in hell.

“S-s-senior... spare me....” said the Cultivator of the great circle of Foundation Establishment, his voice trembling as he dropped to his knees and kowtowed to Meng Hao.

“Senior, I was in the wrong, please spare me,” said the other Foundation Establishment Cultivator, also plopping to the ground and kowtowing.

Both of them were scared out of their minds.

Meng Hao slowly opened his eyes and coolly gazed over the two of them, as well as Huang Daxian. He had long since taken notice of the totems tattoos on their bodies. They weren't the same as those of the Western Desert Cultivators, but they appeared to be able to move just as fluidly.

“Are you here to request medicinal pills?” asked Meng Hao. He lifted his hand, and two medicinal pills appeared in his palm. They were bluish black, and emitted no medicinal fragrance whatsoever. In fact, faintly visible on the surface of each pill was the image of a ferocious, writhing centipede.

At a glance it was obvious that these were poison pills.

Before the two Foundation Establishment Cultivators could respond to his question, Meng Hao flicked his sleeve, and the two pills shot out like lightning toward their mouths. They had no time to react; the pills slammed into their teeth and then entered their throats. In the blink of an eye, they had dissolved.

The two men's faces changed immediately. However, they didn't do anything to resist. They could only let out bitter sighs; they knew that at the very least, they were being allowed to live a bit longer.

“Think of this pill as a punishment,” said Meng Hao calmly. “I want the two of you to take Huang Daxian and look around for soil that looks like this. The more you find, the faster I'll dispel that poison. In fact, if you find enough, I'll even give you some medicinal pills.” He glanced over at Huang

Daxian for a moment.

Huang Daxian immediately gave a start, then loudly voiced his consent.

Meng Hao flicked his sleeve, sending a bit of violet-green soil shooting out to each of the three of them. Then, the Immortal's cave slammed shut with a boom. The tentacles sealing off the fissure drew back, and everything returned to normal. With bitter smiles, the two Foundation Establishment Cultivators let out quiet sighs. They weren't sure what extraordinary properties were contained in the soil given them by the powerful man in the cave. However, it actually seemed to them that they had come across a bit of luck. Their eyes gleaming, they exchanged a glance, then shot out of the cave, taking Huang Daxian along very politely.

According to Meng Hao's requirements, they went searching for the soil.

Time passed by. Soon, it was half a month later. During that time, Meng Hao had become much more familiar with the art of Righteous Bestowal. The power of the art was difficult to fathom. It was similar to being able to touch something and make it become demonic; however, instead of using the word "touch" it used the word "bestow!"

Bestow Demonism upon any living thing, and use it. It also contained the character "righteous," which was the opposite of "evil." And yet, the art itself was clearly very aggressive and oppressive. It seemed like... receiving the Righteous Bestowal of a Demon Sealer gave the beneficiary some sort of official approval!

Furthermore, every time Meng Hao rotated his Cultivation base, he could feel a faint Qi in existence. It seemed that if he wanted to... he could use this Qi to perform the Righteous Bestowal and perform Demonic transformation.

The resulting demon would have no spirit, only an involuntary Qi; however, Meng Hao would be able to control it. It would be a strange sensation, similar to the astral projection Meng Hao had read about in the ancient records of the Violet Fate Sect.

"Compel any living creature to become demonic..." Meng Hao eyes gleamed with a mysterious light. He lifted his hand and gazed at his

finger. After a moment's thought, he pushed his finger down against the floor of the Immortal's cave.

"Righteous Bestowal!" he said. Immediately, ghost images sprang up throughout the Immortal's Cave. Immediately he was able to sense a faint Qi inside of the Immortal's cave, set free from within the short mountain.

This Qi was strange and filled with variations. Meng Hao's senses couldn't tell clearly exactly what it was. However, it didn't take long for him to understand that this was... Demonic Qi of living things!

His eyes flickered as he sent his Spiritual Sense into the Qi. A roaring filled his mind, and suddenly his field of vision expanded rapidly; he was now able to see everything for 150-200 kilometers around the short mountain.

By concentrating on the fusion of his Spiritual Sense and the Demonic Qi, he could sense everything in the area. Just when he was about to retract his vision, he suddenly saw something off to the northwest, what appeared to be a field of rubble. Ordinarily, he wouldn't take note of it, but in this unique state, he suddenly heard a voice coming from within the rubble.

A mournful, archaic voice suddenly boomed out. "Heavens of Ji do not die; I do not die... Heavens of Ji.... You've been suppressing me for thirty thousand years, but I still refuse to step foot onto the Immortal Sealing Dais!" As the voice echoed out, it suddenly said, "Who are you!?" Meng Hao felt as if a gaze as powerful as the Heavens had suddenly fallen upon him.

Chapter 320: Igniting the Alchemic Flame

Meng Hao's heart trembled as his eyes snapped open. He pulled his fingers back from the ground; he felt as if some incredible force had battered him out of the strange state he was in just now.

His eyes glittered as he raised his head, allowing his gaze to pass through the rock walls of the Immortal's cave to look toward the field of rocky rubble.

"So it's another enemy of the Ji Clan. However, this person seems different from the square cauldron in the ancient Blessed Land. The fact that he noticed me shows that his will is still here!" After collecting his thoughts, Meng Hao rose and left the Immortal's cave. Moments later he emerged from the fissure in the small mountain.

It was midday, and the sun burned brightly overhead, baking the land until it seemed it would bubble with grease. After leaving the mountain, Meng Hao looked in the direction of the field of rubble. After a moment of thought, he flicked the sleeve of his robe and shot off toward it.

It didn't take long before he floated in mid-air above the field of rubble, looking down at it. It wasn't a very large area, perhaps several dozen kilometers wide in either direction. The entire area was strewn with bizarrely shaped rocks, some of which were more than half sunken into the soil. Some, on the other hand, lay on the surface of the ground.

It gave off a very bleak air, as if each and every stone in this place had been here for ages.

Meng Hao didn't get too close, choosing instead to remain up in the air. However after some time passed, he still had no idea what this place was. It seemed completely ordinary. Maintaining his attitude of vigilance, he sent out his Spiritual Sense to investigate further, but yet again came up empty handed.

"Of course," thought Meng Hao. "This is exactly how you would expect it to be. Outsiders wouldn't be able to notice anything unusual, not even me. If I hadn't been in that unusual state, I would never have sensed anything

strange here.” He decided not to rashly proceed forward, instead choosing to turn and leave.

Absolutely nothing happened as he left.

Back in the Immortal’s cave, he thought back to the powerful, archaic voice which had pierced into his mind, and the bone-deep rancor it had expressed regarding the Ji Clan.

“Heavens of Ji....” thought Meng Hao. After all of his experiences, his curiosity had been suppressed for far too long. However, he knew that in the Cultivation world, each step can be fraught with peril; a lack of caution can lead to mistakes that can never be righted.

Therefore, after thinking for a bit longer about the archaic voice, he decided to ignore it until he had a more powerful Cultivation base. At the moment, he was only at the early Core Formation stage, and as such, the situation was just too risky. Even though this person claimed to be an enemy of the Ji Clan, that didn’t necessarily mean he wouldn’t harm Meng Hao.

“With the help of this Demonic Qi, my Spiritual Sense can be amplified by several times.... Who knows the extent to which I can cultivate the art of Righteous Bestowal? I wonder if I can combine my will with the Qi to produce an Incarnation of myself?” Giving no more thought to the powerful voice, Meng Hao focused his attention onto the art of Righteous Bestowal. His first test of the art had left him with the sense that this technique was definitely beyond ordinary.

“I wonder if it might have something to do with cultivating the Dao Divinity Scripture, and how it made my Spiritual Sense far beyond that of any Cultivator of my same level.” Meng Hao continued to analyze the matter calmly. Eventually the sky outside began to turn dark, and Meng Hao closed his eyes. Enlightenment regarding the art of Righteous Bestowal swirled within his head. He had the feeling that this technique was something extremely important to him.

A month passed, during which time Meng Hao never opened his eyes. One day, he sensed ten or more Cultivators outside of the Immortal’s cave.

They wore deferential expressions, and were kowtowing just outside the cave. Each of them possessed some of the violet-green soil, and two of their number were the Foundation Establishment Cultivators from before.

During the past month, they had returned a few times. Each time, Meng Hao dispelled some of their poison, to the point where it was more than half gone. He had even bestowed them with medicinal pills. They had long since forgotten their other two Fellow Daoist friends who had been killed. In order to earn even more medicinal pills, they had recruited others they knew, and the group had formed a small-scale power base.

A few in the group had harboured ill intentions. However, after the ground shook and fierce tentacles burst out to rip them to shreds and eat them, anyone else with similar thoughts put them to rest.

When you added in the fact that Meng Hao gave out real medicinal pills as rewards, which to these Cultivators were extremely rare, it arose a zealous fanaticism among them.

In addition, the fact that Meng Hao's Cultivation base was deeply unfathomable to them also had something to do with it.

As for Huang Daxian, even though his Cultivation base wasn't very high, he held a special position within the group. At the moment, he stood outside of the Immortal's cave looking complacently out over the group of people. The meat jelly was perched on his head and the colourful parrot on his shoulder.

"I shall impart to you the words of the Patriarch," he said. "You did well, and this is your reward." He produced a small bottle, from within which he distributed a tiny medicinal pill to everyone present. As the Cultivators received their medicinal pill, their faces lit with excitement and they immediately consumed the pills.

Meng Hao didn't have a lot of low level medicinal pills such as these in his bag of holding. Seeing the increase in the number of people during his month of secluded meditation, he had taken a single medicinal pill and refined it into dozens of smaller pills.

Even still, to these Cultivators, something like that was like a precious

treasure, as different from the medicinal elixirs they usually consumed as Heaven was from the Earth.

It was thus not difficult to understand why the area around Meng Hao's Immortal's cave attracted a dozen or more Cultivators in one short month, all of them willing to join the group.

In fact, they had settled in the area, constructing simple houses that surrounded the Immortal's cave and the small mountain. Eventually the mountain itself came to be a sort of holy ground....

Meng Hao had never anticipated that something like this would happen. However, this small-scale power base was providing him with more and more of the soil that he needed.

Because of this soil, Meng Hao ignored everything else. Based on his experience, the Cultivators who took up residence here were doing it not just for the sake of the medicinal pills, but also for protection.

Meng Hao was a formidable person, and although these people hadn't seen much directly, the ferocity of the vines had been personally witnessed by quite a few eyes. People were able to draw the connection between the two; whoever was able to raise something like the vines must be terribly frightening.

Therefore, they believed this place to be safe.

In the Black Lands, safety was an invaluable treasure.

Actually, at one point during the month, a group of a dozen or so Cultivators belonging to a different local power group showed up. They desired to slay Meng Hao and take his medicinal pills by force. A single cold snort echoed out from within the Immortal's cave, causing Heaven and Earth to shake, and instantly killing half of the group.

The other half coughed up blood and sustained serious injuries. The most powerful of their number was a Pseudo Core Formation expert. His shock was extreme, and he immediately retreated five kilometers. However, at that point he suddenly lost control of his own body; a powerful force bound him up and dragged him back. After seeing this,

other Cultivators immediately swore fealty.

Shocked, even the Pseudo Core Cultivator gave in and became a member of Meng Hao's group.

On one particular day, Meng Hao sat cross-legged in his Immortal's cave, a strange light shining in his eyes. Within his pupils, something appeared like a burning fire. This was none other than the East Pill Division's Everburning Flame legacy.

"Feed it with your Core, ignite the Everburning Flame. With this flame, the Spirit Summoning Incantation can be used, and a great path of the Dao of alchemy can be opened." Meng Hao took a deep breath and closed his eyes. As he did, tongues of flame appeared on his Violet Core.

They appeared weak, but they did not burn out, and as they flickered there, they gradually grew stronger.

At the exact moment in which Meng Hao ignited his alchemic flame, off in the Southern Domain, within the East Pill Division of the Violet Fate Sect, Pill Demon sat in the limestone cave next to the Everburning Flame, his face devoid of blood.

"So you ignited the Everburning Flame, huh...? Good. With the legacy of the flame passed on, if I, your Master, end up returning to the dust, then he can smile on his way to the underworld." Pill Demon smiled, a smile filled with kindness, and even more exhaustion. Clearly, he still hadn't recovered from his battle with Ji Fang.

Pill Demon lifted his head to look at the East Pill Everburning Flame, and memories seemed to flicker within his eyes. "So long as this flame before me is not extinguished, then neither shall I be!"

More time passed, three months. In his Immortal's cave in the small mountain in the Black Lands, Meng Hao was thoroughly engrossed in stoking the alchemic flame. No flame burned on his body, but a broiling heat surrounded him. His skin was as pale as before, but the Violet Core within him was now a ball of fire, burning oh so slowly.

This was none other than Meng Hao's alchemic flame!

Three more days passed, and when Meng Hao opened his eyes, flames flickered within. They quickly disappeared, and as they did, Meng Hao turned his head to look toward the Southern Domain.

“These three months were like a dream,” he thought. “I dreamed of the look of kindness and praise on Master’s face.” As his alchemic flame had kindled brighter during the months, he could sense his Cultivation base growing stronger. He was now definitely at the peak of the early Core Formation stage.

After some time passed, he sent his Spiritual Sense sweeping about, and instantly gaped in shock.

He could see that the area surrounding his Immortal’s Cave was inhabited by dozens and dozens of Cultivators. Most were of the Qi Condensation stage, and six or seven were of the Foundation Establishment stage!

This was no longer a small-scale power, but a medium-scale power. They surrounded the small mountain in all directions; neatly arranged houses had been constructed, and the entire place was quite bustling.

Huang Daxian was now at the ninth level of Qi Condensation, close to Foundation Establishment. With a Foundation Establishment pill, it would not be difficult for him to break through.

That, of course, would require a stroke of luck, or perhaps assistance from totemic power. In the Black Lands, totemic tattoos were a common sight, just like the ones he had seen on those Foundation Establishment Cultivators earlier.

Now Meng Hao understood. Cultivators here who wanted to enter Foundation Establishment, but who did not have a Foundation Establishment Pill, had no other choice than to use totemic power to increase their chances of doing so.

Meng Hao had observed a bit of totem cultivation, and had even made some inquiries about it. The initial process didn’t seem difficult. Apparently, you simply had to kill some creature, then use its life blood to inscribe an image onto your body. Then, you would be able to wield

totemic power.

Such a method seemed problematic. However, Meng Hao didn't understand totemic arts too well, so it was difficult for him to analyze the specifics.

Chapter 321: Cover Over Li With the Heavens!

Outside of the Immortal's cave, the parrot was currently soaring about in the sky, calling out with its shrill voice.

"Listen to me, all of you. Lord Fifth is a Celestial bird, an ancient Celestial bird. I know of the Heavens, and I know of the underworld, because there is nothing that Lord Fifth doesn't know. If I'm in a good mood, then I'll pass on to you a Celestial magic. Celestial magic! Do you know what that means? Now repeat after me, as loud as you can: Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life! When the Lord Fifth appears, who dares to cause strife!" As it finished speaking, it landed onto Huang Daxian's head, its expression lofty and proud, as if it were innately above all the masses.

"You're nothing but a flashy bird!" said the meat jelly solemnly. It was currently perched atop the head of a Cultivator of the great circle of Foundation Establishment. "You call yourself Celestial, but you're really just a bird. And what do you mean by the number five Lord? What is number five anyway? At the most you're a First Lord!" The Cultivator beneath it gave a wry smile, his face pale.

"How many lives have I been trying to teach you this!?" said the parrot, glaring with contempt at the meat jelly. "You still can't count past three? You're not even qualified to talk to Lord Fifth!"

"Oh yeah? How high can you count?" asked the meat jelly, sounding both furious and humiliated.

"I can count to nine!" replied the parrot haughtily, glaring with wide eyes. Immediately, the meat jelly stared in shock as it tried to comprehend how vastly high of a number nine must be. It wanted to say something back to the parrot, but seeing its haughty appearance, the meat jelly realized that nine must be an incredibly high number. It suddenly started to feel a bit low in the self-esteem department.

All of the surrounding Cultivators had strange expressions on their faces, but none of them dared to hold back from repeating the words that so recently caused their blood to freeze upon hearing them. After all, they knew how fearsome the meat jelly and the parrot could be.

The meat jelly was completely indestructible. Two months before, yet another greedy nearby group had come, but the meat jelly had transformed into an enormous bubble and surrounded them. No matter what the dozen or so Cultivators inside had done they had been incapable of even leaving a mark.

Eventually, they had had no choice but to just look out helplessly. Eventually, the meat jelly had let them go, giving a provoking look to the parrot at the same time.

Later, another group of Cultivators arrived, and then, the local Cultivators caught a glimpse of what could be called true insanity, and true misery.

One of those Cultivators ended up cursing the parrot, whereupon the seemingly innocuous multicolored bird had... delved into any hole it saw, at top speed. In the blink of an eye, blood-curdling screams filled the air as the invading Cultivators had half their bodies filled with bloody holes as the parrot shot through them.

As for some of the unlucky ones, the parrot ended up shooting in and out of their eyes. Miserable screams rang out that people still couldn't forget.

The man who had cursed the parrot, well, the parrot threatened the meat jelly, forcing it to transform the man into a luxuriantly furred ape.

Then... came a nightmare which continued to plague everyone who witnessed it.

With a howling roar, the parrot shot like lightning toward the hairy ape. Specifically, toward its rear end....

The shrill screams which came out of the mouth of that Cultivator, as well as the sinister and wicked excitement of the parrot, immediately

caused everything else to be blanketed with thick silence....

After these two battles, the group's power in the area was established, and no one dared to trifle with them.

The haughtiness of the parrot became well known, as was its love of cursing people, its pettiness, and its unwillingness to forget a grudge.

As for Huang Daxian, every time he saw the meat jelly or the parrot, he would flatter and fawn over them. Eventually, others learned from him. Soon, the entire region became the territory of the parrot and the meat jelly.

From then on, it was on a daily basis that the Cultivators would shout, "Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life! When the Lord Fifth appears, who dares to cause strife!"

Their numbers grew, as did the range of their sphere of influence. As such, more and more of the Celestial soil was collected.

Meng Hao retracted his Spiritual Sense and examined his bag of holding. Actually, having so many people here was a bit of a headache. If any more people joined them, then even if Meng Hao had more medicinal pills, it still wouldn't be enough.

After thinking about the situation for a while, Meng Hao stood and left the Immortal's cave. As soon as he appeared, the meat jelly flew over. The parrot seemed a bit unwilling, but also approached and began to circle around Meng Hao. The vines popped up from the ground and swayed back and forth, seemingly happy to see him. Some of the Cultivators who had previously witnessed Meng Hao's power also bowed to him in greeting.

The entire area was soon in relative chaos. Most of the people here had never seen Meng Hao, but had heard of him, and now craned their necks to catch a glimpse.

Meng Hao looked at the crowd with a frown and then walked over to the cistern located near the Immortal's cave. Suddenly, he had an inspiration; he slapped his bag of holding, sending three medicinal pills flying out.

Before anyone could see clearly what exactly the pills were, Meng Hao

had sent them directly into the cistern. Next, he performed a quick incantation gesture with his right hand, and then pointed at the cistern. The water began to seethe as if it were boiling, and an intense heat could be felt, as if an invisible fire were burning.

After a moment, a thick spiritual energy wafted out from the cistern, enveloping the entire area. The faces of all the Cultivators immediately changed, filling with shock and excitement.

Based on the thickness of the spiritual energy, it seemed like drinking a mouthful of the cistern water would be like drinking medicinal elixir.

“Everyone may drink once from this medicinal cistern!” said Meng Hao, giving a look toward Huang Daxian and the Cultivator of the great circle of Foundation Establishment. When his gaze passed over them, their hearts trembled; the Dao Pillars of the Foundation Establishment Cultivator trembled, as if they could sense the intensity and fearsomeness of Meng Hao.

Everyone slowly lowered their heads, and then Meng Hao turned, taking the Celestial soil that had been collected recently, and returning to the Immortal’s cave to study it and gain further enlightenment.

Another month passed. By this time, Meng Hao was able to study the soil for a sustained time equal to the burning of half an incense stick. During that time, he could observe the tiny figures formed from golden magical symbols, and their paintings.

Based on Meng Hao’s judgement, he had actually only collected one part out of hundreds. In order to gain enlightenment, he would need to collect a lot more of the Celestial soil.

Recently, Meng Hao had also suppressed the growth of his Core. The reason was that once his Core Qi appeared, it would signify that his Core was completely solidified; the only following step would be to achieve the Perfect Gold Core.

As far as the essence of his Core Qi, according to Meng Hao’s understanding, it would be better to develop it after he acquired the Perfect Gold Core. He was confident that at that time, his battle prowess

would experience instantaneous and incredible advancement.

On this particular day, after Meng Hao concluded his research, he rested for a moment, then once again tried out the art of Righteous Bestowal. His recent days had been spent on cultivating these two divine abilities. Of course, whenever he used the art of Righteous Bestowal, he would not go anywhere near the field of rubble.

The more he used it, the deeper his understanding became. He already had a basic mastery, and could fuse his will with Demonic Qi to create an Incarnation.

He placed his hand onto the ground, and ghost images sprang up everywhere. It took only a moment to merge his Spiritual Sense into the local Demonic Qi, and then send it out in all directions. At the moment, it could cover everything within a full three hundred kilometer radius. That was equivalent to the Spiritual Sense of the late Core Formation stage.

To reach past five hundred kilometers was possible only for Nascent Soul eccentrics.

As the amalgamation of Meng Hao's Spiritual Sense and the Demonic Qi spread out, it was as if he had an invisible body outside the Immortal's cave. This invisible body could go anywhere within the three hundred kilometer radius, directed by his will.

He saw the Cultivators outside the Immortal's cave. They were already seventy or eighty in number, all of various levels of cultivation. There was only one assignment they were tasked with; every day they had to leave the camp and then return with some of the violet-green Celestial soil. They could use any means necessary to do so. The greater amount one returned with, the more they would be allowed to drink from the medicinal cistern.

Meng Hao took a glance at it all, then ignored it, submerging himself in this strange state, traversing the local area, experiencing what it felt like to utilize the Demonic Qi.

Before he even realized it, an hour had passed. According to Meng Hao's experience, the Incarnation he had formed using the art of Righteous

Bestowal would only last for a little more than an hour. He was just about to disperse the effects of the art, when his Incarnation suddenly turned its head and looked off into the distance, eyes narrowed. He experienced no alarm, only calmness.

There, off in the distance, was the field of rubble. Shockingly, he could see a fog of black Qi emanating out, coalescing into the image of an enormous old man.

The old man was huge, as large as a giant, and he was looking at Meng Hao.

His lower half was formed from black mist, above which, he was dressed in a black robe. His white hair fluttered around him, and his eyes were like lightning. His expression was filled with ancient profundity, and a rift split the middle of his forehead. From within the rift emerged a host of tiny black snakes which wriggled and squirmed and emitted hissing noises.

“Greetings, senior,” said Meng Hao, clasping his hands and bowing.

The old man looked at Meng Hao for a moment. “I’ve been watching you,” he said. Then he continued, his voice containing no politeness: “Why do you have a Ji Clan Karma thread attached to you? Answer me!”

“That has nothing to do with you, sir,” replied Meng Hao with a cool frown.

“Oh?” said the old man with a piercing gaze. His Qi suddenly flared out, and his entire body seemed to surge with Heavenly might. The black mist seethed, and the host of black snakes protruding from his forehead glared at Meng Hao. Their forked tongues flicked in and out as they emitted savage screams.

At the same time, over a hundred enormous black pythons appeared in front of the old man, seemingly reflections of the small snakes on his forehead. After they appeared, they spread out in all directions. The sight of it was incredibly shocking.

Of course, no one but Meng Hao could see this, and his expression was as calm as ever.

“You came here once before,” said the old man, continuing to look at Meng Hao. “You saw the seal which suppresses me. That’s why you’re so confident, isn’t it?” His voice echoed out like thunder, causing even the sky to seem to grow dark.

“Correct,” replied Meng Hao casually.

The man stared at him for a while, then suddenly let out a hearty laugh. “Nice response. You have a Ji Clan Karma thread attached to you, which means you will have trouble evading their Karma in this life. Cultivators who have achieved enlightenment regarding the Essence of the Ninth Mountain and Sea become prey for the Ji Clan.

“You’re young, so for you to be able to sense the Essence of the Ninth Mountain and Sea means you must be on the path of some great legacy. However, such a path... will lead you into conflict with the Ji Clan. It seems to me you won’t get very far on your journey.” With another laugh, he turned and the black fog began to disappear.

Hearing the old man’s words caused Meng Hao to feel a bit confused. Seeing the man was about to disappear, he suddenly blurted, “What is the Essence of the Ninth Mountain and Sea? What does the Ji Clan want with it?”

“There are nine Mountains in the vastness. Each Mountain has four planets, as well as a sun and a moon which revolve around the Mountain and Sea. One Mountain, one Sea, one Essence. Acquire the Essence of a Mountain and Sea, become the Lord of the Mountain and Sea... The Lord of the Ninth Mountain and Sea was surnamed Li (李), but he perished in a great calamity. The Mountain then had no Lord; therefore, all of the Immortals vied for the position!

“Lord Li had two subordinate Battle Immortals. The most powerful of the two changed his surname. He used the Heavens (天) to cover over Li (李), and called himself Ji (季). From then on, Ancestor Ji occupied the Heavenly Palace. He hunted and killed ancient names, changed the positions of the Heavenly bodies, and sealed the hosts of Immortals....

“Tribulation for Mountain and Sea! A great war among the Stars.

Immortals perished. There was boundless weeping. All living things raised their heads, but instead of glimpsing the stars, they saw the Heavens of Ji!” The old man’s powerful voice seemed to be filled with both laughter and insanity as he slowly disappeared.

Meng Hao floated in mid-air staring blankly. His mind spun, echoing with the old man’s words, and his bitter laughter, which seemed part song and part lunacy.

*

Here is a slightly closer look at the characters mentioned above:

Heaven

天

Li

李

Ji

季

Chapter 322: Ji Clan Bag of Holding

After quite some time passed, Meng Hao's figure gradually disappeared, transforming into strands of Qi which disappeared into nothing.

Back in the Immortal's cave, he slowly opened his eyes. They were filled with an expression of blankness, as well as a somewhat embarrassing feeling of fear.

His breathing was a bit heavy. Everything the old man had said, every word, every sentence, continued to echo in Meng Hao's mind like thunder.

Various memories began to flicker through his mind, and his eyes began to glow.

"The boundless Ninth Mountain.... Choumen Tai is from the Eighth Mountain's Planet Tiger Cage, and participated in what he called the great war of the Ninth Mountain.... That must be the great war among the Stars that the old man talked about! [1]

[tl: [1] = Choumen Tai was the "Immortal's corpse" who Meng Hao met in chapter 301]

"Also, I remember that the Eighth Generation Demon Sealer said that he came across the legacy of the Seventh Generation Demon Sealer in the Sixth Mountain, which was how he joined the League of Demon Sealers. He said he refined half of the Sea of the Sixth Mountain to form his Demon Sealing Jade!" [2]

[tl: [2] = The Eighth Demon Sealer's recollections were mused upon in chapter 102]

Various clues that used to be scattered about in his mind were now being drawn together by the old man's words. Now, he was getting a much clearer image of everything.

"The vastness beyond this world includes Nine Mountains and Seas of indescribable size. Each Mountain has its own respective sun and moon.... Each Mountain even has four planets! According to what Choumen Tai said, I'm on one of the four planets of the Ninth Mountain, Planet South

Heaven!" In this instant, the world that Meng Hao used to know was torn to pieces. Everything was vastly larger than he had ever imagined. Currently, his mind was filled with knowledge of the Heavens that... only Immortals understood.

"The Ji Clan is powerful not just here on Planet South Heaven, but the other three planets as well. This is because Ancestor Ji seized the Essence of the Ninth Mountain and Sea and became the most powerful of all, eventually changing the Heavens of the Ninth Mountain! Ancestor Ji (季) covered the name Li (李) with the Heavens (天)! How audacious of him!" Meng Hao took a deep breath; he suddenly felt a great pressure upon him. Could he ever have truly imagined how powerful the Ji Clan was? It was unimaginably terrifying.

Furthermore, what he was up against was merely a minor branch of the Ji Clan here on Planet South Heaven.

"Karma thread..." he thought. "That must be the invisible thread that attached to me after I killed Ji Hongdong. With that thread stuck to me, I won't be able to flee anywhere in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Hmm... I wonder what position the Fang Clan occupies?" He frowned, having no way to answer the question.

"The Essence of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.... Could that be the Demonic Qi I'm able to sense using the art of Righteous Bestowal? Is the Essence of the Ninth Mountain a Demon?" Meng Hao frowned. Considering his Cultivation base and experience, these were things that he had difficulty comprehending.

"Choumen Tai is from the Eighth Mountain. The Eighth Demon Sealer was from the Sixth Mountain. The Seventh Demon Sealer's legacy was in the Sixth Mountain.... I'm the Ninth Demon Sealer from... the Reliance Sect." Meng Hao's mind was in complete disorder. It was as if some vast, mysterious scroll was slowly spreading out in front of him. The more he wished to see, the more of the scroll he needed to spread out.

"And then there's that woman from the Solitary Sword Sect, Shan Ling. The Demon Sealing Jade said that she was a stone from the Ninth

Mountain who fell to here and became a spirit....” Meng Hao rubbed the bridge of his nose. He felt like his entire mind was in a shambles. [3]

[tl: [3] = Shan Ling was introduced in chapter 180]

“What kind of people were the previous eight generations of Demon Sealers? By cultivating their magic, I can sense the Essence of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. How powerful were they, exactly? And why didn’t Ancestor Ji approve of the League of Demon Sealers....” He frowned again. He liked thinking, but no matter how he thought about everything he knew, he couldn’t put all the pieces together. He was just missing too much information.

Using a tiny bit of information to try to understand a huge picture will of course lead to frustration.

“Demon Sealers, Demon Sealers.... If the Qi Essence of the Ninth Mountain and Sea is Demonic Qi, then wouldn’t the League of Demon Sealers be in a position above the Ninth Mountain and Sea? If that is the case, then I....” His heart began to pound at the enormity of the question. However, he quickly decided to dispel the notion.

“Impossible. If that were true, then how could the previous eight generations of Demon Sealers have perished? And why would I, the Ninth Generation Demon Sealer, be in such dire straits? My only Dao Protector is an old turtle who has long since fled.” Meng Hao laughed bitterly. No matter how he tried to get rid of the idea, it seemed impossible; and yet, it had taken root in his mind.

“The Eighth Demon Sealer had to experience Dao Tribulation in the Nine Mountains and Seas.... He didn’t say Ninth Mountain, he said Nine Mountains. He meant all of the Nine Mountains and Seas....” Meng Hao thought for a while, and then decided to stop analyzing everything. He let out a soft sigh. He knew that speculating would do him no good; he was nothing more than a Core Formation Cultivator.

“Who knows, I might never leave Planet South Heaven. The only way to do so is to reach Immortal Ascension .” He shook his head to clear his mind.

Immortal Ascension was just a vague concept to him; what was of more immediate concern was the path of the Perfect Gold Core.

In the following months of practice with the art of Righteous Bestowal, Meng Hao never again sensed the old man in the rubble field. However, he consistently had the feeling that he was being watched.

Through the months, the number of outside Cultivators who joined the force surrounding his Immortal's cave surpassed one hundred. It was now the most powerful force in the entire region.

More than one hundred people surrounded the small mountain. The medicinal cistern was the second of the holy locations, the first being Meng Hao's Immortal's cave.

Every day, they were all required to recite the words regarding faith in the Lord Fifth bringing eternal life. Because of the sheer force of numbers, when they shouted their rallying cry, it sounded like thunder.

The increase in numbers did benefit Meng Hao. Whenever he needed something, a large group of Cultivators would appear at a single word to handle whatever matter it was. The parrot and the meat jelly seemed extremely interested in commanding all of the Cultivators. Therefore, Meng Hao didn't need to pay them much attention, and instead left them to their devices.

On one particular day, Meng Hao sat cross-legged meditating, when suddenly his eyes snapped open. He could sense that the magical symbol on Ji Hongdong's bag of holding had finally completely dissipated.

"I wonder what will be inside the bag of holding of a member of the Ji Clan.... It's hard to say, considering that Ji Hongdong was just a member of the junior generation." Now that he understood more of the fearsome power of the Ji Clan, his anticipation was even greater. He took out the bag of holding and scanned it with Spiritual Sense.

His face immediately changed, and he gasped.

"He was definitely worthy of being a Ji Clansman...." he murmured. "I made out big this time!" He had long anticipated that the contents of the

bag of holding would by no means disappoint. However, regardless of the vast power and resources of the Clan, Ji Hongdong was a tiny member of the junior generation. As such, Meng Hao had assumed he wouldn't be disappointed, but also didn't expect too much.

However, it seemed he had underestimated the resources of a member of the Ji Clan Quasi-Array....

“Ultra high-grade quality Spirit Stones....” A glow shone over Meng Hao's right hand as a Spirit Stone appeared. The interior of the Spirit Stone was turbid, not translucent. It looked ordinary, and was something most people had never even seen. However, Meng Hao was familiar with it.

This was the exact same type of ultra high-grade Spirit Stone he had used to duplicate the wooden sword all those years ago!

Such Spirit Stones were incredibly useful. Meng Hao had long since run out of them. When he thought back to how he had squandered them that time, his heart hurt. In fact, considering that he felt that particular wooden sword to be only moderately powerful, it really felt like a waste.

He really regretted his ignorance at that time. Having practiced cultivation down to now, he truly understood the value of ultra high-grade Spirit Stones. In all of the Southern Domain, high-grade Spirit Stones could be found, but the ultra high-grade variety were exceedingly rare.

As he looked at the Spirit Stone in his hand, power suddenly surged from his Cultivation base. The Spirit Stone began to glow with a resplendent light. At the same time, an immense amount of spiritual energy emanated out, filling the entire Immortal's cave.

It permeated the cave, spilling outside as well. The more than hundred Cultivators outside all opened their eyes wide with shock as they sensed the spiritual energy.

“Fifty ultra high-grade Spirit Stones!” thought Meng Hao. He suppressed his excitement; to him, such a collection of Spirit Stones would be incredibly useful. They could serve as the nucleus of certain magical treasures or spell formations.

Furthermore, he could also try to duplicate the Primordial Heavenly Replenishing Pill, which he needed to help recover his longevity. Then, he would be able to use the Blood Immortal mask again, and wield its shocking power.

He began to put the Spirit Stone back. "Alright, so there's Spirit Stones. What else is... oh!?" Suddenly, his body began to tremble, and he rose to his feet, a look of disbelief on his face.

"This... this...." He began to pant, astonishment written on his face. Just now, something had happened which he hadn't sensed in a long time... spiritual energy had flowed into his body!

This place was neither the Blood Immortal Legacy zone, nor the Song Clan. But suddenly, he was able to absorb the spiritual energy in the area. It poured directly into his body, seeping in through his pores, filling him.

The sensation of being able to once again absorb the spiritual energy of Heaven and Earth caused Meng Hao to close his eyes. Ever since he had formed the Perfect Foundation, he had been unable to absorb spiritual energy in any place other than the Blood Immortal Legacy zone and the Song Clan.

A moment later, he opened his eyes, and they glowed with an intense light. He had already absorbed all of the spiritual energy in the entire area, including that outside the Immortal's cave.

This in itself completely changed his impression of this bag of holding. His mind was spinning even more intensely than it had when he heard the words of the old man in the field of rubble.

"Ultra high-grade Spirit Stones...." He once again looked at the Spirit Stone he held in his hand. He rotated his Cultivation base, and felt boundless spiritual energy surging into him. This proved his assumption; it was not an illusion.

"It must have something to do with my Cultivation base. In any case, it seems that once I form the Perfect Gold Core, I can still use ultra high-grade Spirit Stones to absorb spiritual energy. I couldn't do that during Foundation Establishment. With these Spirit Stones, I won't have to only

rely on medicinal pills and the Violet Pupil Transformation to heal myself.” He looked back down at the fifty ultra high-grade Spirit Stones in the bag of holding. As of this moment, they were even more valuable to Meng Hao than they had been before.

Chapter 323: Goddess Duo Lan [1]

[tl: [1] = Duo Lan's name in Chinese is 朵兰 duǒ lán – Duo is a surname, which also means “flower.” Lan means “orchid”]

Meng Hao took a deep breath. The glow in his hand lasted for a long time before he finally put away the ultra high-grade Spirit Stone. After that, a silver-colored magical symbol appeared above his palm. It began to emit a silver glow, as well as faint wisps of Qi that floated up into the air and transformed into more magical symbols. It gave Meng Hao a feeling very similar to that given off by the Celestial soil.

The magical symbols emanated powerful ripples which immediately caused Meng Hao to feel a sense of danger; he examined everything closely before sending the symbol away.

“Exactly as I anticipated. To kill a son of the Ji Clan, one must not get involved in a prolonged battle. Exterminate like lightning, giving him no chance to use any magical items.... If I hadn't been so decisive in my use of the blood-colored mask, then I'm afraid....” Fear filled him as he thought back to the fight; had he hesitated in the slightest, there might have been a much different outcome.

The Ji Clan was truly fearsome; Meng Hao just couldn't believe that they wouldn't have some powerful tricks up their sleeves. The main reason he had achieved victory was because he had attacked like a clap of thunder, giving his opponent little time to react.

Looking at the silver magical symbol, Meng Hao could tell that it required preparation time to use.

“At its very weakest, this thing is more powerful than my Cultivation base; I'm just not sure exactly how to use it.” After thinking for a moment, his hand flickered again; this time, a translucent pill bottle appeared.

Clearly visible inside was a medicinal pill the size of a longan fruit [2]. The pill was branded with the image of a hand. Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he opened the pill bottle; after sniffing the aroma of the pill, he was visibly moved.

[tl: Longan literally means “dragon’s eye,” and is a common fruit in China, similar to lychee.]

“This is not an ordinary medicinal pill! This is... a one hundred percent consummate pill!” He took a deep breath as he closely examined the pill. A long moment later, a look of amazement filled his eyes.

“Soul Procurement Pill! One of the three great ancient medicinal pills! A consummate Soul Procurement Pill!” Breathing deeply, he examined it once again to confirm he was correct. He was. There was no mistake. His expression filled with wonder.

Of the three great ancient medicinal pills, Meng Hao already possessed a Primordial Heavenly Replenishing Pill. Therefore, he would be able to compensate for longevity he had squandered. Also, his Master had given him three Outlander Pills, which he could use to suppress the Resurrection Lily, as well as add to his longevity.

“The Nascent Soul of a Nascent Soul Cultivator is based on the five elements, and is divided into five colors. A Four Color Nascent Soul is actually considered the ultimate. With a Flawless Foundation and a Violet Core, along with a One Color Soul Procurement Pill, then it’s possible to add one more element!

“If I had four elements, then this pill could increase it to five. But, if I already had five elements, then... would it be able to become a Six Color Nascent Soul? Too bad it doesn’t matter how many times you consume this pill, it will only be effective once.” He held the One Color Soul Procurement Pill and stared at it, his eyes glittering. Finally, he carefully put it away.

He had the strong feeling that this pill would be extremely important to him in the future!

Next, he looked down at the bag of holding as he pulled out a fishing rod.

It was long and slender, and completely emerald in color. He hefted it in his hand, not quite sure exactly what function it served. It was glittering and translucent, and also appeared to be very sharp; the hook at its end

shone with a cold light.

“This thing...” After a moment’s pause, he flicked the rod; immediately an illusory pool of water appeared in front of him. The fish hook flew down into the pool of water, and as it did, a tremor ran through Meng Hao’s body. He heard the sound of infants wailing, the gasping breath of old people just before death, the laughter of able-bodied men, the stubborn oaths uttered by teenagers. He heard the voices of all living things.

The sounds entered his mind and heart, shaking them. He felt as if he would be torn apart. He immediately loosened his hand; the fishing pole fell to the ground, and everything else vanished.

It had only taken that brief moment for Meng Hao’s entire body to be covered with sweat. His breath came in ragged gasps.

“What is this thing?” he thought, looking down at the fishing pole. It didn’t look like anything particularly extraordinary at first, but now, it seemed vastly mysterious.

This was especially so when he thought about how terrifying the Ji Clan was; clearly, this fishing pole must surely be some type of important item.

Some time passed, after which Meng Hao put the fishing pole away. He looked back at the bag of holding. Other than a collection of ordinary Spirit Stones, there seemed to be only one other noteworthy item.

It was a box.

The box was square, seemingly crafted from jade, and yet not. It was pitch black, and on the right corner was a mark, a character.

Fang (方).

The box seemed ancient, permeated with an archaic Qi. Meng Hao’s eyes glittered as he slowly opened it. Inside was a single glove. It was as soft as the wing of a cicada as he picked it up.

He used Spiritual Sense to examine it carefully for a moment before placing it on his right hand. The instant he put it on, he sensed an

incredible power exploding out from within it, flowing into his right hand.

He took a deep breath and looked at his hand. There was no glove visible; however, when he made a fist, cracking sounds could be heard, as if the air itself was being pulled toward it. Everything in the Immortal's cave trembled, then flew into the air toward Meng Hao's closing fist. Even the air seemed to be reduced, by at least half, sucked into the fist.

"What power....?" Suddenly, an image in his mind appeared of the young woman of the Fang Clan, and her terrifying fist.

"Fang.... This item must be related to the Fang Clan. If it is, though, why is it in the bag of holding of a member of the Ji Clan? Furthermore, why wouldn't he use it?" After much pondering of the matter, he remained puzzled. All of the other items, the ultra-high grade Spirit Stones, the fishing pole, even the silver-colored magical symbol, were things that required time to use. Ji Hongdong had no time to use any of them.

And yet he didn't wear the glove, which was clearly extraordinary. Had he put it on, it would not have been so easy to kill him.

"I still have his blood," thought Meng Hao. "When I'm able to create a Blood Spirit, then its consciousness will be linked to me, and I will be able to see his memories. Perhaps then I can find out the answer." He took some time to feel the power of his right hand, then slowly opened it. He looked once again at the bag of holding. Inside were some miscellaneous items. As for the ordinary Spirit Stones, there were about twenty or thirty thousand, not enough to duplicate any of the medicinal pills he needed to copy.

Eyes glittering, he put the bag of holding away.

With these objects, he now had even more ability to rise to power outside of the Southern Domain. He could truly roam free now.

"Except, I can't at the moment," he thought, shaking his head. He retrieved Ji Hongdong's bell, then spit out a mouthful of Qi from his Core and melded the two together. He then studied it for a while, trying to figure out how to use it. Like the other objects, it seemed that learning how to use it would require a bit of research.

“There’s no hurry. My wounds are healed, and the time to emerge is almost here. First, though, I need to duplicate the Primordial Heavenly Replenishing Pill!” At first he was a bit hesitant; he knew that the One Color Soul Procurement Pill could only be used once. Unfortunately, there was no way to test whether the Primordial Heavenly Replenishing Pill had a similar restriction.

If it did, then duplicating it would be a waste. However, if he didn’t duplicate it, but could use it more than once, it would be a huge loss.

He had a decisive disposition. Therefore, eyes glittering, he pulled out the copper mirror and the Primordial Heavenly Replenishing Pill. He took a deep breath, and then began to duplicate it with an ultra high-grade Spirit Stone.

The three great ancient medicinal pills were rare in the modern world, and he wasn’t sure at first if duplicating it would even work. It pained him a bit to have to spend five of the ultra high-grade Spirit Stones to duplicate one pill.

He immediately put the duplicate into his mouth.

Time passed by. Several days later, his hair slowly began to change. It was no longer white, but black; his face began to show signs of color, and soon shone with life. His entire person glowed, and in fact, his Cultivation base had even grown. It wouldn’t be long before he would be able to break into the mid Core Formation stage.

Meng Hao held back though. His primary goal was the Perfect Gold Core; he could not turn back once Core Qi appeared and he entered the mid Core Formation stage.

A few more days passed before he opened his eyes. They glowed with a bright and piercing light. His longevity was completely restored. He cast his Spiritual Sense outside, where it was currently early morning. Beneath the dawn sun, the parrot was flying in circles in the sky, continuously calling out orders to the more than one hundred people below.

“Lord Fifth is going to teach you a Celestial spell formation. This Celestial spell formation uses people as its base! I guarantee that if you

master the formation, then you will be invincible! Now, cry out the words with me!”

“Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life! When the Lord Fifth appears, who dares to cause strife!” The roaring of the more than one hundred Cultivators was like thunder....

The meat jelly sat off to the side, face filled with disdain. However, it couldn't conceal the envy and jealousy it felt inside.

Meng Hao had watched similar scenes on multiple occasions recently. He had merely smiled wryly and ignored it. He was just about to retract his Spiritual Sense, when suddenly he frowned. He pushed two fingers down against the ground and invoked the art of Righteous Bestowal. The Qi in the area poured into him, focusing in his eyes. Combining his vision with his Spiritual Sense, he swept the region with his gaze. There, several hundred kilometers away, was a procession of Cultivators, flying in this direction.

In the lead was a man and a woman. The man wore a silver mask, and Meng Hao recognized his Qi. It was Black Lands Dao Child Luo Chong! [3]

[tl: [3] = Luo Chong is the guy Meng Hao sliced with the Wooden Time Sword in Chapter 269, defeating him handily.]

The woman next to him wore a fine gauze veil; her beautiful features were just barely visible behind the hazy fabric. She seemed to embody all of the beauty in Heaven and Earth.

She had long, slender legs, and a full chest. This, coupled with the somewhat provocative gown she wore, made her emanate a fatal attractiveness.

The garment hugged her slender waist, accenting her curvaceous rear end. On her forehead was a totemic tattoo of a butterfly, which made her appearance even more arousing.

Her arms seemed as if they were carved from jade, and were also decorated with glittering totem tattoos. Behind these two people were four more. Two were masked Black Lands Cultivators of the mid Core

Formation stage.

The other two were large-framed; at a glance, it was obvious that these were powerful Western Desert experts. The four of them were obviously the followers of Luo Chong and the woman.

“This is one of the most infertile regions within the Black Lands,” said Luo Chong. “The only people who live here are lowbred Rogue Cultivators, not decent enough even for you to look at. Goddess Duo Lan, why exactly does your visit from the Western Desert bring you here?” Luo Chong’s face was hidden behind his mask, but a warm smile could be heard as he spoke. His eyes sparkled with intense adoration as he looked at the woman.

She gave him a graceful smile that looked like a blooming lily. She was without a doubt a natural born beauty. Her smile caused Luo Chong to breathe a bit more heavily. She was just about to respond to him, when suddenly, her phoenix-like eyes flickered. The butterfly totem on her forehead flickered as if it were about to fly out.

“Who are you?!”

Chapter 324: The Cutting Edge of the Black Lands

Meng Hao sat cross-legged in his Immortal's cave, the fingers of his right hand pushed against the ground, eyes closed. His Spiritual Sense was currently merged with the mountain's Demonic Qi. Not only was the range of his Spiritual Sense now greater, but the sensation that he could form an Incarnation was even stronger than ever.

Luo Chong of the Black Lands and the woman from the Western Desert were directly in front of Meng Hao's field of vision. The world in front of him was a rippling blur, both the air, the land, as if it were some other location.

Luo Chong and the four others were also rippling, blurry figures. As for the beautiful woman, however, as soon as her butterfly fluttered into action, she immediately became crystal clear.

Meng Hao looked at her, and in that same instant, she looked back at him.

To the woman, however, Meng Hao did not appear as the image of a person, but rather, a blurry mountain!

The mountain was not very high, but emanated a majestic and vigorous will; it rose up above the earth, exerting a pressure that made the woman's face flicker.

"Demon...." Her eyes flashed and her pupils constricted. "Sir, I am Duo Lan from the Western Desert. I have no intention of offending you, Demon Lord...." Her voice was soft and filled with fear.

Meng Hao didn't respond. He looked at her closely for a moment, especially the totem on her forehead.

After a moment the image of the mountain faded away from the woman's vision, disappearing without a trace.

Her entire body shook, and her eyes shined with a bright glow. She

began to breathe heavily, which made her chest rise and fall. This in turn caught the attention of Luo Chong.

“Goddess Duo Lan,” he said, sounding surprised, “what happened?” He could see that her face was somewhat pale. It wasn’t just him that noticed; the four people behind them had also seen it.

“Nothing,” she replied with a smile, quickly recovering her composure. However, a look of fear still lingered in her eyes.

At the same time, back in the Immortal’s cave in the short mountain, Meng Hao opened his eyes. They glittered brightly as he lifted up his hand to look at his two fingers.

“This is the first time I’ve entered this state and then seen... the power of totems. It seems as if they have something to do with Demons!” A thoughtful look appeared in his eyes. In the past, he had done a bit of research regarding totem variations, but had never been able to determine anything definitive. However, the woman just now had been using totemic power, and had been able to sense him. Furthermore, he sensed Demonic Qi coming from her totem tattoo.

“Interesting,” he thought, closing his eyes again.

Not much time passed before Luo Chong, Duo Lan and the four others neared Meng Hao’s group of Cultivators.

Their approach caused the Cultivators in the area to look up toward them. As soon as they saw the golden mask worn by Luo Chong, and the two green-robed Cultivators behind him, as well as the Western Desert Cultivators, their faces immediately filled with awe and veneration.

In the Black Lands there were two great powers, sort of like empires. One was the Black Lands Palace, the other was the United Nine.

The United Nine was a group of allied cities controlled by different Cultivator Clans. Of the two, however, the Black Lands Palace was the most frightening. Its Cultivators wore masks, the colors of which indicated the level of their Cultivation base.

Azure masks represented Core Formation. Silver masks represented

Nascent Soul. Gold masks represented Dao Children.

The Black Lands Palace ruled by force in the Black Lands. It was referred to as the number one power, and was known to have the support of the Western Desert. Because of that, even the Sects of the Southern Domain feared the Black Lands Palace.

A Dao Child from the Black Lands Palace was like a Chosen of the Heavens. One word from him could determine life or death for these Cultivators. He was the Heavens, they were nothing but bugs.

The parrot tilted its head up, looking with contempt at the group flying through the sky. Next to it, the meat jelly had a solemn look on its face. "These people are immoral," it muttered. "They are just too wicked...."

Up in mid-air, Luo Chong's gaze swept over the group, and he suddenly let out a cold snort.

The sound of it fell upon the group of Cultivators. It felt like the fury of an emperor, causing all of them to silently lower their heads and kowtow.

Seeing this caused a pleased expression to fill Luo Chong's eyes. He looked over at the incredibly beautiful Duo Lan.

"Goddess Duo Lan, what exactly are you looking for?" he said with a smile. "We have a bunch of backwater Cultivators here. I can make them go looking for whatever it is you need." Based on his words, he obviously really did view the Cultivators down below as nothing more than insects.

Duo Lan's pretty brow furrowed slightly, and she hesitated. She thought about the place she wished to locate, and it was true: having people familiar with the area would be of help. Just when she was about to nod in agreement, her eyes suddenly narrowed. She had just seen that in the middle of the location occupied by the Cultivators, was a small mountain.

At first glance, the mountain seemed strange to her. At second glance, she felt a peculiar sensation that made her think back to the Demon she had just seen....

Luo Chong happened to see her looking over at the mountain. He glanced at it passingly before his gaze came to fall on the medicinal

cistern. As soon as he saw it, his eyes narrowed, and he shot forward through the groups of people to land directly next to it.

He scooped up some water and sampled it, after which his eyes shined brightly.

“This is a natural medicinal elixir cistern! The quality is amazing, the highest quality!” He laughed heartily, ignoring the incensed expressions of the surrounding Cultivators. He waved his right hand, within which appeared a jade bottle that he prepared to fill with the medicinal cistern.

“If I procure some of the medicinal stones from this area,” he thought, “I can take this cistern back with me and put in the Palace!” It seemed that escorting this beautiful woman was going to pay off for him after all.

In the blink of an eye, the bottle shot out into the air. The cistern water began to gurgle, and then shoot toward the bottle. The more than one hundred Cultivators in the area were growing more and more furious. It was hard to say who was first, but they all stood up in quick succession, their eyes shining with hatred. Black Lands Cultivators are inherently a cruel and savage lot, and to see someone so brazenly steal their cultivation resources caused their veneration to turn into frenzy.

However, in the exact instant in which all of the Cultivators stood up en masse, one of the mid Core Formation Cultivators floating up in mid-air gave off a cold snort. The sound transformed into something like rolling thunder which swept across the ground, causing the faces of the other Cultivators to instantly go pale. Some of them even coughed up blood.

“You people sure are brazen!” said Luo Chong with a cold laugh. “I’m a Dao Child, and I’ve taken a liking to this medicinal cistern. That’s good luck for the cistern, as well as you. If I didn’t need you to help Goddess Duo Lan, then based on your actions just now, I would have a mind to exterminate the lot of you!”

As soon as the words left his mouth, a calm voice echoed out from within the small mountain. “They may be brazen, but your temper takes the cake.”

The suddenness of the voice caused Luo Chong to immediately turn, a

look of concentration in his eyes. The two Black Lands azure-masked Cultivators from up above shot down to appear on either side of him, their eyes flashing. They had already scanned the mountain with Spiritual Sense, but hadn't detected anyone within. This unexpected voice immediately filled them with fear.

As Meng Hao's voice echoed out, he reached down and touched the ground with one finger. The ground shook, and vast quantities of Demonic Qi tendrils rose up from the ground. They emanated out from the mountain and began to congeal at its peak.

No one could see this Qi, not even Luo Chong and his companions. The only thing they could sense was a crushing feeling of danger. The two Western Desert Cultivators, on the other hand, as well as Duo Lan, could clearly see it. Their faces flickered as the huge amount of Qi began to take the shape of a phantom figure.

The phantom figure seemed to be draped with a black robe. His features were indistinguishable, but as he stood there, he seemed to be fused with the mountain, as if he were the mountain, and the mountain was him.

Duo Lan was experiencing the exact same feeling she had from moments ago.

She looked around and realized that the more than one hundred local Cultivators all had looks of respect on their faces. They were not kowtowing to the short mountain, but, the sight in front of her reminded her of what you might see in a Tribe of the Western Desert.

Such Tribe members were constantly prostrating themselves to the most powerful totems in the tribe. That was how they acquired totemic power.... What she was seeing here was the early stages of such an arrangement.

Suddenly, the black phantom atop the short mountain flickered, gathering together the Demonic Qi in the area and shooting toward Luo Chong and the other two people with him. Though they couldn't see it, they could feel the danger, and retreated in shock.

However, the speed of their retreat could not compare to the quickness of the black phantom. Just when they were about to collide, Duo Lan's

face twisted. She could not allow the Dao Child of the Black Lands Palace to die right in front of her. That would most certainly affect her prestige. She lifted her right hand and then waved a finger; the butterfly on her forehead flew out, speeding directly toward Luo Chong and the others.

At the same time, the two Western Desert Cultivators let out gruff roars. A giant bear totem coalesced, snarling as it charged forward. After that was a giant elephant, which also barrelled ahead.

In the blink of an eye, the phantom Meng Hao had created with the art of Righteous Bestowal was now racing to attack six individuals at the same time.

An explosion rippled out; Meng Hao's Demonic Qi phantom shook and then dissolved. Blood sprayed from Luo Chong's mouth. The faces of the two azure-masked Cultivators went pale. One of them grabbed Luo Chong and shot backward. The two Western Desert Cultivators howled as they retreated backward several paces. As for Duo Lan, her face flushed red briefly before returning to normal.

"Your Excellency, Demon Lord, we're here today...." She actually felt a bit relieved, and was about offer words of mediation when suddenly a cold snort echoed out from within the short mountain.

"My Incarnation is a bit weak," said Meng Hao lightly. The black Qi around him covered his body, which suddenly flashed, speeding out of the Immortal's cave like a black smoke.

In the blink of an eye, he was in front of the bear totem Western Desert Cultivator. He raised his right hand, the one covered in the diaphanous glove, and formed a fist, which then descended down toward his opponent.

Chapter 325: Tribulation Transcending Miraculous Life Form!

Boom!

As the fist descended upon the bear totem Western Desert Cultivator, his face flickered. The first thing that happened was that the giant bear shook violently and then shattered into countless pieces. As the boom echoed out, the man's body caved in. Blood sprayed from his mouth in seven or eight spurts as he was hurled violently backward several hundred meters. Eventually he ground to a halt, coughed up another mouthful of blood, and then sagged visibly, his body covered in blood.

His complexion suddenly seemed to grow older. Before he had even stopped moving, he'd changed from being a middle-aged man, to an ancient one. His hair was gray, his skin covered with wrinkles, and his eyes listless.

Most terrifying of all, the three totem tattoos on his body faded and then disappeared.

Shockingly, a tiny, shrieking phantom version of the enormous bear from just now, floated above Meng Hao's right hand.

Meng Hao wasn't finished. In the space of a single breath, he took a step forward and lashed out with three more fist strikes.

The first fist slammed into the elephant totem Western Desert Cultivator. Blood showered from his mouth as he tumbled backward about fifty meters. He groaned, and it sounded like his body might be about to explode. He rapidly grew older; his life force dissipated, and his totems faded. Now a bear and an elephant circled around Meng Hao's hand.

His second punch slammed into the chest of one of the azure-masked Cultivators. Crunching sounds could be heard, and the man screamed. His mask shattered as blood shot from his mouth. He also was flung backward fifty meters or so; his body aged rapidly, and it seemed as if his Cultivation

base might collapse.

The third punch landed onto the other azure masked Cultivator. His Cultivation base was a bit weaker than the other; he had just stepped into the early Core Formation stage and as such, his Core was not completely stable. Meng Hao's fist strike sent him tumbling back about thirty-five meters; his scalp went numb as he felt a terrifying power surging through his body, destroying everything. His Core shattered, and then his entire body exploded into a haze of blood and gore.

All of this happened in the blink of an eye. Then, Meng Hao was in front of Luo Chong. His diaphanously gloved hand shot out, latching onto Luo Chong's neck, lifting him up into the air.

Behind his gold mask, Luo Chong's eyes shone with intense fear and astonishment. His body trembled and he panted raggedly. However, he didn't dare to struggle. He could sense the intense killing intent emanating out from his faceless attacker. The denseness of the killing intent caused his mind to reel.

Seeing Meng Hao's billowing killing intent, Duo Lan's face paled and she cried, "Great Demon Lord, please listen to me! We harbor no ill intentions. What happened just now was a misunderstanding. Great Demon Lord, I beg you to forgive our hot-headedness. We did not know this was your territory. Great Demon Lord please stay your hand.... We are willing to provide compensation for our actions just now."

"Great Demon Lord," gushed Luo Chong, "this... this is all just a misunderstanding. Really, just a misunderstanding...." He felt like he already had one foot in the grave, the same feeling he'd had when facing Fang Mu from the Southern Domain, about whom he still frequently had nightmares.

That was the first time he'd felt like this. Now was the second.

Except, the feeling this time was even more intense than the first time. All of his arrogance from moments ago had completely disintegrated.

"Misunderstanding?" said Meng Hao, his voice hoarse, like two rocks rubbing against each other. His left hand reached into his robe to pull out

a medicinal pill. He shoved it into Luo Chong's mouth, and then sent an identical pill shooting over toward Duo Lan.

"Consume that pill," he said coolly, "and then we can consider this matter a misunderstanding." Luo Chong's eyes flickered with even more intense fear. He wasn't sure what medicinal pill he had just consumed, but he could imagine what it might be. There was nothing he could do about it now; he would have to wait until he got back to the Black Lands Palace, where the effects could surely be dispelled.

Duo Lan's face flickered as she hesitated. She didn't care too much whether Luo Chong lived or died. However, if she didn't consume the pill, then the result of the offense given just now would not be good.

Gritting her beautiful teeth, Duo Lan lifted up the medicinal pill and then swallowed it down. She looked at Meng Hao.

He loosened his hand, then flicked his sleeve and turned to walk back toward the mountain. Purposely putting an imperious expression onto his face, he said, "Get the hell out of here. If you ever again enter the area five thousand kilometers in any direction, the poison will kill you! No alchemist under Heaven can neutralize my demonic pills." With that, he disappeared into the Immortal's Cave.

Luo Chong, Duo Lan and the others hesitated only for a moment before disappearing off into the distance.

When they were about a hundred kilometers away, they finally stopped and looked back in the direction of Meng Hao's Immortal's cave.

"Dammit.... Once I get back to the Black Lands Palace, I'll dispatch some people to wipe that place out!" said Luo Chong, a dangerous look on his face.

"I'll take care of it," said one of the old azure-masked Cultivators through clenched jaw. "Let's see what superhuman abilities that guy really has. I'll..." Before he could finish speaking however, a single word suddenly rang out from nowhere.

"Bestow!"

One word. The instant it echoed out, the azure-masked Cultivator began to tremble. Luo Chong and the others watched in astonishment as tendrils of black Qi emerged from his ears, eyes, nose and mouth. Soon massive amounts of black Qi were spreading out from him. As for Duo Lan, she could see that above the old man's head was a phantom figure; it was none other than Meng Hao's Righteous Bestowal Demonic Incarnation.

The blurry Demonic Incarnation burrowed into the man's body through the top of his head. The azure-masked Cultivator began to scream, and his right arm suddenly began to quiver. Luo Chong watched on in astonishment as the man's right arm suddenly struck out toward his own forehead.

A boom could be heard as the man's head exploded, killing him instantly.

"Take care of yourselves," said Meng Hao coolly before disappearing.

Everything was as silent as death.

Luo Chong's body shook uncontrollably, and he immediately abandoned any thoughts about what he had just been talking about. The only thing he could think of was that he would never come with five thousand kilometers of this place ever again.

Duo Lan was panting and her eyes were wide. She had seen some so-called Demon Lords in the Western Desert, but none of them were as bizarrely frightening as this one.

"What if it was turned into a totem...?" thought Duo Lan. Her heart beat even faster.

Maintaining their silence, the remaining four Cultivators shot off into the distance.

Outside the Immortal's cave, the retreat of Luo Chong and the others caused the eyes of the more than one hundred Cultivators to fill with fanaticism. Cultivators worshipped the powerful, and the power displayed by Meng Hao just now left their minds reeling and hearts trembling.

"Did you see that?" squawked the parrot, immediately flying up into the

air. Its eyes slowly passed over the amassed Cultivators. “That was none other than Lord Fifth’s Celestial magic! If you diligently practice your cultivation according to my methods, then it won’t be long before you are just as powerful!”

Back in the Immortal’s cave, Meng Hao’s looked down at his right hand, and his eyes filled with a mysterious glow.

“This right hand, coupled with the power of my Cultivation base and the Demonic Qi, can exterminate the mid Core Formation stage. However, when it comes to late Core Formation, my only option is to use the Blood Immortal mask.

“Either way, considering I’m at the peak of the early Core Formation stage, there aren’t many other Core Formation Cultivators who are a match for me. Once I succeed with the Perfect Gold Core and enter mid Core Formation, a Cultivator in the same stage who could deal with me would be a rarity indeed!” His eyes gleamed with self-confidence.

As far as he was concerned, the difference between the power he had wielded in Foundation Establishment, and his power now, was vast.

“Getting the last medicinal plant ingredient won’t be hard. But the Heavenly Tribulation which will come after I form the Perfect Gold Core... that will be a problem.” Meng Hao frowned. That was what he had the most misgivings about. The Heavenly Tribulation from back in Foundation Establishment had been terrifying. If the Blood Immortal Legacy hadn’t fought against it for him, Meng Hao would never have been able to form the Perfect Foundation.

Muttering to himself, his eyes glittered as he sent his Spiritual Sense out with a message. A few moments later, flapping sounds could be heard as the colorful parrot flew in from outside, looking a bit impatient.

“What’s going on?!” it said, eyeing Meng Hao. “Don’t you know that Lord Fifth is in the middle of training those Cultivators out there? Don’t you know how precious Lord Fifth’s time is?”

“How do I transcend Heavenly Tribulation?” asked Meng Hao, not beating around the bush.

“Heavenly Tribulation?” The Parrot stared in shock, and then flew a few circles around Meng Hao, seemingly sizing him up from various angles. Finally, it made a clucking noise and shook its head. It sighed. “Nobody can transcend it. You’re dead. It seems that I, Lord Fifth, ancient Celestial bird, should consider getting a new master.”

It was about to leave, when Meng Hao, his expression the same as ever, calmly said, “So, you don’t even know how to transcend tribulation. And you still call yourself an ancient Celestial Bird.” His face was clearly filled with a sneer.

When the parrot saw the sneer, its feathers immediately stood on end, and it glared at Meng Hao.

“I don’t know?” it said, panting. “You dare to tell me I don’t know? I... I can’t be fooled so easily!” Instead of continuing any further, it put on a supercilious expression and began to preen its feathers.

“So, you really are just a flashy old bird!” said Meng Hao casually, his sneer growing even more obvious. He even went so far as to close his eyes, as if he didn’t deign to continue the conversation.

The parrot was instantly furious. Pecking furiously at its feathers as it preened, it roared, “Who said I don’t know?! I know a method that can suppress and delay Heavenly Tribulation. There’s no Celestial magic like that which I don’t know!”

“So, you really don’t know,” replied Meng Hao lightly.

“Heavenly Tribulation is nothing but farts!” roared the parrot. “Back in the day, I could transcend tribulation with a single breath! Even now, I know at least ten thousand ways... no, I mean, a million different ways to do it! I’ll tell you one of them. All you have to do is find a miraculous life form, the type whose roots and leaves are connected the same way a mother and a son are connected. The roots cannot be destroyed, and the leaves never die. The leaves never die, and the roots cannot be destroyed! You hold onto the roots, and use the leaves to defend against the Heavenly Tribulation. That is how you can transcend tribulation!

“Too bad for you miraculous life forms like that aren’t common. Even

things similar to it aren't common. They're all extinct. You would have to have an incredible amount of luck and fortune to happen across one. Just from looking at you, I'd say it's not gonna happen. You're not that kind of person. Most likely, you're dead."

Hearing the parrot's words actually caused Meng Hao's eyes to flicker. After analyzing the parrot's words, they seemed to make quite a bit of sense. Furthermore, his mind was currently reeling. This was because he had thought of a miraculous life form from the Black Lands that was very similar to what the parrot had described!

Chapter 326: I Haven't Tried That Out Before!

“The roots cannot be destroyed, the leaves never die. The leaves never die, the roots cannot be destroyed....” Meng Hao’s eyes filled with thought as he put the pieces together. A miraculous life form that inherently displayed the type of relationship between a mother and a son. Rare in the world, almost never seen.

What appeared in Meng Hao’s mind now were words he had heard years ago.

“The larva cannot be destroyed, and the thread cannot be broken. The thread cannot be broken, nor can the larva be destroyed!” These words were describing a creature that, when fed Sieve Net Thunder Mulberry Leaves, would transform from Frigid Snow into the miraculous bug called the Eyeless Larva. [1]

[tl: [1] = The Eyeless Larva and related information were discussed mostly in chapter 165]

“Besides that larva, there’s another way, but their growth isn’t complete....” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered as he thought of his Blood Clones.

Because the nucleus of each Blood Clone was the skin of the meat jelly, as long as he himself didn’t die, they couldn’t be destroyed. Even if they were, they could easily be recreated. It might be a bit of an exaggeration to say that they were eternally indestructible, but the fact remained that it would be very difficult to truly kill them.

However, the Cultivation bases of the Blood Clones were too far removed from his own. They might be difficult to destroy, but when it came time to face the Heavenly Tribulation, Meng Hao knew that the Blood Clones would be defeated.

“Unless I refined nine generations of blood, then added myself in, thus forcing another generation on top of the nine. Then it would be a Blood Spirit. I could not be destroyed, and the spirit would never disperse!”

As Meng Hao sat lost in thought, the haughty parrot once again looked at Meng Hao with disdain. “Don’t even think about it,” it said suddenly. “Only people with incredible luck and amazing fortune can ever have a chance to get a miraculous life form like that. As an example, I, Lord Fifth, once had a miraculous lotus root. Only someone like me could ever get something of the sort.”

Meng Hao ignored the parrot and continued to think. A new thought suddenly flickered in his mind. The parrot’s words had opened up the floodgates of his mind regarding transcending tribulation. After all, he was not in the Blood Immortal Legacy zone; this time, he would be facing the test alone.

He had been thinking about the matter for a very, very long time. The parrot’s words just now had lit a virtual fire in his mind; all kinds of thoughts and questions exploded inside of him.

“Regarding miraculous life forms,” he thought, “there’s something else I could do. I could borrow Demonic Qi from Heaven and Earth to create an illusory Incarnation. After all, the Incarnation can carry my will with it to kill people. I wonder if I could use it to defend against Heavenly Tribulation.... It’s too bad the Incarnation is so weak. However, it’s an area that could be explored.” His eyes lit up as he realized that he actually already had three types of miraculous life forms.

“Plus, I have the meat jelly!” he thought. His eyes contained an imperceptible glitter. Using the meat jelly when transcending tribulation would be his last resort. He had long since taken note of its ability to consume lightning.

“Forget it. Just forget it,” said the parrot, looking askance at Meng Hao. It sighed, its face filled with an expression that exuded omniscience. “That method just now was definitely too difficult. In all the Heavens, I think only Lord Fifth could pull off something like that. For other people, well, it could only happen in their dreams.

“Lord Fifth is an erudite, ancient Celestial Bird. Omniscient. Okay, I’ll tell you of another method. This one isn’t very hard. Actually, it’s pretty

simple. However, such a method is also only available to people with extraordinary luck and fortune.

“It’s not very complicated. You just need to have a Soul of Lightning next to you. If you do, it will be much easier to transcend the tribulation. However, you’ll have to train the Soul of Lightning yourself. Basically, you start out with the soul of a Cultivator with a very profound Cultivation base. Then, you slowly use lightning to transform its soul embodiment. Over time, you gradually increase the amount of lightning. Assuming the soul isn’t destroyed, then you eventually force it to transform into a Soul of Lightning that you can use.” The parrot yawned and then flew out of the Immortal’s cave in a flash of light. Outside, it once again began to instruct the Cultivators about its self-proclaimed Celestial magic.

Meng Hao sat cross-legged in the Immortal’s cave, thinking about what the parrot had said about the Soul of Lightning. A strange expression appeared on his face, and after a while, he slapped his bag of holding. The blood-colored mask appeared in his hand. He sent his Spiritual Sense inside to find the Li Clan Patriarch, who had been forgotten by the meat jelly after the appearance of the parrot.

The Li Clan Patriarch was no longer listless like before. However, as soon as he caught sight of Meng Hao, his entire body began to tremble. Clearly, his fear of the meat jelly had reached the ultimate level.

Meng Hao circled around the Li Clan Patriarch, examining his soul embodiment. After a while, his eyes began to shine.

The glow in his eyes struck terror into the heart of the Li Clan Patriarch.

“What... what are you planning?!” he asked cautiously. He had a bad feeling, as if something miserable were about to happen to his soul embodiment. After his time spent being tormented by the meat jelly, without even the option of seeking death, he was no longer as proud and haughty as he used to be.

Meng Hao didn’t say anything. After examining the Li Clan Patriarch for a moment, he did something with his Spiritual Sense, and a lightning bolt appeared within the blood-colored mask. It crackled down toward the Li

Clan Patriarch, slamming directly onto his soul embodiment.

“Dammit! What the hell are you doing?!?” He trembled, and his soul embodiment flickered as if it were about to dissipate.

Meng Hao nodded, then used his Spiritual Sense again to summon another lightning bolt, and then another. Rumbling booms sounded out as they fell down onto the Li Clan Patriarch, who emitted constant miserable shrieks.

This process went on for about two hours, until the Li Clan Patriarch’s soul embodiment was growing dim.

“You psycho!” cried the Li Clan Patriarch, gnashing his teeth. “You’re a damned lunatic! And that meat jelly is nothing but a nightmare! One of these days I’ll get my revenge!” He continued to curse, but inside actually felt quite pathetic, and was heaving constant sighs.

In the Immortal’s cave, Meng Hao opened his eyes.

“The Li Clan Patriarch has an extraordinary Cultivation base. He meets all the requirements to become a Soul of Lightning. From now on, I’ll need to use all methods at my disposal to get him accustomed to lightning. I also need an Eyeless Larva. Before that, though, I should head out and collect the last medicinal plant ingredient I need for the Perfect Gold Core.” Having made up his mind, Meng Hao sent his Spiritual Sense out to find Huang Daxian.

He was currently looking on complacently as the parrot flew around above a group of people who were all running around in various patterns. Huang Daxian’s body trembled as Meng Hao’s voice suddenly echoed out in his head. Then, his mind was branded with an image of the plant Meng Hao needed.

Half a month later, Meng Hao was looking down at a jade slip, inside of which was information regarding the medicinal plant he needed, a clue uncovered during the investigation carried out by his group of over a hundred Cultivators. Meng Hao stood and left the Immortal’s cave.

“Dongluo City, member of the United Nine Cities.” Inside the jade slip

was also a map of the Black Lands, marked with the location of Dongluo City, which wasn't very far away. [2]

[tl: [2] = Dongluo in Chinese is 东洛 dōng luò – Dong means east. Luo is a sound word with no meaning. Dongluo is also the name of a real location in China.]

By now, Meng Hao was familiar with the power structure of the Black Lands, thanks to his more than one hundred followers. Other than the Black Lands Palace and the United Nine, the Black Lands were inhabited completely by Rogue Cultivators. In some cases, groups banded together to form small-scale powers. Some were strong, some were weak, but regardless, they existed in a state of disunity.

As far as the United Nine, it was made up of nine of the Black Lands' most powerful Cultivator Clans, and the cities that had grown up around them. They had banded together and formed an alliance to stand up against the power of the Black Lands Palace.

The ingredient Meng Hao needed was a Spirit Orchid Leaf, a medicinal plant that wasn't particularly rare. That having been said, it wasn't something that the small-scale powers would have. It would only be available in one of the nine major cities.

According to the information he'd received, Dongluo City would be holding an auction soon. Medicinal pills would be up for sale, as well as medicinal plants. As for the Spirit Orchid Leaf, it could actually be consumed directly to treat injuries, so of course people would be willing to purchase it.

Meng Hao flicked his sleeve as he left the region of his Immortal's cave for the first time in more than a year. Transforming into a beam of prismatic light, he shot like lightning off into the distance.

Thanks to the Primordial Heavenly Replenishing Pill, his hair was now black once again and his eyes were filled with abstruseness. He wore a green gown, and his features were handsome and refined. On his forehead was mark that looked both like a scale and a feather, and yet was neither. Overall, he appeared completely extraordinary.

As he flew away from the Immortal's cave, the meat jelly and the parrot followed him.

As they flew along, the parrot continuously chided the meat jelly, who squabbled back endlessly. It went on for a few days, with the two of them occasionally getting into blows. Finally, the parrot used its trump card. It went on with a series of "Do you want to know?" questions, which resulted in the meat jelly transforming into a small bell which the parrot fastened around its leg.

The parrot finally came to rest on Meng Hao's shoulder, perched there with an arrogant look on its face that said that it was a one-of-a-kind ancient Celestial bird, esteemed in Heaven and Earth, unique in all creation.

The ground beneath them was pitch black, with occasional black-colored plants growing up from the soil. It all looked very sinister. The entire time, Meng Hao didn't stop once; following the information on the map, he flew straight toward Dongluo City.

On one particular evening several days later, a green city appeared up ahead. It wasn't grand and majestic, but rather, square in shape, and apparently constructed from vegetation.

The city walls were created from interwoven plants. The greenness created by the plants made the city stick out conspicuously from the black soil.

In the middle of the city, trees grew up. All of the trees had massive amounts of branches growing out from them, which were also interwoven to form layers. The city as a whole seemed to be formed of two levels, one on the ground, the other in the sky.

There was a third level, which was formed by a single, enormous tree, the interior of the city. From a distance, the city looked very bizarre. Meng Hao's eyes began to shine.

As they approached, they saw the city gate, which was formed by eight giant interlocking trees. Cultivators walked in and out of the gate, and inside the city itself were quite a few Cultivators.

Perched atop the massive tree in the center of the city was what appeared to be an enormous phoenix, several dozens of meters in length. It had bright, scarlet feathers, and was incredibly beautiful.

A closer look revealed that it wasn't actually a phoenix, but a peacock.

It would occasionally look around at the city with an arrogant expression. It didn't emit the power of a Cultivation base, but from a distance it still emanated a powerful, threatening Qi that Meng Hao could sense. It caused his pupils to constrict.

The look in the peacock's eyes seemed to say that no one was worthy of its gaze. It looked around arrogantly, seemingly despising all that it saw.

Suddenly, Meng Hao heard the parrot whisper: "You dare to act like that in front of Lord Fifth, bitch!?"

Meng Hao had read some information about this scarlet peacock in the jade slip. It was a holy animal of the Dongluo Clan. For some reason unknown to outsiders, it would occasionally take to flight and circle around the city; everyone who saw the spectacle would praise its beauty.

Just as they were about to enter the city, Meng Hao heard the parrot next to him, panting heavily.

"Eee? Now that I'm closer I can see that flirty look in its eyes... Hm, a red bird, I've never tried that out before...." Before Meng Hao could react or even think about what it meant, the parrot was gone. Meng Hao watched as ripples spread out in the air, and a multicolored streak shot up through the air toward the peacock.

Chapter 327: Angry Dongluo Ling! [1]

[tl: [1] = I'm pretty sure this is a reference to Angry Birds.]

Everything was happening too quickly. Meng Hao gaped in astonishment. Before he could react, he saw the multicolored streak flying through the air at high speed. It looked like a shooting star as it headed toward the beautiful, proud Scarlet Peacock.

Within the colorful light was none other than the parrot, shooting forward like a spear, head upraised. Its sharp, curved beak emitted a cold glow, as it clenched its body tight into something that looked like a spearhead.

Meng Hao wasn't sure if he was mistaken or not, but it very much seemed like its eyes were shining with excitement, as well as determination and lasciviousness....

It moved with incredible speed. In one breath it was quite a distance from the peacock. In the next breath, it was upon it.

All of the feathers on the body of the Scarlet Peacock stood on end as it turned its beautiful head, emanating the powerful might of a phoenix, seeming to warn everyone from encroaching upon its space. Meng Hao's eyes went wide, and his mind began to spin. He suddenly had a very bad feeling about what was happening. He watched the multicolored streak of light that was the parrot as it charged directly toward the peacocks rear end....

Aaiiieee!

An intense, miserable screech echoed out from the once graceful and beautiful peacock. The sound was wretched, as an indescribable pain washed over it.

All its feathers stood on end, and its expression was twisted and distorted. It was no longer elegant, and its beauty had now been transformed into suffering. It trembled violently as its scream filled Dongluo City, which of course attracted the attention of large numbers of

Cultivators. All of them lifted their heads up in astonishment.

What they saw was the peacock, always so graceful and haughty, now trembling violently and screaming miserably. It was flying haphazardly through the air, beating its wings, as if it was trying to shake something off of its body.

Its efforts were of no avail. As it screamed, its eyes turned red, and a billowing Flame Sea appeared around it. Within the fire, the peacock continued to scream intensely. Its feathers bristled to the point where it looked like it might explode from insanity.

All of the Cultivators in the city were staring with gaping mouths, unsure of what exactly was happening to it. However, they could all sense that the peacock was currently experiencing indescribable pain.

It was at this time that members of Dongluo City's Cultivator Clan emerged, looking worried as they flew up toward the peacock. One among their number was a young woman wearing a long, emerald green garment. Her features were beautiful and enchanting, but her phoenix-like eyes were filled with worry and confusion as she approached the peacock.

"Scarlet Peacock, what's wrong...?" she said. Her voice was pleasant, like the song of a lark.

As soon as the Cultivators down in the city saw her, they began to discuss the matter in hushed tones.

"That's Goddess Dongluo Ling of the Dongluo Clan...." [2]

[tl: [2] = Dongluo Ling's name is 东洛灵 dōng luò líng – Dongluo is the name of their clan, kind of a made up a name. Ling means spirit.]

"That's none other than one of the three most beautiful female Cultivators in the Black Lands, Dongluo Ling!"

By this time, Meng Hao had ducked his head down and hurried into the city, his scalp slowly growing numb. He blended into the crowd, his face ashen, looking up at the flames in the sky. The miserable shrieks of the peacock continued to ring out.

“Damned parrot!” thought Meng Hao, grinding his teeth. There was nothing he could do about it, though. He should have considered the parrot’s indulgences. Back when it was stuck in the copper mirror, Meng Hao had to take the initiative to provoke something like this. But now that it was free, it couldn’t hold itself back after seeing a pretty, feathered peacock.

“I can’t let people find out that I brought it here....” he thought with a frown. Up above, the peacock let out another shriek. Now, everyone could see a multicolored beam of light whizzing through the air near the peacock’s rear end. Before anyone could see clearly what was inside of it, it built up some momentum and then shot back toward the peacock.

The peacock tried to dodge out of the way, but was unable to. When people saw this, they could only watch on in dumbstruck silence.

Based on what they had just seen, they now understood why the elegant Scarlet Peacock was emitting such blood-curdling screams.

A buzz of conversation immediately rose up as everyone expressed their disbelief and astonishment.

“This is....”

“What is that thing? What it’s doing is... indescribable....”

“That multicolored light is entering.... My god! Is there really a magical item that does something like this? What is it? It’s simply too vicious, too malicious, too penetrating....”

Meng Hao stood in the crowd, his jaw clenched. He felt as if his face were burning, and he was very worried about everyone finding out that the multicolored light had been brought into the city by him.

The Dongluo Clan Cultivators floated in mid-air, trying to figure out how to help the peacock. Dongluo Ling’s face was filled with anxiety. However, the sight of the multicolored light caused them to stare in shock.

The Scarlet Peacock’s wails were pitiful, its eyes filled with humiliation and pain. Suddenly, it began to fall to the ground, body trembling. The Dongluo Clan Cultivators rushed forward in a frenzy. As they neared, the

multicolored light disappeared, leaving behind only an exhausted panting sound.

The Dongluo Clan Cultivators' faces were extremely unsightly. Dongluo Ling's was virtually bursting with flames. Moments later, the entire city was sealed down tightly. More Dongluo Clan Cultivators appeared, bursting with bestial killing intent and rage as they began to search for the multicolored light.

One could imagine what savage methods they would employ to punish the mysterious multicolored light if they ever found it....

As for the Scarlet Peacock, it was currently being given emergency treatment....

Meng Hao's face was just as unsightly as he dispersed along with the crowd. He wasn't sure where the parrot had gone to. If it suddenly appeared on his shoulder, then he would have to leave the city immediately.

He suddenly realized that the meat jelly was actually very well behaved....

As night fell upon Dongluo City, word of what had just happened spread through the various Cultivators. Late that night, the wrath of the entire Dongluo Clan was burning.

In the Dongluo Clan's manor house, Dongluo Ling stood there with tears in her eyes as she comforted the trembling, sleeping Scarlet Peacock. Every time it trembled, her eyes would flash with killing intent.

"I'm going to find that multicolored light," she said, gnashing her teeth, "and when I do, I'll hack it into pieces!"

Meanwhile, Meng Hao sat cross-legged in his room in a local inn, his face dark. Finally, he opened his eyes from meditation and let out a soft sigh as the parrot appeared.

It looked the same as ever, multicolored, with the meat jelly bell still attached to its foot. Its expression was one of arrogance, and its eyes flickered with contentment and complacency.

“Heyyy, Lord Fifth is back,” it said, strutting back and forth on the table, lifting its head up to stare at Meng Hao.

“Did you have fun?” asked Meng Hao coolly, his facing expressionless.

“Lots of fun!!” replied the parrot. It took a deep breath, and the haughtiness in its face disappeared, to be replaced by a look of reminiscence.

“I’ve tried out many different purely colored bird such as that,” it said with a sigh. “One year I even tried out their ancestor, the phoenix. However, scarlet is the only color I haven’t tried. Not bad. Really not bad.”

“Do you know how much difficulty it’s going to cause if they found out it was you?” said Meng Hao.

“What are you scared of?” it said, its face filled with conceited grandeur. “Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life. When Lord Fifth appears, who dares to cause strife? If they dare to mess with me, I’ll screw ‘em to death! I’ll deal with them like I dealt with that bird. I’m not talking about you, of course. Birds have their tenacity, and so do people. Tenacity, that’s the key. Look, I have a duty to help you out. Join me in your loudest voice....”

A solemn-looking face suddenly appeared on the bell on the parrot’s foot. “You’re immoral! Simply too wicked! My life’s mission is definitely to convert you, you sinister bird!”

The parrot looked down at the meat jelly with a look of disdain. “Shut up, bitch! Did I ever not take you with me to do these kinds of things? Do you remember the Space Ape from that year? Did I take you with me, or not? How about the Flame Phoenix? Did I take you with me, or not? What about that big hairy fish in the Star Sea, or that tiger in the Eighth Mountain? What about the great Golden Dragon? Did you forget about that?”

The meat jelly hesitated for a moment, then gritted its teeth and said, “Uhh... You forced me!”

Meng Hao sat off to the side, watching on silently. Originally he had

planned to say a few things about what had happened today, but hearing the parrot list off its “achievements,” he suddenly realized he didn’t have anything to say. He sighed, shaking his head and ignoring the two, instead closing his eyes and continuing to meditate.

As the night went on, the Dongluo Clan used all its power, all their precious treasures, all their Divine Sense, to search every corner of the city. It was all to no avail. As the search continued, three days slowly passed.

During the three days, Meng Hao went out twice. Each time, the parrot would perch pompously on his shoulder to accompany him. On a few occasions, they encountered members of the Dongluo Clan. However, the uncomely parrot didn’t seem to attract any suspicions.

“Don’t worry,” said the parrot. “I’ve done things like this before on many occasions, and I’ve never gotten caught. The only things left behind are legends of Lord Fifth. However, no one ever knows my true appearance.”

Meng Hao didn’t respond.

On the two occasions he went out, Meng Hao made inquiries about the auction which was to take place in ten days, and was able to confirm that ten Spirit Orchid Leaves would be up for sale.

He also made some inquiries about the price. This particular plant would appear in the auction every few years, and the price was always a bit over ten thousand spirit stones.

Meng Hao personally didn’t have many Spirit Stones, but Ji Hongdong’s bag of holding had ultra high-grade Spirit Stones, as well as a collection of regular Spirit Stones to the number of about twenty thousand. It wasn’t much when it came to duplicating medicinal pills, but it should be enough to purchase the Spirit Orchid Leaf and still have some left over.

On evening of the fourth day, Meng Hao sat cross-legged in his room. Suddenly, his eyes opened, and he let out a sigh. As he had anticipated, trouble had come looking for him. He looked up at the door.

It didn’t take long before it exploded, shattered to pieces that showered

into the room.

Chapter 328: Establishing Strength!

The instant the door shattered into pieces, a whooshing sound could be heard, and the parrot disappeared without a trace. Meng Hao wasn't sure where it had gone to hide, but obviously it had seen the look on his face and knew the trouble it had stirred up. However, instead of cleaning up its own mess, it left it to Meng Hao. Meng Hao's mood sank even deeper.

His eyes flickered with coldness. He knew that the law of the jungle was a strict one and was revered as a way of life in the Black Lands. Weakness and retreat gave an opponent even more power and reason to crush you.

In the Black Lands, there was no reasoning, there was only strength.

The strong could plunder cities and enslave Clans. In the Black Lands, you could do anything you wanted and no one would do anything against you unless it was to their benefit. If you didn't encroach on someone's territory, they wouldn't pay attention to you at all even if you slaughtered countless other Cultivators.

For example, the nine Clans that made up the United Nine had changed countless times throughout the years. One would rise, another would fall, down to this very day.

After the door was destroyed, two people charged into the room, accompanied by a cold, glittering light. As they descended upon him, Meng Hao let out a cold snort. It didn't matter that he was actually in the wrong. He sat there cross-legged, his killing intent flashing. He lifted his right hand up as fast as lightning, and a single finger attack shot out.

A miserable scream immediately filled the air, and a corpse toppled backward out the door. At the same time, his four remaining fingers curled into a claw which latched onto the neck of a black-robed Cultivator.

No matter how he struggled, the man couldn't move an inch. Meng Hao immediately sent spiritual power into the man's Cultivation base, sealing it down tightly.

When attacking, one cannot hesitate, nor show weakness. That is a fundamental rule in the Black Lands.

Meng Hao's expression was calm as he looked over at the door. Standing outside were eight Cultivators wearing black robes. Their expressions were serious, but they didn't dare to enter the room. Instead, they stood there looking vigilantly at Meng Hao.

"Dongluo Ling," said Meng Hao coolly, "is this the way the Dongluo Clan receives its guests? You'd better provide an explanation, or I'll turn your skull into a cooking pot."

The people outside remained silent as a woman stepped out from behind them. She wore a long, emerald green robe, and was quite beautiful. Her skin was so delicate it seemed a breeze could break it. This was none other than Dongluo Ling. Her brow was furrowed as she glared into Meng Hao's room.

"Since you know who I am, then you'd better let my man go immediately. Then we can discuss some matters." Her voice was pleasant, but filled with iciness. Her Cultivation base was beyond ordinary; it appeared to be at the early Core Formation stage.

Meng Hao grinned. He might have the appearance of a scholar, but looking at him now, he possessed a certain fierceness. He suddenly clenched his right hand. Loud cracking sounds could be heard; the man's body twitched as his neck was crushed into pieces. After he was thoroughly dead, Meng Hao stood up and turned into a blur as he rushed toward the door.

Dongluo Ling laughed mockingly. She stood her ground, not moving at all. As she glanced down at the body of the dead man, the eight men around her suddenly moved forward to obstruct Meng Hao's way. Two of them were white-haired old men. Their gazes were like lightning, their stature tall; shockingly, they even had totem tattoos on their arms. However, they didn't look like Western Desert Cultivators. They had extraordinary Cultivation bases at the mid Core Formation stage. Their bodies flashed as they moved forward to defend Dongluo Ling.

They were fast, but Meng Hao was even faster. In the blink of an eye, he was out the door. He flicked his sleeve, and a gale force wind suddenly exploded out. It screamed out in all directions, causing the bodies of the eight Cultivators to shake as they spit up blood. They all retreated, looks of astonishment on their faces.

This caused Dongluo Ling's face to change and her pupils to constrict before she could even think about it. The faces of two old men in front of her fell.

Meng Hao was as calm as ever as he neared Dongluo Ling. The eyes of the two old men flickered as they also advanced, hands flickering in incantation gestures. Their Cultivation bases roared with power as their magical techniques appeared.

"No Core Qi," said Meng Hao, his expression intentionally lofty. "Insects." Even as he spoke, his right hand lifted up and then descended downward in a fist.

Boom.

An expression of shock filled the face of one of the men. The magical technique he had been incanting immediately collapsed to pieces. He felt an incredible power slam into him, and blood sprayed from his mouth as he staggered backward several paces.

As for the other old man, his eyes narrowed and he let out a howl as he attacked. Meng Hao's left hand snaked out, and he tapped the man's forehead lightly. Suddenly, Demonic Qi rose up, visible only to Meng Hao. It poured into the man, causing his veins to bulge and his eyes to fill with confusion.

All of this happened in a single instant, and then, Meng Hao was standing directly in front of the shocked Dongluo Ling.

Dongluo Ling knew that she had acted rashly, and that her opponent was far more powerful than her. The only thing she could do now was angrily say, "Do you really dare to offend me in my own Clan's city? You're dead for sure!"

Meng Hao looked her over coldly. Then he lifted up his right hand and was about to grab her, when suddenly he frowned and paused in mid-motion. Then, he pointed his hand down toward the ground. The entire inn began to shake as invisible Qi rushed up from all directions to circle around Meng Hao. It formed into a barrier to protect against a black spear which was currently shooting toward him from off in the distance.

The spear was as thick as the hand of a child, and was covered with complex, swirling patterns. It whistled through the air, slamming into the Demonic Qi vortex surrounding Meng Hao. A boom echoed out, and the spear shook, then collapsed into pieces. The pieces transformed into green-colored Core Qi, which then dissipated in all directions. The spearhead, however, did not disappear; it was still stabbing through the vortex. Just as it seemed it would pierce all the way through, Meng Hao reached up and tapped the top of the spearhead.

As soon as he touched it, the spearhead trembled and then exploded into fragments of Core Qi.

Dongluo Ling took advantage of this opportunity to back up about twenty meters. It seemed she was about to flee. Meng Hao coolly said, "Get back here."

The words were simple, but the instant she heard them, Dongluo Ling's face went pale white. She had suddenly discovered that her entire body was incapable of moving.

The old man who Meng Hao had just tapped on the forehead looked confused, as if his spirit had fled. Seemingly not even under his own control, he bound Dongluo Ling, grabbed her, and then flew back toward Meng Hao.

It was at this moment that Meng Hao lifted his head and looked off into the distance. It was currently dusk, and there were no Cultivators visible anywhere. Even the inn seemed to be empty. However, far off in the distance, a middle-aged man stood on a rooftop. His body was skinny and withered, almost like a skeleton. However, he emitted a dignified aura as he looked toward Meng Hao.

Their gazes met, and their Spiritual Sense shot out, emanating with massive pressure. Invisible ripples exploded out. Meng Hao didn't move, but the face of the middle-aged man flickered, and he retreated several paces, coughing up blood.

"So," said Meng Hao, his voice cool, "mid Core Formation Core Qi turns out to be slightly more powerful than insects."

"Your excellency, who are you?" asked the stooped, middle-aged man. "Why do you wish to make the Dongluo Clan your enemy?" His expression was serious, and it seemed he couldn't see Meng Hao's Cultivation base.

"Sir, that is exactly the same question I wanted to ask you," said Meng Hao calmly. "I have no grievance with the Dongluo Clan. So why did you send everyone in the area away, and then surround me and try to kill me!?"

Dongluo Ling ground her teeth and glared at Meng Hao, her eyes radiating hatred. "From the day the Scarlet Peacock was injured until today, thirteen people have entered the city. I've personally looked into the other twelve. You are the last one, and also the most suspicious!" When she thought about how the Scarlet Peacock couldn't even fly now, and would always tremble and shake as it slept, her hatred toward Meng Hao seeped into her bones.

Meng Hao's face sank. His voice cold, he said, "What ultimate absurdity! You're just trying to stir up trouble!" He didn't even make an attempt to explain anything; his simple response made him seem even more awe-inspiring.

The middle-aged man hesitated for a moment. Finally, he clasped hands and bowed toward Meng Hao, a bitter smile on his face. "This is all just a misunderstanding," he said with a sigh. "My little sister went off on her own to investigate things. Fellow Daoist, I truly hope you can forgive us. That Scarlet Peacock is my little sister's most beloved pet, and what happened has really aroused our ire. Therefore, we accidentally offended you. Sir, I am Dongluo Han. I implore you to give me a bit of face. What do

you say?” [1]

[tl: [1] = Dongluo Han's name in Chinese is 东洛韩 dōng luò hán – Dongluo is their Clan name. Han is a sound word.]

Meng Hao looked hesitant. He waved his right hand, and the old man who had bound up Dongluo Ling no longer looked confused; he regained his senses, then immediately began to tremble. He looked at Meng Hao as if he were a ghost.

Dongluo Ling's body flashed, transforming into a beam of light as she flew over to stand next to the middle-aged man. She glared viciously at Meng Hao.

“Many thanks, Fellow Daoist,” said the man. “Allow me to give you a Dongluo City command medallion. With this medallion, your time in the city will be much more convenient.” Dongluo Han pulled out a black command medallion which he tossed toward Meng Hao. Meng Hao grabbed it and looked it over. In his time spent in the city recently, he'd learned that in Dongluo City there were five different types of command medallions. Scarlet was the highest, black was secondary, then yellow, blue and white. Each medallion came with various privileges within the city.

For example, in order to participate in the upcoming auction, one needed, at the least, a yellow command medallion.

After Meng Hao took the command medallion, Dongluo Han once again clasped hands and bowed, then grabbed the obstinate Dongluo Ling and left, along with the other Cultivators. As she left, Dongluo Ling's features were filled with fury.

“Third Bro, why did you compromise with that guy?” she asked. “We surveilled him for several days. Of the thirteen suspects, he was definitely the most suspicious. Some people even saw him with a multicolored parrot.”

Before Dongluo Han could respond, a dignified voice suddenly could be heard from off to the side.

“I told him to.” Along with the voice, a man appeared. He looked to be

middle-aged, but there was also some sort of ancientness to him. As soon as he appeared, Dongluo Han and Dongluo Ling lowered their heads and saluted.

“Greetings Clan Chief.”

“The Black Lands are falling into great chaos. The United Nine face imminent danger. At the moment, the last thing we need is to provoke powerful enemies. That guy appears to be in the mid Core Formation stage, but his attack just now was matchlessly ruthless. He dispatched another mid Core Formation Cultivator with no difficulty. He seems like a Rogue Cultivator, but at the same time, not. Under normal circumstances, it wouldn’t matter, but for now, we need to exercise caution.”

Chapter 329: Lord Fifth Flies Into a Rage

“The Black Lands in great chaos?” said Dongluo Han, gaping at the Clan Chief.

Dongluo Ling also gaped for a moment. For as long as she could remember, the law of the jungle in the Black Lands made it appear on the surface as if there were no rules. However, because of the Black Lands Palace and the United Nine, there was a bit of stability. Superficially, the Black Lands seemed chaotic, but the powers beneath the surface made things much less chaotic than they seemed.

The Dongluo Clan Chief was quiet for a moment before looking up at the stars in the sky and saying, “Four days ago in Saturn City, Elder Tumou was killed by Patriarch Death Spirit from the Western Lands....”

His words caused Dongluo Han’s face to flicker. The surrounding Cultivators all looked shocked and doubtful.

Breathing heavily, Dongluo Han said, “Elder Tumou was an almighty Spirit Severing Cultivator.... He....” The nine Clans that made up the United Nine were all very different. Furthermore, various Clans had come and gone throughout the years. However, the main reason the United Nine was able to stand up to the Black Lands Palace was because of their four great mountains.

These four mountains housed four Spirit Severing Patriarchs. The Clans of these four were naturally the leaders in the alliance. With the presence of the four Patriarchs, they had been able to oppose the Black Lands Palace down to this day.

The Dongluo Clan Chief slowly continued, “After Elder Tumou perished, the Black Lands Palace immediately invaded his Saturn Clan. In a single day, all the Clan members were slaughtered, and their city was taken over by the Black Lands Palace.”

Dongluo Han gasped. “The Black Lands Palace.... The Western Desert....” After a moment’s thought, his heart and mind trembled. This news caused him to completely forget about the matter of the Scarlet Peacock.

“This matter must be kept a secret....” said Dongluo Ling, looking at the other surrounding Cultivators.

The Clan Chief shook his head. “It won’t take long before news of the incident spreads throughout all the Black Lands, even if the United Nine tries to cover it up, the news will spread.” He looked tired and very anxious.

Dongluo Ling was about to say something else, when suddenly, a miserable shriek could be heard coming from the top level of the city, where the Scarlet Peacock was. The cry was one of ultimate misery, as if it were experiencing indescribable pain.

Dongluo Ling’s face immediately flashed. Next to her, Dongluo Han gaped in shock. All of the Cultivators immediately looked upward.

As for Meng Hao, he was sitting cross-legged inside of his room. After the Dongluo Clan members left, the staff of the inn returned, giving Meng Hao a wide, respectful berth. The owner of the inn waited on him nervously, allowing him to change rooms and even giving him some Spirit Stones before making an excuse to leave.

“At first I thought I was going to have to fight my way out and come back in disguise,” thought Meng Hao, looking down at the black command medallion. “Who would have thought that the Dongluo Clan would back down?” A puzzled look appeared on his face. “Has something happened I don’t know about?”

It was at this point that he heard the miserable shrieks coming from outside. He immediately stood, opened a window, and looked out, a strange expression on his face.

Another scream rose up into the air. This time, it was obvious that it was a different Scarlet Peacock than the one from before. Even as looks of shock filled the faces of everyone in the city, a third shriek echoed out.

At the same time, three figures, blazing like fire, shot out from the second level of the city. It was three more Scarlet Peacocks. The largest was nearly a hundred meters long, the smallest only about thirty. They were letting out shrill shrieks; anyone who heard them could almost feel

their pain.

A boom rattled out, and for some inexplicable reason, a massive force seemed to rip through one of the huge trees that made up the second level of the city. It shot in and out several times, until it had cut out a character.

5!

A bang rang out as a tall, strapping man appeared in mid-air, surrounded by a multicolored glow. His features were indistinct, but he gave on an eminently conceited air as he floated there in mid-air looking down on the ground.

The three peacocks trembled. Beneath them, the massive character 5 that had been cut into the tree, was extremely clear.

“You all listen carefully to what Lord Fifth has to say. When I was born, I was the most revered in Heaven and Earth. If I want people to wear clothes, they wear clothes. If I want animals to have fur or feathers, then they grow it immediately!”

The echoing voice immediately evoked the wrath of the Dongluo Clan. Furious shouts could be heard from within the Dongluo Clan. A ruddy-faced old man suddenly charged out, emanating the power of the Nascent Soul stage. He shot toward the parrot, who was currently utilizing the meat jelly’s transforming ability.

“You dare to defame the residence of the Dongluo Clan!? Get back here!”

“You old fart!” screeched the man-form parrot. “Lord Fifth is gonna screw you to death!” His body flickered as he shot toward the old man. He radiated a savage potency, as if he were a member of an elite death squad [1], the most powerful and esteemed person in all the Heavens.

[tl: [1] = The way he is described here is a reference to the movie series the Expendables.]

This powerful vigor radiated thickly off of him, as if there were no orifice in the world that he couldn’t conquer!

The parrot, in the form of a virulent, muscular man, suddenly appeared next to the old Nascent Soul Cultivator. The speed of his movement left the man shocked, and before he could do anything, they slammed into each other.

As the boom rattled out, the Nascent Soul Cultivator's face twisted. Cold sweat burst out from his forehead as he realized that his opponent had been shooting straight toward the area roughly a handsbreadth below his navel. If he hadn't moved quickly enough....

Before he could continue along with this train of thought, he suddenly felt a cold air on his back.

The man-form parrot was off to the side, raising his head up and giving out a piercing howl.

"You're far too wicked!" said a voice. "Doing this kind of thing is very immoral! Very, very immoral. You shouldn't...."

"Shut the hell up, bitch! Lord Fifth is gonna screw this guy to death!" The man-parrot's eyes grew green as he glared at the Nascent Soul Cultivator, let out a wild shout, and then charged forward.

The old man's scalp went numb as he saw the strange man approaching him. This was the first time he had ever felt such fear in his heart. However, it was at this exact moment that a cold snort suddenly sounded out from within the Dongluo Clan. Two prismatic beams of light flew out, emanating the power of Nascent Soul Cultivation bases. One of these men was even of the late Nascent Soul stage.

A boom echoed out, and the man-parrot tumbled backward. His eyes grew even more green, and its body began to tremble with rage.

"I'm gonna screw you to death! All of you...."

"No need to get so excited," said the meat jelly. "Don't be so impulsive...."

"Asura Fire!" cried the man-parrot as it floated there in the air. Suddenly, black flames leapt into being.

“Sky Walker Slaying!” it cried again. The flames roared up into the sky. In the middle of all the black flames was the man-parrot, its body trembling. Suddenly, a black band of cloth appeared in its hand, which it wrapped around the top of its head, covering one eye. It was really a bizarre sight. Suddenly, it shot down toward the Nascent Soul Cultivators.

It moved with incredible speed. As it did, a black mist emanated out from its body, as well as fire. It gradually transformed into an enormous one-eyed raven, hundreds of meters long. It emanated a shocking power as it charged in a frenzy toward the three Nascent Soul Cultivators.

Everyone who saw this was astonished. Even Meng Hao’s eyes were wide.

The three Nascent Soul Cultivators were pale faced. They all began to perform incantations. Above them, the intensely shocking flames descended down. The faces of the Nascent Soul Cultivators fell, and they retreated. A massive boom shook everything as a huge crater appeared in the ground.

This crater was located in the very center of the city, causing the plants which composed the floor to begin to sway and sag. The entire second level of the city was virtually destroyed. The ground quaked, and all of the Cultivators currently in the city flew up into the air, faces pale with astonishment.

There was nothing alive within the crater, and the enormous black raven had disappeared without a trace.

The only thing left behind was a wildly arrogant voice which broke the silence.

“Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life. When the Lord Fifth appears, who dares to cause strife!”

This was the only sound that echoed out into the quiet. Dongluo Ling’s eyes were filled with fear, and off to the side, Dongluo Han was panting. The Dongluo Clan Chief had a serious expression on his face as he shot off toward the crater. His solemn voice called out, “Remember this: never, ever provoke that Cultivator. A person like him has a lot of helpers. We’ve

reached a moment of truth. Make friends, not enemies!”

The ground eventually ceased quaking. Meng Hao stood at the window, his expression strange. Everything that had happened just now made him suddenly think that the parrot was actually kind of funny.

A multicolored light suddenly flashed in the room. The parrot appeared, looking exhausted. It flopped down onto the table and looked at Meng Hao out of the corner of its eye. It was huffing and puffing, but its expression was as haughty and proud as ever.

“Bitches. If Lord Fifth hadn’t just recently awoken from slumber, then he would be much more powerful. I could have screwed the entire city! Then they would know how badass Lord Fifth is! As for you, kid, feel free to express your thanks by offering me some worship. Come, come. Say it with me: Have faith....”

Meng Hao turned, ignoring the parrot and instead looking once again out the window, his eyes shining with vigilance. He had long since pulled out the good luck charm to see if he could use it.

“It’s too bad I haven’t been able to harness the power of the roc. If I had, then even a Nascent Soul Cultivator wouldn’t be able to keep up with me.” He continued to look out in the direction of the Dongluo Clan.

As time passed, however, it seemed that the commotion had died down. No one came to cause trouble, and the Dongluo Clan didn’t seem to be furious. Everything was smoothing over.

This, however, made Meng Hao even more nervous, although what he was worried about wasn’t the Dongluo Clan, but whatever momentous event had led to the current circumstances.

If something major hadn’t happened, the Dongluo Clan definitely wouldn’t be acting like this.

Three days later, Meng Hao finally understood everything. One of the cities of the United Nine had been taken over after its Spirit Severing Patriarch perished. The Western Desert was controlling the Black Lands Palace; it seemed their goal was to devour all of the Black Lands.

This news swept over the Black Lands like storm winds over the following days. Soon, everyone knew about it....

When the day of the auction arrived, Meng Hao left his room. A cold wind blew outside, and the sky above was filled with dark clouds. It seemed a thunderstorm was approaching.

“The Black Lands are heading towards an upheaval,” said Meng Hao to himself. He looked around to see Cultivators all around him hurrying in the direction of the auction.

The parrot was perched on Meng Hao’s shoulder, looking around proudly as if it knew that one day it would take care of this place once and for all.

Chapter 330: I'll Marry Anyone But You!

The crater in the middle of Dongluo City had long since been filled in with vast amounts of vegetation. The damaged second level was also restored to its normal condition. However, the “5” on the big tree could not be covered up, no matter what the Dongluo Clan did.

The auction was being held not very far away from that very tree. As Meng Hao approached the auction, he couldn't help but see it. The parrot, perched on his shoulder, looked up at it out of the corner of his eye. With an egotistical expression, he lifted his head up as if everything were beneath him.

The auction facility wasn't very large, a far cry from the Violet Fate Sect auction, in which tens of thousands of Cultivators could participate. There were only a few hundred people seated around the auction floor, conversing in whispers. In the middle of it all was a raised platform.

Only Cultivators with the appropriate command medallions from the Dongluo Clan could enter. As soon as Meng Hao produced his black command medallion, he was immediately treated with favor, and escorted to a comfortable seat.

If the auction floor had been set up with private booths, Meng Hao would have been entitled to one because of the black command medallion.

He sat down, his expression the same as ever, then closed his eyes and settled his mind. There weren't very many people seated near him, nor were there many people in the auction in general. This wasn't a very common sight in Dongluo City.

Because of the latest news circulating around the Black Lands, people were nervous. Many Cultivators had already fled the cities. At the moment, the cities of the United Nine were now no longer as safe as the outside world was.

After all, the Black Lands Palace was targeting, not Black Lands Cultivators in general, but the Clans of the United Nine.

Under such circumstances, Meng Hao knew that any people who had chosen to come attend this auction were people with utmost self-confidence. Considering war had already broken out, an auction like this most likely wouldn't be held again for some time. In fact, this would probably be the last auction in Dongluo City until the war ended.

"I have to attend...." said Meng Hao to himself. After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, the auction would begin. More people began to filter in, and as they did, a man and a woman approached Meng Hao.

As they neared, Meng Hao opened his eyes and saw Dongluo Han and the beautiful Dongluo Ling. Dongluo Han had a broad smile on his face, whereas Dongluo Ling looked irritated, like she didn't want to be there.

"Fancy meeting you here, Fellow Daoist," said Dongluo Han with a grin, approaching Meng Hao and sitting down next to him. "When last we parted, I was unable to enquire as to your respected name. Would it be possible to find out?"

Dongluo Ling hesitated for a moment and then sat down on the other side of Meng Hao.

"My humble surname is Meng," said Meng Hao coolly. "I'm a simple Rogue Cultivator." He smiled at Dongluo Han. He could sense that the man hadn't come to cause him trouble, but must have some other request, and had chosen this moment before the auction to bring it up.

His presence here was not unexpected; Meng Hao had actually predicted that something like this would happen.

"Brother Meng, there's no need to be so modest," replied Dongluo Han with a polite smile. "Considering how strong you are, I don't think any other Rogue Cultivators could measure up to you." His glance flitted over the parrot, and an imperceptible flicker of fear flashed through his eyes.

As for Dongluo Ling, she sat on the other side of Meng Hao. During the entire time, she had been glaring fiercely at the parrot. If looks could kill, then she would have slain the parrot many times over by now.

Meng Hao chuckled but didn't say anything. Since Dongluo Han hadn't

brought up whatever request he planned to discuss, Meng Hao would just have to remain in the dark. However, he turned the good luck charm over and over in his palm, just as he had been doing for the past several days, never returning it to his bag of holding.

It was at this point that the parrot looked impatiently at Dongluo Ling and said, “What the hell? Are you crazy? What do you keep staring at Lord Fifth for? Are you looking for a screw?”

Dongluo Ling’s eyes went wide, and the veins on her face bulged out. Her beautiful features went purple, and she lunged to her feet, filled with explosive power. She was so angry that her entire body trembled.

During her entire life, she had never met anyone who she wanted to chop into pieces as much as this parrot. As such, her disgust toward Meng Hao had also reached an incredible level.

Dongluo Han gaped for a moment, then laughed bitterly and was about to say something when the parrot rolled its eyes. “Lord Fifth hates featherless, furless necks,” it said in its high-pitched voice. “Lord Fifth also hates waists with no fur or feathers. Nice chest and rear end, but again, no fur, no feathers. Even if you offered yourself free of charge, Lord Fifth wouldn’t accept.” The expression on its face said that no matter what she said, it would never like her.

Meng Hao felt a massive headache coming on. He cleared his throat.

The parrot’s words just now made Dongluo Ling feel as if her mind were about to explode. Flames of fire raged in her eyes, and she seemed on the verge of losing control. She was about to spring into action when Dongluo Han’s face suddenly darkened.

“Fifth Sis, SIT DOWN!”

Dongluo Ling’s head shot up to look at him. Gritting her teeth, she thought about the safety of her Clan, and of Dongluo Han’s solemn expression. Bottling up her frustration and fury, she could do nothing but sit back down. However, she made a firm decision that in the future, no matter who tried to get her to come see this detestable parrot, she would absolutely refuse.

“We’ve incurred Brother Meng’s ridicule,” said Dongluo Han. “Please don’t take offense at my younger sister’s impulsiveness. Actually, I brought her with me today to offer an apology for the matter from the other day.”

“You’re too courteous, Fellow Daoist Dongluo. That was just a misunderstanding, there’s no need to bring it up.” Meng Hao smiled, but inwardly, he was on guard. He had anticipated that the Clan would seek him out eventually. Because of the power he had displayed, and the parrot’s performance, most likely, he met the qualifications to be recruited by the Clan.

However, based on what Dongluo Han had said just now, Meng Hao could tell that he had something even bigger planned.

“My younger sister lacks discipline, and unfortunately, the Clan is facing upheaval. Brother Meng, you are handsome and talented. You and I hit it off well right from the start. In fact, I don’t even take you to be an outsider. Brother Meng, I wonder if you would....”

Meng Hao’s eyes suddenly flashed, and he was about to say something when Dongluo Ling once again shot to her feet.

“What are you talking about, Third Bro? You said you brought me here to make an apology! I get what you’re trying to say, and I completely disagree! I don’t care if it’s your idea or the Clan’s idea, I will never comply. If you try to force me, then I’ll kill myself! I will never become anyone’s beloved, especially this shameless, vulgar, despicable hoodlum!” She turned to glare coldly at Meng Hao, making no attempt to conceal her hatred, disgust and contempt. “You might as well quit your dreaming. I’ve taken an oath to never become someone’s beloved, but even if I hadn’t, there are countless heroes in the United Nine, and you don’t measure up to even a single one of them!”

With that, she gave Meng Hao a final contemptuous look, then turned her supple waist and stalked off. Her slender, lithe figure would cause any man who saw it to feel tremors in his heart.

Meng Hao frowned. After hearing Dongluo Han’s suggestion, he had

been about to refuse. However, hearing Dongluo Ling's reaction caused him to smile and hold his tongue. He looked back at Dongluo Han.

Dongluo Han sighed inwardly. The idea hadn't come from the Clan. It was something he had spontaneously come up with himself. He had the feeling that this Cultivator named Meng possessed some unfathomable secret. As such, the idea of convincing him to join the Clan had wormed its way into his head.

Seeing Dongluo Ling's fierce reaction, however, caused Dongluo Han to shake his head with a bitter laugh. He gave Meng Hao an apologetic look, and didn't bring the matter up again. Instead, he sat silently in thought for a moment and said, "I assume you guessed my purpose in coming, Brother Meng. The Black Lands are falling into chaos. The Alliance of United Nine Cities isn't equal to the Black Lands Palace, but our power is not too far off. Fellow Daoist, join the United Nine, and your every wish will be but a command away."

Meng Hao didn't immediately refuse. He sat thinking for a short while, before slowly responding, "I can't make a decision immediately, sir."

"No matter," replied Dongluo Han. Actually, if Meng Hao had agreed immediately, it would have aroused his suspicions. An initial refusal was actually the most appropriate response. "The United Nine will be recruiting Black Lands Cultivators throughout the coming days. I want you to know that the United Nine will naturally treat recruits with utmost sincerity. Even though war has broken out between the Black Lands Palace and the United Nine, you should be able to see that the United Nine will not easily be exterminated. Brother Meng, I will await your decision. You can use that command medallion to notify the Dongluo Clan. In addition you can use the medallion to borrow some Spirit Stones for use in the auction today, a gift from me."

It was at this time that bells echoed out from the platform in the center of the auction floor. A glowing light emanated out, and a figure appeared on the platform. The auction was officially beginning.

Dongluo Han clasped hands and smiled, then made his way out of the

auction area to look for other Cultivators to recruit. The entire Dongluo Clan had been mobilized in an effort to get more Rogue Cultivators to bolster the alliance.

There weren't a lot of people present, but the auction atmosphere was still lively. However, Meng Hao quickly noticed that there were three particular groups of people with whom others would not compete, regardless of what item was up for auction. At the most, they would watch on with dark expressions, but would hold their tongues.

These three groups were located carefully in opposite locations of the auction floor, and would not compete with each other.

Meng Hao glanced them over, then paid them no further attention. Regardless of where you went, there would be groups of various levels of influence and power. Groups like this would invariably flex their muscles at an important auction such as this.

Perhaps under normal circumstances they would be a bit more cautious. However, considering this was Dongluo City, and also considering the general chaos in the Black Lands, groups such as this were now far more valuable than before.

What Meng Hao needed, though, was the Spirit Orchid Leaf, of which ten would be available in the auction. Considering the turmoil on the horizon for the Black Lands, medicinal plants that could heal injuries would be increasingly valuable.

Despite that, Meng Hao still was able to acquire one. When he did, seven or eight Cultivators eyed him greedily.

His expression was the same as ever as he waited for the auction house to deliver the Spirit Orchid Leaf to him, whereupon he prepared to leave.

"Next up for auction is a flag. This flag is a treasure suitable for the Core Formation stage, and is called the Black Days Banner. When unfurled, it unleashes incredible power, and places inky blackness beneath your feet. It can be used both offensively and defensively, and most strange of all, can be fused with your Core Qi!

“This treasure was acquired from within some ancient ruins. Furthermore, we guarantee that in all the Black Lands, there is only this one.” As auctioneer introduced the item, a woman walked out from behind him bearing a copper tray. Atop the tray was a piece of cloth the size of a fist.

Meng Hao was just about to leave when he heard all of this. Suddenly, the parrot’s eyes went wide, and it stared at the flag, its eyes filled with disbelief.

After a moment the parrot didn’t speak, but rather transmitted its shrill, disbelieving voice into Meng Hao’s head. “Get it! You have to get it! This is incredible luck for you!”

Chapter 331: Just Steal It!

Meng Hao paused in mid-step, then sat back and focused once again on the auction, his eyes glittering slightly. There didn't seem to be anything very special about the flag, but for the parrot to show such interest in it left Meng Hao assured that it was something extraordinary.

"10,000 Spirit Stones!" someone cried in a husky voice, even as the introductory words were still echoing around the auction floor. Meng Hao glanced around surreptitiously and saw that the owner of the voice was someone among one of the three groups of Cultivators who were dominating the auction.

The opening bid caused everyone to frown. However, nobody dared to offer another bid. Not even the Cultivators from the other two groups did anything more than discuss the matter in low tones.

The auctioneer sighed inwardly. In the past, such a situation would never have arisen in the Dongluo City auction. However, because of the current disorder in the Black Lands, the United Nine wanted to recruit powerful groups of Cultivators just like these ones. Therefore, the auction itself wasn't very important, and matters such as those occurring right now were ignored.

Just as the auctioneer was about to bang his hammer down to set the final price, Meng Hao's cool voice rang out.

"15,000 Spirit Stones," he said calmly. The instant he did, the entire auction floor went silent, and one gaze after another came to rest on him. This was especially true of the group of Cultivators who had called out the opening bid. There were more than ten of them in the group, three of whom were of the Core Formation stage. The rest were Foundation Establishment, but all of them gave dark looks to Meng Hao.

One of the three Core Formation Cultivators, whose Cultivation base was about the same as Meng Hao's, coldly said, "Hand over your 15,000 Spirit Stones to me and then leave. If you do, we won't cause any trouble for you."

His words only caused Meng Hao to smile. "16,000 Spirit Stones," he said.

This caused the surrounding Cultivators to gasp. They could see a strange light in Meng Hao's eyes that caused the face of the middle-aged man who had just spoken to darken. Killing intent gleamed in his eyes.

"Are you fool enough to reject a face-saving offer? 20,000 Spirit Stones!"

"21,000 Spirit Stones!" Meng Hao didn't have many more Spirit Stones, and in fact, this was his limit. After purchasing the Spirit Orchid Leaf, his supply was dried up.

"Interesting," said an old man standing next to the middle-aged man. He was one of the other three Core Formation Cultivators. His Cultivation base was the same as Dongluo Han's, at the mid Core Formation stage. "So, it turns out that there's someone in Dongluo City who dares to steal things that belong to one of the three great Sects. I'll offer 40,000 for this flag."

He glared at Meng Hao as if he were already a dead man.

Meng Hao was silent for the space of a few breaths and then said, "50,000 Spirit Stones!" The surroundings were completely silent. Even the auctioneer appeared to be shaking with fear. In his estimation, this flag was worth no more than around 40,000 spirit stones. 50,000 was an extremely high price.

Perhaps auctions could reach such a high price in the Southern Domain, but this was the Black Lands. Furthermore, the actual function of the flag was not as amazing as he had made it sound; he had actually exaggerated a bit.

The mid Core Formation old man looked at Meng Hao, his gaze icy cold. It wasn't just him; many of the surrounding Cultivators seemed to think that Meng Hao was specifically targeting one of the three major powers of the Dongluo City region, the Han River Sect.

"If you want to make a bid like that, you'll need to show the Spirit Stones," said the old man, his gaze flickering. "Otherwise I could make

random bids too.” He looked over at the auctioneer, who hesitated for a moment and then faced Meng Hao.

“Fellow Daoist,” he said, “according to the rules of the auction, since you’ve incurred the suspicion of fellow participants in the auction, you’ll need to produce the Spirit Stones to prove that you have them. Please, don’t make things difficult for me.”

“How many Spirit Stones can I borrow with this?” asked Meng Hao, lifting up the black command medallion.

“100,000,” replied the auctioneer, looking back at the Core Formation Cultivator.

“I’ll pay 150,000 for the flag,” said the Core Formation Cultivator coolly. He looked at Meng Hao with cold laughter in his eyes. Given the power of the three great Sects, as well the fact that they had received recruitment invitations, a mere 150,000 Spirit Stones was a price that could easily be erased by the Dongluo Clan. Therefore, he didn’t care too much. What he did care about was having his Sect targeted in front of all these Cultivators. Killing intent already glowed in his eyes.

Meng Hao was silent for a moment, and then sighed inwardly. He just wanted the flag; he wasn’t targeting anybody. However, the auctioneer was now looking over at him, apparently preparing to announce the winner of this lot.

“Just how important is this flag?” Meng Hao transmitted to the parrot.

“Very important,” was the response. “If Lord Fifth isn’t mistaken, that’s no flag. Whoever it was that refined that thing into a flag is an idiot. He wrecked a precious treasure! Do you remember the guy I told you about who painted a talisman which ended up getting burned? The falling ash from the talisman became the Black Lands. Well, that talisman wasn’t completely destroyed; some of it remained and fell to the earth.

“Well, this flag is none other than a remnant of that scorched talisman. If you can get it, it will help you a lot in gaining enlightenment of that Immortal’s magical symbols. You could say that getting this flag will make you qualified to practice cultivation based on those magical symbols! If

you don't have the money, then just steal it! What are you waiting for! Don't be scared! Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life. Lord Fifth is watching over you. Steal it! That's what I did all those years ago. Steal it! I'll even help you break the shield protecting the platform!" The parrot seemed to be getting more and more excited at the prospect of getting Meng Hao to steal the flag.

The voice of the meat-jelly bell interrupted the mental conversation between the parrot and Meng Hao. "Stealing is immoral, wicked, wrong," it said solemnly. "For you two to do this is really bad, I"

However, having heard the parrot's words, Meng Hao's eyes glittered and filled with determination. This auction was hosted by the Dongluo Clan, and Meng Hao was even considering joining them. However, he was only one person; how could he possibly compare to ten?

It was hard to tell who the Dongluo Clan would side with in the end, which was a problem. Seemingly having no other options, and seeing the auctioneer about to say something, Meng Hao suddenly stood up.

This caused the auctioneer to stare over in shock. As he did, Meng Hao's body flickered. In front of the gaping eyes of all of the surrounding Cultivators, he shot toward the platform in the center of the auction floor.

He moved too quickly for anyone to react. As he neared the platform, the parrot continued to grow more excited. It squawked loudly, spitting something out of its mouth.

It was an attack that instantly slammed into the podium, causing a resounding boom to fill the air. The auctioneer stared in shock as the invisible shield protecting the podium shattered into countless pieces. Meng Hao descended, ignoring the auctioneer and grabbing the flag, then turning and shooting away.

Most of the Cultivators participating in the auction didn't even have time to react. However, the instant Meng Hao began to make his escape, two roaring howls rose up from the center of the auction floor. Two old men had suddenly appeared and flew to intercept Meng Hao.

"You dare to steal from our Dongluo Clan auction!? You're looking to

die!”

“Get back here!” The Cultivation bases of the old men exploded with the power of the late Core Formation stage. Seeing them approach only seemed to make the parrot more excited. It squawked again, and a piercing sound rang out, an attack which spread out explosively toward the two late Core Formation old men. Their bodies shook, and they were incapable of approaching any closer.

Meng Hao dodged past them, flying like a shooting star above the heads of the other Cultivators. He kicked up a stiff wind that blew across their faces as he transformed into a beam of light that shot off into the sky.

This entire process took only the space of a few breaths. From the moment he snatched the flag until he disappeared, he moved with incredible speed. The method he had used to snatch the flag was natural and smooth, almost rehearsed. The minds of the observing Cultivators reeled and were filled with blankness.

This was the first time they had ever seen anyone rob an auction. Even in the Black Lands, this was something extremely rare, especially considering that it was always major Clans who hosted auctions. All of the Cultivators had strange expressions on their faces.

The people from the three great Sects watched on, stunned. Most shocked of all was the old man who had just made the top bid; how could he have anticipated that his opponent would actually... violate the rules in such a way?

He had no money, so he just stole the item.... Granted, these three great Sects often did similar things, but usually it was in secret. They would never dare to do so publicly.

In fact, now it seemed as if everything the old man had just said was a joke. An angry expression quickly appeared on his face. Even more angry were the two Core Formation old men who had tried to stop Meng Hao. Their eyes blazed with fury and the veins on their forehead bulged out; they were clearly incensed.

A buzz immediately rose up among the onlookers.

“Who was that? How brazen! He actually stole the item!”

“He’s far too daring. He had no Spirit Stones, so he stole it?! Compared to him, we don’t even count as Black Lands Cultivators! He is the true Black Lands Cultivator!”

“We need to learn from him!”

Off in the distance, on one particular wall that no one in the auction could see, was a small booth. Inside stood Dongluo Han, who was currently staring out in shock. From this booth, everything on the outside could be seen, however, no one could see inside.

He had long since noticed Meng Hao’s lack of Spirit Stones, and had felt a bit embarrassed. After all, Meng Hao had been competing with the Han River Sect, one of the three great Sects that the Dongluo Clan had already made an initial agreement with. Dongluo Han had already begun to prepare a diplomatic response if Meng Hao gave voice to complaint. He had never imagined that Meng Hao would actually resort to theft!

“What a daredevil....” Another man stood next to Dongluo Han. He looked gentle and refined, but he also let out a sigh of praise.

Dongluo Han could only make a wry smile.

At the same time....

The old Core Formation Cultivator from the Han River Clan let out a roar. “You dare to steal things at the Dongluo Clan auction, and my things at that!? The three great Sects won’t let you get away with this!” His body flashed as he flew up into the air. He was immediately followed by ten or more people who all transformed into colorful beams that shot up into the air.

The other two groups from the three great Sects exchanged glances. Then, they also flew into the air to pursue at top speed.

As for the remaining Cultivators, they saw that the auction was now over, so they too flew up into the air to follow.

Chapter 332: The Great Con

Meng Hao sped through the air. The parrot gripped his shoulder tightly with its claws, flapping its wings and looking extremely pleased.

“Steal, steal, steal!” it squawked. “That’s the way to do it! Steal what you feel like, screw whatever you want. That’s the way to live! Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life! When the Lord Fifth appears, who dares to cause strife!”

Meng Hao ignored the parrot. His face felt a bit red. This was the first time he had openly stolen something, and it felt strange. Back when he was a scholar, he would never have been able to brazenly rob in the way he had just now.

Actually, without the urgings of the parrot, he still would never have done so. Even with all the egging on, he had still hesitated. Actually, if he had been able to, he would have tried to sell some medicinal pills first. In the end, though, that didn’t seem possible.

Therefore, for whatever reason, he had listened to the parrot, and performed the robbery in the auction....

Such brazen theft made him feel quite nervous inside, but also a bit excited.

He shook his head, laughing bitterly as he moved along at top speed. He suddenly realized that he had been unconsciously influenced a lot by the parrot since it woke up.

“Damned parrot,” he thought with an inward sigh. Suddenly, the Cultivators speeding through the air at top speed could be heard from behind him, along with roars of rage.

“You little bastard! You stole my stuff! Are you looking to die?!” The voice echoed and rolled about like thunder. Meng Hao sent out his Spiritual Sense, and immediately saw the dozen or so pursuing Cultivators, whistling along through the air just behind him. He wasn’t sure what technique they were using, but their bodies were surrounded by a red glow,

seemingly connecting them all together and lending them greater speed as they pursued.

“I’m not gonna do something like this again,” thought Meng Hao. “Stealing doesn’t really suit me. Yeah, next time I’d rather let the old guy buy the item, then find him later and take it from him. That way I can avoid this kind of attention.” Meng Hao was good at problem solving, so he thought for a moment and then sent his Spiritual Sense out again. One of the three Core Formation Cultivators, an old man with a face full of pockmarks was the only one Meng Hao was paying attention to. He had a Cultivation base at the late Core Formation stage; everyone else Meng Hao ignored.

The pock faced old man hadn’t said a word the entire time. Instead, he had observed everything with cold eyes; this made Meng Hao feel a bit of pressure.

Unless he put on the Blood Immortal mask, it would be difficult to defeat him.

He looked over and gave the parrot a look. “This whole disaster is your fault!”

“What are you scared of?” said the parrot, looking back at him with an intense look of pride. “Screw them to death!” Suddenly, its claw lifted up toward its face, placing a black band around its head, covering one eye. After that, it flew off of Meng Hao’s shoulder.

It squawked, and suddenly a black fire appeared around its body, which began to grow rapidly. In the blink of an eye, it was now twenty or thirty meters tall. It lowered its head, looking every bit like the member of some sort of elite death squad. With a cry, it made its attack.

Meng Hao’s eyes went wide. He saw the parrot advancing bravely; it only took an instant for it to slam into the dozen or so pursuing Cultivators. A boom rang out, and the red glow which surrounded the Cultivators instantly collapsed. Some of them coughed up blood; the three Core Formation Cultivators scattered.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. Without hesitation, he shot forward. In an

instant, he was in front of the early Core Formation Cultivator. He lifted his fist and struck out.

The man's mouth twisted into a vicious smile. He made an incantation sign with both hands, and immediately a spinning vortex shot out. It was black, and lightning crackled within. Furthermore, terrifying shrieks could be heard, along with a multitude of spirit faces, which shot toward Meng Hao, apparently intent on consuming him.

Meng Hao gave a cold snort. Without hesitation, he landed his punch. A boom filled the air. The faces twisted and screamed, and then collapsed into pieces. The lightning disintegrated, and the vortex broke up into pieces. This magical technique couldn't stand up in the least to Meng Hao's fist. Before the middle-aged Cultivator could react, Meng Hao's fist passed through them all and slammed into his chest.

Boom!

The man toppled backward, blood spraying from his mouth and out from his back. His body shook as a massive hole appeared in his chest. He only had time to look down at it before his entire body exploded.

Meng Hao didn't pause for a moment. His right hand immediately began to form an incantation.

In front of him was the old mid Core Formation Cultivator, who brimmed with killing intent. He waved his sleeve, and nine pagodas appeared around him, upon the surfaces of which were carved the images of bizarre creatures. Suddenly, countless phantom creatures sprang into being around the pagodas, filling the sky. They immediately charged toward Meng Hao.

However, it was at this moment that Meng Hao cried, "Eighth Demon Sealing Hex!" His finger fell, and immediately, ghost images sprung up everywhere, from everything. It was as if a second phantom world existed on top of the current one. They folded in onto the old Core Formation Cultivator; causing his expression to flicker. His Cultivation base was immediately locked down, as if he had been removed from the world, shoved alive out of Heaven and Earth.

“What magic is this....” His mind spun as the cold-faced Meng Hao approached. His fist descended, then another, then a third!

By the time the third punch fell, the nine pagodas had been smashed into smithereens. In the blink of an eye, Meng Hao’s fist was speeding toward the old man’s forehead.

Suddenly, an intense feeling of danger filled Meng Hao’s head. Without a moment’s hesitation, he transformed the fist into a claw and snatched the mid Core Formation old man. Meng Hao shoved the man in front of himself and then pushed, using the immobilized old man to propel himself backward.

As he lifted his head, he saw an orange light shining out from the face of the pock marked old Cultivator. It flew through the air to the spot he had just been in, which was now occupied by the mid Core Formation Cultivator. Suddenly, the glowing light stopped.

That orange light was what had just caused the sense of crisis to appear in Meng Hao’s mind.

He laughed coldly as he fell back. The parrot shot over like lightning, and together, they flew off into the distance.

“I’m the Patriarch of the Han River Sect!” said the pock faced old man, his face grim. “Let’s see how you try to escape me!” The mid Core Formation Cultivator’s Cultivation base was now recovering, but his face was pale white and he looked at Meng Hao with fear. His killing intent, though, was stronger than ever.

The group of Cultivators once again began to pursue Meng Hao, this time, with the pock faced old man in the lead.

Meng Hao’s expression was calm. He had the good luck charm in his hand still. It was full of cracks, and he wasn’t sure how many times he could use it before it completely disintegrated. Unfortunately, he had discovered long ago that he could not duplicate the good luck charm. However, he would still use it without hesitating if the situation demanded.

“Hold on,” said the parrot. “Don’t use that thing. I know what it is. Why waste the excellent opportunity we have right now?”

As Meng Hao sped along, he looked at the parrot, who was clutching tightly to his shoulder.

“What are you talking about?”

The parrot’s eyes gleamed as it said, “Don’t you want to get rich? Don’t you want to get a bunch of treasures? Don’t you want to become the wealthiest person under the Heavens?”

Meng Hao blinked a few times. Ever since he was young, he had dreamed of being rich. For the parrot to mention such a thing at this moment left him feeling a little bit suspicious.

He sent out his Spiritual Sense to glance at the people pursuing him. Given his own current speed, he guessed that it wouldn’t be long before the Han River Sect Cultivators caught up with him.

“Lord Fifth doesn’t care too much about riches. Lord Fifth loves fur and feathers. Okay, how about this.... You can keep everything, but you have to promise that in the future, you’ll find more beautiful furred and feathered creatures for Lord Fifth. Ones similar to that Scarlet Peacock would do nicely.” Without waiting for an answer from Meng Hao, it lifted up one of its claws and shook it.

“Ultimate Vexation, get the hell out here!”

A face appeared on the small bell that was attached to the Parrot’s claw. It looked incensed. “I know what you’re planning. This time, I won’t do it. I have principles! I won’t do it. I won’t! Never!”

The parrot yawned and said, “Remember the fatso who attacked you that year? I’ll tell you where he is.” Its expression was one of complete disdain, as if the meat jelly’s consent was a foregone conclusion.

As soon as it heard the parrot’s words, the meat jelly’s face appeared to twist with indecision.

“That damned fatso. I hate him! It was with complete good will that I

spent ten thousand years converting him. Then, he repaid my kindness with enmity. I... I... Fine! I need to finish converting him. For that reason, I'll help you one more time. But only this once! And this is the last time... Really...." As the meat jelly chattered, an impatient look appeared on the parrot's face. It kicked its claw one more time, and the meat jelly flew off.

"Bitch! Will you ever shut up!? Alright, turn into some Spirit Stones for Lord Fifth. I want one million, okay?" When the parrot finished speaking, the meat jelly let out a growl, and then, to Meng Hao's shock, suddenly exploded.

The sound of the explosion immediately caught the guarded attention of the Han River Sect Cultivators. Even the pock faced old man suddenly stopped moving.

However, a moment later, vast amounts of shining, glittering Spirit Stones appeared. They looked like rain as they descended from the sky all over the place.

They were dazzlingly bright in the sunlight, and a thick spiritual energy emanated out from them, completely shocking. The amazing, brilliant sight of it caused all of the nearby Cultivators to begin to pant.

One million Spirit Stones, and the quality of each one was beyond average; these were not low grade Spirit Stones! To see them slowly floating down in mid-air caused the Black Lands Cultivators to instantly charge forward with reckless abandon.

Even the pock faced old man's eyes went wide. To him, one million Spirit Stones was a vast number. Behind him were the members of the other two great Sects, and behind them were nearly hundreds of other Cultivators. All of them, rushed forward with wide eyes.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and he immediately transformed into a beam of light that shot off at high speed, like a shooting star. He left behind all the people who were suddenly enthralled with the idea of getting rich.

It was as if they had lost their minds, and didn't even stop to think why Meng Hao would suddenly have so many Spirit Stones. If he did, why would he need to perform robbery at the auction? Actually, Meng Hao was

feeling a bit torn; he couldn't believe he had never thought to have the meat jelly turn into Spirit Stones.

“Heh heh,” chuckled the parrot with an arrogant, sinister smile. “Steal away. The more you steal the better. Years ago I forced Ultimate Vexation to use this method on the eight Taiping Dao Patriarchs to rob them blind!”

Chapter 333: Conning the Whole Way

One million Spirit Stones appeared; brilliant sunlight reflected off of them, creating a radiant glow. This afternoon in this part of the Black Lands, a crazed frenzy rose up among hundreds of Cultivators.

This was especially true of the Cultivators in the very back, who had come along to watch the excitement. Their eyes went red as they immediately used every technique they knew to increase their speed, scattering in all directions to grab Spirit Stones.

The people from the Han River Sect were the closest. The pock faced old man hesitated for a moment; something didn't seem right to him. He thought back to the auction, and how Meng Hao had apparently been short on Spirit Stones. However, it was impossible to tell whether the Spirit Stones were illusory or real. Seeing how the disciples surrounding him were all breathing heavily, he gritted his teeth, abandoned the chase, and went after the Spirit Stones. His sleeve flicked as he tried to gather together as many as possible.

The other Han River Sect disciples charged forth madly. The disciples from the other two Sects immediately began to struggle for supremacy in taking the Spirit Stones. It only took a moment for hundreds of Cultivators to be flitting about in all directions after Spirit Stones. Soon, they began to fight and plunder.

"Dammit, that's my Spirit Stone!"

"The guy who robbed the auction tossed out these Spirit Stones to save his own skin! They don't belong to anybody. First come first serve!"

The sound of explosions echoed out. One million Spirit Stones seemed like a lot, but considering hundreds of Cultivators were fighting over them, they were divided up very quickly. It was without hesitation that the Cultivators tossed them into their bags of holding.

Suddenly, their excited, complacent thoughts changed, and they looked off in the direction Meng Hao had fled.

In their opinion, for him to have thrown out a million Spirit Stones just to buy some time, indicated that he must have even more Spirit Stones on his person.

A strange light appeared in the eyes of the Han River Sect Cultivators. They had snatched up the most Spirit Stones of all, perhaps more than two hundred thousand. The expression on the face of the pockmarked old man indicated that he was determined to win. He knew the Spirit Stones weren't fake; after snatching them up, he had carefully examined one. With a hearty laugh, he shot in pursuit of Meng Hao, his disciples in tow.

Almost all of the other Cultivators in the area did the same. There were a few who hesitated, worried that something untoward would happen if they were too greedy. Some even considered leaving; after all, everyone had gotten some Spirit Stones, which meant that everyone had profited at least some. Some people were surreptitiously examining their bags of holding to count exactly how many Spirit Stones they'd acquired.

It was then that a flabbergasted gasp could be heard.

"Huh? Where are the Spirit Stones? I just took about ten thousand, where did they go?"

"Mine are gone too! What's going on...?"

Others who overheard such remarks immediately looked down to check their own bags of holding, whereupon their faces instantly fell.

"My Spirit Stones are gone! Impossible! I stole at least eight thousand just now!!"

"Something fishy is going on...."

A buzz rose up, mixed with miserable cries. As they checked their bags of holding, the faces of all the Cultivators grew deathly pale. Some of the Cultivators even began to shake, and veins began to pop out on their faces. Intense rage and insanity poured out from their eyes.

"My magical items are gone!!"

"Dammit, my medicinal elixir! There's none left at all in my bag of

holding!!”

“Ahhhhhhh! My bag of holding has nothing in it! What’s going on!? It’s totally empty! Even the magical item I just bought at the auction is gone!”

As word spread, the miserable cries grew even louder. The pock faced old man from the Han River Sect flickered as he looked down to his own bag of holding. Then, his face went as gray as ash; he lifted his head up to the sky and let out a desolate howl.

His body shook, and smoke began to rise up from the top of his head. Veins of blood shot through his eyes, which radiated vicious frenzy. How could he not go crazy? His heart virtually dripped with blood, as if someone had literally ripped it open.

His bag had originally contained hundreds of thousands of Spirit Stones, which had apparently vanished into thin air. All of his medicinal elixir, magical items, medicinal pills... everything was gone, even the random odds and ends he had collected inside.

His bag of holding had been thoroughly cleaned out. He was now completely empty handed.

His savings of many years, half of the wealth of the Han River Sect, had all been on his person. Now, however... it was gone.

The pock faced Patriarch howled. Behind him, the Patriarch from one of the other great Sects was shaking and howling madly. His bag of holding was equally empty.

The bags of holding of all the hundreds of Cultivators were completely empty. Someone had inexplicably removed their contents, leaving behind not a sound or hint of how it had occurred....

“That Heaven-damned bandit! I won’t rest until he’s dead!” These words came out even before Patriarch Pockmarks could say anything similar. They came from a rubicund old man whose entire body was quivering. The insanity in his eyes outmatched that of Patriarch Pockmarks’. This was the Patriarch from one of the other Clans.

The source of his madness was the fact that just before the auction, he

had filled his bag of holding with a million Spirit Stones. That was the price he had demanded from the Dongluo Clan to join them.

In addition to the Spirit Stones, there had been magical techniques from the Dongluo Clan, which he had long thirsted for. Now, though... they were all gone. How could he not go mad?

These Black Lands Cultivators weren't stupid. If they couldn't figure out that Meng Hao was the culprit, then their years of Cultivation had been spent in vain. And the root of the problem was those Spirit Stones....

Hundreds of Cultivators were now in a rage. Their eyes were red, and they used all the power they could muster to shoot at top speed after Meng Hao.

Revenge must be had! However, there was no sign of Meng Hao. Fearing that he would escape completely, the hundreds of Cultivators used a variety of methods to call upon friends.

Some arranged for people up ahead to block Meng Hao. Others contacted people from other power groups or Sects up ahead, requesting either direct assistance, or to borrow jade slips or Spirit Stones.

Of course, none of them realized that Meng Hao hadn't actually conned them; the parrot had. However, it didn't matter. Meng Hao and the parrot had both done such things many times in the past.

When you think about how many people Meng Hao had conned throughout his time in the Cultivation world, well, you could say that he had conned people the whole way....

As a tiny example, there was a certain group of discarnate souls back in the Black Sieve Sect who Meng Hao could send into instant misery if he felt like it.... [1]

[tl: [1] = Meng Hao secretly administered his own blood to the possessed Cultivators of the Black Sieve Sect. Since he is a Demon Sealer, he can basically kill them at any time. This happened in chapter 258]

As Meng Hao whistled through the air, the meat jelly reclined lazily on top of his head, looking quite arrogant.

“This is wrong....” It coughed up dozens of magical items.

“This is immoral....” It burped up a vast quantity of Spirit Stones.

“This is too wicked....” In the blink of an eye, it spat up mouthful after mouthful of bottles of medicinal elixir and hundreds of jade slips.

“You two are going to turn me into an evildoer....” With a sigh, the meat jelly coughed up some more items.

Meng Hao stuffed the belongings of hundreds of Cultivators into his bag of the Cosmos. Only it was large enough to contain so many things.

Seeing such a vast collection of items caused Meng Hao’s mouth and tongue to go dry. The sight of more than a million Spirit Stones caused his eyes to shine. Then there were the jade slips, which surely contained a vast array of information. As for the magical items, none of them particularly caught Meng Hao’s attention. However, if he sold them, he would be able to make a heap of Spirit Stones.

Then there was the random collection of other items, one of which happened to catch Meng Hao’s eye. It was a book, plated in something that looked like gold. It consisted of three pages, and three illustrations.

The first illustration depicted ten swords arranged so that their tips pointed outward to form something that looked like a lotus flower.

The second illustration depicted one hundred swords, formed together to make ten lotus flowers which were arranged into a large ring.

The third illustration depicted one thousand swords arranged into one hundred lotus flowers, creating a massive formation. They circled around each other, forming ten layers which all seemed to be revolving in different directions. The mere sight of it was dazzling.

“A sword formation?” thought Meng Hao. He glanced at it for a moment, then put it aside. He continued flying on, heart thumping. He really had struck it rich this time, having stolen the wealth of hundreds of Cultivators.

“It’s too bad....” he was just whispering this sentence in his heart, when

the parrot next to him let out a sigh and spoke out loud exactly what he was thinking.

“It’s too bad there weren’t very many people,” said the parrot. “If there were more, then this transaction would have truly been profitable.”

“Don’t even think of trying to get me to do it again!” blubbered the meat jelly. With a pop, it again transformed into a bell and attached itself to the parrot’s foot.

Meng Hao looked at the parrot, and the parrot looked back at him. One man, one bird. In this instant, seeing the light in each other’s eyes caused them both to experience the feeling of mutual friendship.

“From now on, you are Lord Fifth’s master!” said the parrot, its voice sincere.

“In the future, I’ll find some more fur and feathers for you.”

After exchanging these words, the man and bird looked down at the meat jelly bell. The meat jelly quivered and opened its eyes, as if it had just felt something very cold. After opening its eyes, it saw Meng Hao staring off into the sky, and the parrot looking down at the earth below.

“You’re both evildoers....” said the meat jelly loudly.

“Wow, the weather is great today,” said Meng Hao, looking up at the beautiful white clouds, seemingly entranced, as if he’d never seen them before.

“Eee!” said the parrot, looking down at the ground with an expression of rapture. “The flowers down there are beautiful! They almost look like they’re covered with feathers!”

Soon, three days had passed. Meng Hao proceeded onward at top speed the entire time. Behind him, the hundreds of Cultivators stretched out in a line as they pursued him, based on the level of their Cultivation base.

Their eyes were filled with killing intent. Their hatred for him had not quite reached the point where they refused to live under the same sky with him, but it was close.

Black Lands Cultivators were used to living in constant danger, and as such, usually keep most of their belongings in their bags of holding. That was especially the case... when going to an auction.

You could even say that it was at the very moment when their bags of holding were fullest that they met Meng Hao. As such, their hatred toward him was incredibly intense.

This was especially true of the three great Sects. The Patriarch Rubicund was the most frenzied of them all. He had taken the lead position in the group. After him was Patriarch Pockmarks. Their eyes billowed with venomous killing intent as they glared ahead toward Meng Hao. They couldn't wait to tear him to pieces and eat him alive.

"Little bastard, I'll hunt you to the ends of the earth if I have to. You're dead!" screamed Patriarch Rubicund, gnashing his teeth as he thought of his Spirit Stones. His heart bled.

Chapter 334: Celestial Spell Formation

“Look, you old fart, you’re the ones who started chasing me. That’s what started this whole thing.” Meng Hao’s eyes flickered with coldness as he proceeded onward. Off to the side, Patriarch Rubicund whistled toward him.

The man gave a cold snort, then increased his speed. “Stealing auction items is a high crime! Then you used depraved tricks to steal our wealth! You’re a disgrace to the Black Lands, which earns you the death penalty!” Behind him, Patriarch Pockmarks’ eyes were darkly sinister. Further back, the rest of the Cultivators were all looking at Meng Hao with intense killing intent.

“Your Cultivation base is in the late Core Formation stage, and yet after three days you’ve been unable to catch up to a paltry early Core Formation Cultivator like me? How do you have the face to raise such a ruckus?” Meng Hao also increased his speed.

“You sure know how to run your mouth! It won’t be long before I help you to understand what it’s like to live a life worse than death!” As he spoke, Patriarch Rubicund used some unknown technique to cause his face to suddenly grow purplish-black. His speed then increased by several times as he shot toward Meng Hao. At this speed, he would catch up in the space of just a few breaths.

“Greedy to the bones,” said Meng Hao coolly. “Considering your Cultivation base, do you have any face whatsoever?” The parrot opened its mouth and a gale force wind sprung up along, with a shocking roar.

Meng Hao’s speed increased. Facing up against the fierce wind, Patriarch Rubicund and the rest of the hundreds of Cultivators behind him could do nothing except howl in rage as their speed decreased.

Currently, none of them had any magical items. Some of them were able to use secret techniques or Core Qi to close some of the distance between them and Meng Hao. However, a single breath from the parrot would immediately increase the gap. Therefore, no matter what they did to

increase their speed, it did no good and they were unable to catch up with Meng Hao.

During the three days, their rage only continued to grow more and more intense.

Seeing the distance between them and Meng Hao grow once again, the killing intent in Patriarch Rubicund's heart spread to fill his entire body. The Patriarch Pockmarks was exactly the same, as were all the hundred Cultivators behind them.

After three days of travel, Meng Hao could tell from the landmarks and regions he was passing that he was getting close to his Immortal's cave.

"Considering how pissed off they are, are you sure your idea will work?" said Meng Hao to the parrot, frowning.

"Of course it'll work," replied the parrot boastfully. "You can never go wrong when you listen to Lord Fifth. Just lead these people into our lair. You can go practice Cultivation and leave everything else to Lord Fifth!" It patted its chest and proudly continued, "Don't worry, the more people there are, the more chaotic the Qi will be, and the easier it will be to use that technique I mentioned to delay the Heavenly Tribulation."

The frown remained on Meng Hao's face. During his three days of travel, he had discussed with the parrot the matter of delaying the Heavenly Tribulation. He knew that the method was a type of deception, using a variety of miscellaneous Qi to confuse Heaven and Earth. It was like spreading a gauze over the face of the Heavenly Tribulation.

Therefore, these pursuing Cultivators, more than a hundred of them, would actually be of some use to Meng Hao and the parrot. However, as to whether the technique would succeed, and as to whether the parrot would really be able to hold off the crowd, well, Meng Hao wasn't completely certain.

Even as he was thinking about these things, his eyes suddenly flashed. He looked ahead of him, and his eyes narrowed; there he could see a dozen or so beams of prismatic light whistling toward him. He was being blocked in!

There was a blockade up ahead, and people pursuing him from behind. The people up ahead merely had to delay him for a bit, and then the pursuers would arrive. He was encircled.

Behind him, Patriarch Rubicund and many of the others all of a sudden looked very excited. Obviously, they had used various methods to call for help earlier, and result was this group of people up ahead preparing to block Meng Hao's way.

Among the approaching Cultivators was a middle-aged man of the mid Core Formation stage. Core Qi floated above his head, but it appeared to be a muddle of colors; clearly the man had just recently cultivated it. Furthermore, he obviously had a Mixed Core.

His expression was grim as he sized up Meng Hao. Then, he performed an incantation sign, which caused the Core Qi to transform into the shape of the head of a wild beast. It roared as it shot forward.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he lifted his hand and then pointed a finger down toward the ground.

"Righteous Bestowal!" A strange light flickered in his eyes; in an instant, ghost images sprung up from the ground everywhere. Now, he could see wisps of Demonic Qi which were invisible to everyone else. They shot toward Meng Hao and then began to circle around his body.

The invisible strands of Qi which surrounded Meng Hao coalesced into a phantom. It was blurry, but after taking shape, it emanated Meng Hao's Qi.

Next, he waved his hand toward the group of Cultivators up ahead, causing the phantom to shoot toward them.

Meng Hao didn't want to split his attention to control the phantom, so as soon as it neared the group of Cultivators, he said, "Burst!"

The phantom immediately exploded.

A huge boom rocked Heaven and Earth. What everyone else saw was Meng Hao simply pointing toward the group Cultivators, after which blood sprayed from their mouths. A few people even directly blew up. The

face of the Core Formation Cultivator fell, and he retreated seven or eight paces. However, he was powerless to fight back against what seemed like an invisible gale force wind that slammed into him and sent him tumbling backward.

Astonishment filled his face as he was knocked head over heels, blood spraying out of his mouth. Before, he had assumed that even if his opponent was extraordinary in some way, he was with a group of a dozen or more people. Furthermore, all he had to do was delay him, which should be no problem.

And yet Meng Hao had used an unknown technique to simply point a finger and then unleash some sort of incredible power. The man's heart felt cold as he watched Meng Hao approach; he didn't dare to do anything further to stop him.

Meng Hao shot forward, immediately passing the scattered group of Cultivators who had been attempting to block his path.

This scene caused the hundred or so pursuing Cultivators to feel completely shocked. All of them slowed, hesitating. However, when they thought about their empty bags of holding, and the expression 'strength in numbers,' then their killing intent once again billowed up. Not a single one retreated; they immediately shot in pursuit of Meng Hao, stringing out in a line that resembled a sharp arrow.

Time passed. After three or four more breaths from the parrot, Meng Hao finally caught sight of the short mountain and the Immortal's cave. He also saw the group of more than a hundred Cultivators living around the mountain.

When they caught sight of him and his pursuers, looks of vigilance and uneasiness appeared on their faces.

The instant they began to feel uneasy, the parrot's shrill voice blared out, "Okay children, Lord Fifth is here with some guests. Get in formation!"

At the same time, Meng Hao transformed into a beam of light which shot directly toward the fissure in the side of the mountain.

As he did, the parrot loosened its grip on his shoulder and flew into the air. The meat jelly bell attached to its foot made dainty clinking sounds.

When the more than one hundred local Cultivators heard the parrot's voice, tremors ran through their bodies. Gritting their teeth, they immediately rose to their feet. Then, they began to run in a particular order and fashion, coiling around the short mountain as they did so.

A strange expression appeared on Meng Hao's face as he used Spiritual Sense to watch all of this. He thought back to what the parrot had called a Celestial spell formation, and all the running training it had made the Cultivators do. He hesitated for a moment, then clenched his jaw and sat down cross-legged. He pulled out the medicinal plants needed to make the Perfect Gold Core Pill and began to concoct.

He would make the Perfect Gold Core Pill, consume it, and then replace his Violet Core with a Gold Core. Furthermore, he would go all out, breaking through from the early Core Formation stage into the mid Core Formation Stage, all using his Perfect Gold Core!

"After that happens, I will delay the Heavenly Tribulation and cultivate Core Qi. If all goes smoothly, then when I leave this Immortal's cave...." Meng Hao's eyes glowed with a frigid light. "I'll help them to experience true deadly pursuit!" He took a deep breath and then produced the copper mirror, which he used to duplicate some of the medicinal plants he needed.

Before, he would have had to be very careful, considering his lack of Spirit Stones. Furthermore, using the ultra high-grade Spirit Stones would have been far too distressing. Now, however, he had more than a million Spirit Stones in his bag of holding; therefore, he felt free to use them without being miserly.

In addition to that, Meng Hao felt supremely confident in his Dao of alchemy, far more so than Chu Yuyan had been back when she concocted the Perfect Foundation Pill. Using the mysterious legacy technique of the East Pill Division, along with his alchemic flame, Meng Hao was more than seventy percent confident that he would succeed.

Outside the Immortal's cave, Patriarch Rubicund, Patriarch Pockmarks, and all the others approached, faces filled with murder. They saw Meng Hao disappear into the short mountain, the detestable parrot flying around squawking, and the group of Cultivators running in circles around the mountain.

All of it caused them to gape in shock for a moment, and then begin laughing uproariously. As more people arrived, they too looked at the Cultivators running in circles, and laughed out loud.

“What are these people doing? Have they gone insane?!”

“Are they jogging for exercise?”

“What kind of Cultivators are they? They're really losing face for the Black Lands!”

The sneering ridicule of the Cultivators who had been pursuing Meng Hao caused embarrassed looks to appear on the faces of the Cultivators on the ground. However, they didn't dare to stop running. This was the only Celestial magic that the parrot had taught them, which drew its power from people running.

According to what the parrot said, this technique was incredibly, unbelievably amazing. It was supposedly the ultimate spell formation in all Heaven and Earth.

“Come come,” cried the parrot excitedly as it soared through the air. “Everyone put your voices together....”

The more than one hundred local Cultivators hesitated for a moment. However, nearly a year of practicing had created a virtual instinct. As soon as one person cried it out, everyone joined together to shout.

“Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life! When the Lord Fifth appears, who dares to cause strife!”

Their voices joined together and echoed out in powerful waves. As the sound rose up, so did a wind. It was hard to tell whether the wind was started because of the running, or because of their shouting.

In any case, the wind caused the area fifty kilometers around the Immortal's cave to suddenly become blurry. The blurriness was faint, so faint, in fact, that no one noticed it all, not even Patriarch Rubicund, who was of the late Core Formation stage, or the others of similar level.

“Kill everyone!” cried Patriarch Pockmarks. “Don’t even leave a blade of grass left alive!” His words floated through the air lightly, but were filled with shocking killing intent. As they rang out, the Han River Sect disciples behind him, as well as many of the other random Cultivators, transformed into prismatic beams. They shot forward, their faces twisted viciously, their killing intent billowing. It was with ultimate derision that they prepared to vent their venomous hatred of Meng Hao.

Chapter 335: Valiant!

The large group of Han River Sect disciples descended with killing rage and taunting laughter. Eyes beaming with viciousness, they neared the over one hundred Cultivators who were running around on the ground.

“Children, don’t look! Ignore them!” cried the parrot as it flew back and forth in the air. The clinking of the bell on its foot could also be heard ringing out. “Come come. Join me in your loudest voice....”

The more than one hundred Cultivators once again joined voices to call out loudly. The Cultivators who had been pursuing Meng Hao all the way from Dongluo City grew closer. However, as they neared, their expressions flickered as they felt a wind picking up.

The wind brushed against their faces, rippling their clothes, blowing against their hair. It even began to push their bodies about. The charging Cultivators were gradually forced to stop. Their clothes whipped violently, their hair was in disarray, and their expressions were gradually changing to that of shock.

A vortex of slowly moving wind began to spread out from beneath the feet of the running Cultivators. As it extended outward it pushed back against the incoming Cultivators, blocking them. In an instant, it changed from a gentle breeze into a screaming gale force wind.

The screaming of the wind was shocking, and it mixed with the cries of the Cultivators inside to form a power that seemed as if it could rend the very Heavens. The Cultivators from Dongluo City retreated in astonishment. Some were too slow, and were caught up by the cyclone of wind. Blood sprayed from their mouths, and even their organs were broken into pieces.

A dozen of the Cultivators who had weak Cultivation bases suddenly began to scream. Their miserable cries drifted along with the wind, piercing the ears of the onlookers. People watched on in horror as the clothing of their dozen compatriots was ripped to shreds. Their hair turned gray, and their skin was slowly peeled off of their bodies as if they

were being punished with death by a thousand cuts. Blood and flesh flew about within the screaming wind. In the blink of an eye...

The skin and muscle of the dozen Cultivators were completely flayed off of their bodies, turning them into skeletons. Cracking sounds could then be heard as the skeletons were smashed into pieces and then disappeared into the wind.

This scene caused the pursuing Cultivators' scalps to grow numb. Their faces shone with intense horror and disbelief. Their breathing came in ragged pants as they hurriedly backed up. No one dared to proceed forward, and complete silence filled the air, with the exception of... the cries of the wind and... the voices of the running Cultivators, joined together and melded into the wind.

“Have faith in the Lord Fifth... gain eternal life....”

During this moment of relative silence, Patriarch Rubicund gave a cold snort. From behind him walked out a Cultivator of the mid Core Formation stage. Another mid Core Formation Cultivator appeared at the side of Patriarch Pockmarks, his jaw clenched.

A third mid Core Formation Cultivator appeared along with a Patriarch who was obviously from the third of the three great Sects. This man was tall and well-built. After he stepped forward, the three Core Formation Cultivators turned into beams of prismatic light that shot forward.

They appeared intent on piercing through the massive, foggy whirlwind to destroy the more than one hundred Cultivators within.

However, as soon as they neared the wind, their faces changed immediately. They emitted howls as Core Qi appeared above their heads, taking various forms as they charged into the foggy wind.

They had advanced nearly half way to the hundred or more Cultivators, and were roughly thirty meters away from them when, suddenly, a gigantic, phantom figure appeared within the whirlwind.

It was formed from wind itself, and was no less than thirty meters tall. Its facial features were indistinct; the only thing visible was its strapping

frame and the illusory clothes which rippled on its body. As the phantom appeared, it was running and emitting an indistinct howling sound. It seemed to have not even noticed the three incoming Cultivators.

The killing intent of the three men flickered as they performed incantation gestures. Core Qi exploded outward, transforming one into a stretch of sandy soil, another into a vast array of flying swords, and the third into a painting of mountains and rivers. The Core Qi enveloped the area, sweeping directly toward the gigantic phantom.

“Shatter!” cried the three men, their voices cold.

However, their Core Qi passed directly through the giant phantom, as if it were completely illusory.

This caused the three men to gape in astonishment. The next thing that happened was that the phantom turned and barreled directly toward them.

The phantom was supposedly illusory, and yet it caused the bodies of these three men to tremble violently. Their faces turned ashen, and they coughed up mouthfuls of blood. Looking astonished, they were about to retreat when they suddenly saw a second, a third, a fourth... and in an instant TEN giant phantoms had appeared within the wind. All of them charged forward toward the three men, who immediately began to retreat.

The Core Formation Cultivator from the Han River Sect was a bit slower than the others. Before he could retreat more than a few paces, one of the phantoms was upon him. Eyes filled with viciousness, the Core Formation Cultivator bit down on the tip of his tongue and spit out a mouthful of blood out into the air. He passed his hands through it, created a blood-colored mark.

He pushed against the blood-colored mark, causing it to ignite and then transform into a massive blood-colored skull. With a roar of rage, it shot toward the approaching phantom. Instead of slamming into each other, the blood-colored skull passed directly through the phantom, and then flew past it through eight more phantoms before finally dissipating.

A look of despair appeared on the face of the Han River Sect Cultivator

as the first phantom slammed into him. Blood sprayed from his mouth and he let out a bloodcurdling scream.

“Patriarch, save me....” he cried in a voice filled with fear and dread. Patriarch Pockmarks’ face fell. He was about to charge forward to save the man, when his eyes narrowed. Suddenly, he felt as if he didn’t dare to charge forward, and instead retreated.

The reason for this was that he suddenly caught sight of dozens of phantoms approaching at high speed within the wind. Their approach shook the ground, as if giants were trampling the earth. Howls mixed with bloodcurdling shrieks as the Han River Sect Core Formation Cultivator was trampled to death in a bloody pulp.

This scene caused the hearts of all of the outside Cultivators to begin to pound, regardless of the level of their Cultivation base. The foggy wind was growing more and more blurry; as for their expressions, there was no longer even a hint of derision to be seen. Instead, their faces were filled with terror.

Immediately, people began to consider fleeing. However, what they hadn’t noticed was that behind them, another foggy wind had appeared. It surrounded them, completely enveloping them and cutting off their escape.

These Cultivators had pursued Meng Hao with menacing viciousness, but now, their hearts grew cold.

This was even more so when they noticed that inside the foggy wind ahead and behind were dozens of phantom figures. The figures were running, causing the ground to heave. It was easy to imagine how quickly they would be injured, or even killed, were they to be struck by the phantoms.

After all, the phantoms had just trampled a mid Core Formation Cultivator to death in an instant. This filled the other Cultivators’ hearts with dread.

It didn’t take long for them to realize that the phantoms running through the wind were actually none other than the more than one

hundred Cultivators they had previously derided.

As they circled the area, their voices grew louder and louder.

“Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life. When the Lord Fifth appears, who dares to cause strife!” The shocking sound of the voices shook the earth, causing everything to tremble and the other Cultivator’s faces to drain of blood.

“What spell formation is this?!” the words were not spoken by Patriarch Rubicund, whose heart trembled with fear and trepidation as he looked at the foggy wind around them growing less and less clear. Nor were they spoken by Patriarch Pockmarks, who stood there with an unsightly expression on his face.

Instead, they were spoken by another Cultivator. He was short, with a very large head. Because of that, he didn’t stand out very much within the crowd. Even Meng Hao hadn’t even noticed him.

When the big-headed Cultivator spoke out, looks of reverence appeared on the faces of many of the surrounding onlookers, who stepped back politely. Patriarch Pockmarks was from the Han River Sect. Patriarch Rubicund was from the Sky High Sect. And this big-headed Cultivator was the Patriarch of the third great Sect, the Talisman Sect.

His Cultivation base was at the late Core Formation stage. His methods were ruthless, and few people in Dongluo City would dare to provoke him. Furthermore, he was known to be very skilled with spell formations. As he stepped forward and looked out at the foggy wind, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a jade bracelet.

Patriarch Rubicund and Patriarch Pockmarks looked at Patriarch Big-head’s bag of holding with bitter smiles. They said nothing, but it was obvious that he hadn’t been part of the great Spirit Stone theft incident. Clearly, his bag of holding was completely intact.

Patriarch Big-head stared down at the bracelet, the surface of which was murky, but upon which could be seen over one hundred dots of light, moving to and fro. He studied it for a long moment and then took a deep breath. His eyes shone with amazement, and his heart trembled. “What a

splendid Celestial spell formation,” he said. “This is a legendary magic from ancient times, long since lost to the world. And yet here it is today, being employed in front of our own eyes!

“This Celestial spell formation is based upon humans. Ancient Cultivators used powerful corporeal bodies to form the eye of the spell. The more people in the spell formation, the more power it can employ.... The wind of this spell formation has the potential to slay Immortals. Those phantoms are Human Celestials!!” Patriarch Big-head’s scalp was numb. He suddenly turned his head to look at the foggy wind behind them, and his eyes began to glitter brightly.

“However, there are only one hundred people powering this particular spell. Furthermore, these are not ancient Cultivators, and their Cultivation bases are varied and weak. In turn, that means... this spell formation can be broken! What is your choice, to break through the wind in front of us and slay the people therein, or break through the wind behind us, retreat and then come up with another plan?” He looked at Patriarch Pockmarks and Patriarch Rubicund, his eyes gleaming.

The three of them exchanged glances, whereupon their eyes filled with determination.

“I don’t want much,” said Patriarch Big-head with a smile, his eyes filled with avarice. “Just that parrot.”

“I want my belongings back, plus half of the contents of that guy’s bag of holding,” said Patriarch Pockmarks, his voice grim.

“The other half goes to me,” said Patriarch Rubicund, his killing intent flickering, “along with his life!”

Chapter 336: League of Hellfire!

A brutal glow flickered within the eyes of the three Cultivators. Patriarch Big-head laughed heartily and then once again slapped his bag of holding to produce what appeared to be nothing more than an ordinary grain of rice.

It was plump, glossy and white. At first glance, the sight of it would make you hungry.

The eyes of Patriarch Rubicund and Patriarch Pockmarks narrowed. “That’s....”

“This object was pried from the mouth of an ancient Giant Locust,” said Patriarch Big-head, his voice cool. “It was passed down through generations to me. After studying it thoroughly, I refined it anew. It can be used to break any spell formation in Heaven and Earth.” He waved his hand, and suddenly, waves of rice grains flew out from his hand, pouring in sheets toward the black, foggy wind ahead of them.

The pure white rice instantly began to turn dark. It only took the space of a few breaths for it to become pure black. Patriarch Big-head gasped, and a strange look appeared in his eyes. His body trembled, and he began to shrink as if he were being withered. Veins of blood appeared in his eyes.

“Fellow Daoists, I need power from your Cultivation bases!” He lifted his right hand, and Patriarch Rubicund and Patriarch Pockmarks immediately began to transmit power from their Cultivation bases. Patriarch Big-head absorbed it without hesitation.

Other surrounding Cultivators heard the words uttered by Patriarch Big-head. Patriarch Pockmarks glanced at the remaining Han River Sect disciples, and soon, a mutual understanding was reached by everyone. Power poured out from the Cultivation bases of the hundreds of surrounding Cultivators. Patriarch Big-head turned into a black hole as he sucked in the power. His eyes turned bright red, and he raised his hand straight up into the air and extended a finger.

“Luminous Rice...” he said, his voice hoarse. Instantly, the blackened

sheets of rice began to emit blinding rays of light, which shot out, forming together into a vast sheet of brightness. The light illuminated the surrounding darkness of the foggy wind, and if you didn't look too closely, everything suddenly didn't seem as mysterious as before.

Patriarch Big-head bit down on the tip of his tongue and spit out a mouthful of blood. The glowing blood, which was filled with the power lent by the surrounding Cultivators, melded into the shining rice grains within the foggy wind.

“Heavenly Army Transformation!”

A powerful boom filled the air, and the surrounding Cultivators instantly saw a vast array of emaciated figures appear within the fog. They were short, about half the size of an average person, and did not appear to be any sort of Heavenly Army. In fact, they looked more like evil spirits that had just crawled out of hell. All of the grains of rice transformed into such evil spirits.

In the blink of an eye, there were hundreds of them!

The bodies of the evil spirits were indistinct, as if they couldn't quite fully manifest into the world. Even still, a cruel and bloodthirsty viciousness emanated out from them.

Patriarch Big-head's face was pale as he retreated a few steps, clasped hands and bowed. “Heavenly Army, I beseech you to break this formation! The more than one hundred people inside are my sacrifices to you, oh Heavenly Army!” Up ahead, the fog roiled as the massive phantoms began to slam into the evil spirits. Shocking explosions rang out.

Inside the spell formation, the parrot's eyes went wide with both fear and irritation.

“Dammit! That's an Immortal divine ability that's supposed to turn rice into soldiers. Who was it that changed it into something that summons evil spirits!? That's not something a Core Formation Cultivator could pull off, and it's also not a technique from the Ninth Mountain. That's something from... the League of Hellfire from the Fourth Mountain!

“Somehow that guy managed to get his hands onto an incomplete legacy.... Dammit, everybody else can pretty much ignore these evil spirits, but considering the current state of my body... it could cause some big problems if I ran into them.” For the first time, the parrot looked somewhat nervous. “So annoying....” it said, taking in a deep breath.

Meanwhile, back in the Immortal’s cave in the short mountain, Meng Hao’s eyes glowed brightly as he looked at the black pill furnace he held in his hand. On the surface of the pill furnace was the face of a youth, which looked back at Meng Hao with an expression that said it would never yield.

This was none other than the pill furnace he had acquired in the Violet Furnace Lord trial by fire. [1]. However, from the moment he had acquired it, it had showed no sign that it would ever submit to him. At the moment, Meng Hao looked at it with brow furrowed. Finally, he gave a cold snort and performed an incantation with his right hand. Then, he pushed his finger down onto the face of the youth. It twisted and filled with a look of pain.

[tl: [1] = He acquired the black pill furnace in chapter 281]

Meng Hao was currently surrounded by countless threads of Qi, visible only to himself. They swirled toward him from all directions to pour into the pill furnace.

“If you still won’t give in, fine,” said Meng Hao coolly. “A pill furnace with a spirit inside is a bit better, but I’m already used to the kind without.” Meng Hao pushed down, and the Demonic Qi in the area poured in, transforming into a cage. The cage surrounded the image of the youth, and then transformed into something that looked like a net, which completely suppressed it.

The youth screamed, filled with anxiety. However, the scream was weak.

“If I want to let you live, then you can continue to exist. If I want you dead, it will take a mere thought.” Meng Hao’s voice was cold, and even as he spoke the words, the net tightened, thoroughly restricting the youth in all aspects. The blackness of the pill furnace began to grow dim, to be

replaced by a violet color.

Glancing at the pill furnace, Meng Hao waved his right hand, whereupon a vast quantity of medicinal plants emerged. His left hand flickered like a ghost as he began to catalyze, extract fluids, make adjustments, and feed ingredients into the pill furnace. A flame appeared in his right hand; it was not red, but violet.

This flame was none other than the East Pill Everburning Flame, the legacy alchemic flame stoked by his Violet Core. This ever burning alchemic flame would allow him to employ the Spirit Summoning Incantation. [2]

[tl: [2] = The Spirit Summoning Incantation was one of the three gifts given to him by Grandmaster Pill Demon in chapter 294]

Just when Meng Hao was about to begin concocting, the anxious voice of the parrot was transmitted into his mind. Meng Hao immediately sent out his Spiritual Sense, whereupon he saw the fog in the outside world, as well as the hundreds of vicious evil spirits.

He was silent for a moment, and then looked at the pill furnace. His eyes filled with determination as well as a cold glow.

“I don’t care what price you have to pay, give me three days!” he transmitted back. Then he severed his connection with the outside world and began to concoct.

“Three days...” thought the parrot, a feverish light shining in its eyes. A flicker could be seen at its feet, and the meat jelly appeared.

“Lord Fifth gets it, bitch! How annoying! I never imagined that someone would have a Hellfire legacy. Even though it’s not complete, it still... could restrain Lord Fifth!” The parrot eyed the meat jelly earnestly. “Three days. You need to cooperate with me for three days. If Meng Hao isn’t finished by that time, then we’ll just have to flee.”

Only on rare occasions would the meat jelly not be talkative. However, as soon as it heard about the Hellfire legacy, its eyes grew wide.

The meat jelly shivered and nodded repeatedly. “The League of Hellfire

from the Fourth Mountain.... How is it possible for them to appear here?!”

Time passed slowly. Meng Hao’s expression remained calm the entire time. Rumbling sounds were already detectable from outside of the Immortal’s cave, the results of the unanticipated problems the parrot had mentioned.

Meng Hao wasn’t the type of person to lay blame on others. True, it had been the parrot’s idea to lure all the people here. However, even though unexpected problems had cropped up outside, Meng Hao was still confident that they could be handled.

This was the self-confidence of a Cultivator.

“As long as there are no Nascent Soul Cultivators, then all I have to do is put on the blood-colored mask, and I can take care of everything myself if I have to. This is a good opportunity to teach the parrot a bit of a lesson.” Meng Hao’s left hand flickered as he poured more medicinal plants into the pill furnace, along with a mouthful of violet Qi. This Qi was not Core Qi, which could give birth to divine abilities, but normal Cultivation base Qi.

The purpose of this action was to cause his alchemic flame to grow even stronger. A variety of complex thoughts filled his mind as he began to concoct the Perfect Gold Core Pill.

Under normal circumstances, this pill would require quite a bit of time to concoct. However, Meng Hao was a Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy. Furthermore, he had his legacy flame and the Spirit Summoning Incantation. Considering all of that, he was confident that he could reduce the concocting time by quite a bit.

Time passed. Three days later, the squawks of the parrot echoed out throughout the foggy wind. Explosions filled the air. The fog had already subsided by about half. The killing intent of the Cultivators from the three great Sects billowed to the Heavens. They had been trapped for days now, and had constantly been sending power out from their Cultivation bases. They were growing more exhausted, but their hatred for Meng Hao caused them to intensify their efforts.

Of the hundreds of evil spirits, only about half remained. As for the more than one hundred Cultivators who ran about within the spell formation, many were coughing up blood and their bodies were stooped over. They did not seem to fear for their lives; nonetheless, they slowly began to slip into unconsciousness.

As more and more of them passed out, the forces of the three great Sects grew nearer. Patriarch Big-head pulled out more rice, flinging it out into the air. Darkness filled the area, even the sky itself. There were no clouds; this darkness bore the appearance of a turbid magical river.

“The yellow springs appear.... This is definitely the work of the League of Hellfire....” The parrot laughed bitterly. Inside the fog, a light glittered as the meat jelly appeared. It flew through the air listlessly, looking dispirited. The two of them had used quite a variety of special defensive techniques throughout the past three days, but now they were running out of steam.

“Dammit!” said the parrot hatefully. “If I had just one more year to practice, or five hundred Cultivators, then the power of this trifling incomplete legacy couldn’t possibly break through Lord Fifth’s Celestial spell formation!” Suddenly, an explosion could be heard from within the Immortal’s cave.

Meng Hao’s eyes were bloodshot. He had used all the energy he could muster to concoct the Perfect Gold Core Pill. At the critical moment, the pill furnace began to shake. Strands of golden light began to emanate out from within, bathing the entire Immortal’s cave with a golden glow.

Meng Hao’s hair was in disarray, his expression listless. And yet, determination still glowed within his bloodshot eyes. His alchemic flame burned as he continued to refine the pill, increasing its medical strength.

At this moment, the sky in the outside world, which was dark and gloomy to begin with, suddenly filled with massive amounts of black clouds. The black clouds churned and seethed, covering an area fifty kilometers in diameter. The illusory visage of the yellow springs was concealed, and the gruesome darkness banished. However, the Earth

below only grew darker. Booming sounds filled the air as countless bolts of lightning writhed up above like silver snakes.

This was not the Heavenly Tribulation of Perfection. This was Pill Tribulation caused by a medicinal pill!

However, if the pill was successfully concocted, and Meng Hao consumed it, then the Tribulation would change. Its explosiveness would increase exponentially, and it would transform into a horrifying, exterminating Heavenly Tribulation!

Chapter 337: Perfect Gold Core Pill

When the Pill Tribulation appeared, Meng Hao sat in the Immortal's cave, his eyes shining brightly as he stared at the pill furnace in front of him. The pill furnace was thoroughly inundated with golden light, illuminating the entire Immortal's cave with the color of gold.

As the gold light spilled out, Meng Hao could sense cracking sounds.

The sounds came from within the pill furnace; Meng Hao sensed something like a liquid gold within the pill furnace, rapidly congealing, shrinking. Each time it shrank, a cracking sound could be heard, as if the liquid was being compressed.

It was at this time that the Pill Tribulation appeared in the sky overhead. Such tribulation was unavoidable; Meng Hao took a deep breath and concentrated on the pill furnace.

In the outside world, the Tribulation clouds spread out in all directions; lightning crackled and thunder boomed up to the Heavens. Outside of Meng Hao's Immortal's cave, wisps of white Qi were rising up from the short mountain. They circulated together to form into the shape of a pill furnace that seemed to wish to fly up into the sky.

The sight of it caused the late Core Formation Patriarchs of the three great Sects to stare mutely. However, it didn't take long for their expressions to fill with disbelief.

"That's... Pill Tribulation!!"

"That's definitely the legendary Pill Tribulation. I've read about it in the ancient records. They say that when certain medicinal pills appear, or sometimes other Heavenly materials or Earthly treasures, the Heavens become angry and wish to exterminate the object!"

"That damned Cultivator is concocting pills? Who knew he could do that?! And who would have imagined he could concoct a pill that would provoke Pill Tribulation!?"

Greed appeared on the faces of the three Patriarchs.

The Cultivators behind them didn't understand what the black clouds meant, so their eyes filled with confusion. Then, the booming of thunder began to grow more intense, and their faces filled with fear.

It was at this moment that a huge tremor ran through the earth as what remained of the more than one hundred Cultivators powering the spell formation all coughed up blood and then passed out. As they fell, the fog dissipated.

The short mountain was now visible, as were the parrot and the meat jelly, floating in mid-air. They were currently looking up into the sky, odd expressions on their faces.

When the fog fell, the remaining evil spirits began to scream, as if the lightning and thunder in the sky filled them with terror.

Suddenly, a massive, thick lightning bolt began to descend down toward the earth. As it shot down, over a thousand smaller lightning bolts merged together with it until it was nearly a meter and a half wide. It shot directly toward the short mountain.

The sight of it caused the Patriarchs of the three great Sects, along with the Cultivators who surrounded them, to stare open-mouthed.

However, just when everyone thought that the lightning bolt was about to smash into the mountain, it suddenly began to collapse for no apparent reason. As it did, it split into hundreds of smaller lightning bolts, which then screamed toward the trembling evil spirits.

It seemed these evil spirits were also something that attracted the attention of the Heavenly Tribulation, causing it to split apart and seek to destroy them.

That was the reason for the strange looks on the faces of the parrot and meat jelly. Actually, it was a lucky break that the Pill Tribulation appeared at the exact same moment that the spell formation fell apart.

Explosions filled the air and the ground quaked. The hundreds of evil spirits screamed miserably as over half were instantly smashed into nothing. The other half began to slowly dissipate, intent on leaving.

Not a single spark of lightning headed toward Meng Hao's pill furnace inside the Immortal's cave. The golden glow shone up from the pill furnace, spreading out in all directions, piercing out through the Immortal's cave, penetrating up through the mountain and the soil.

Suddenly, a blinding golden light appeared outside of the short mountain. In addition, bands of golden light seeped up from within the earth.

The evil spirits who had escaped the Tribulation Lightning and were dissipating, saw the golden light and then began to scream and disappear with even greater haste.

A fathomless golden light!

It shot out from the center of the mountain, as if a sun were buried deep within!

It seemed as if this sun wished to rise up out of hell and charge into battle with the Heavens!

The meat jelly and the parrot had long since flown off. However, the parrot felt bad for the Cultivators who had formed the spell formation, so before leaving, it and the meat jelly carried them off to hide some distance away.

Within the blink of an eye, the mountain was no longer visible; the only thing one could see was the boundless glowing light.

The light pierced up into the clouds above, causing them to churn violently. The lightning danced back and forth, and a second bolt began to form. It shot down toward the center of the golden light, the short mountain which was the nexus of it all.

It moved with incredible speed, and was soon almost directly on top of the mountain.

However, even as that happened....

A popping sound rang out within the Immortal's cave. The lid flew off of the pill furnace, and an unprecedentedly bright golden light emanated out,

eclipsing the light from before. Something that had the appearance of a sun flew out, emanating scorchingly hot rays of golden light. Meng Hao's Immortal's cave seemed as if it would ignite, along with the entire mountain!

What actually was... it began to melt. The stones, the restrictive spells, all the objects within, became ash in an instant. The only thing left behind was the piercing golden light which shone up into the Heavens. The light was impossible to cover up as it shot upward to slam into the lightning bolt.

When the light and the lightning bolt connected, a massive boom ripped out that violently shook Heaven and Earth. The Immortal's cave was gone; Meng Hao sat there cross-legged, bathed in goldenness. The ground beneath him was beginning to melt. The black soil was transforming into golden liquid, which spread out everywhere to form a lake!

A golden lake!

At the very center of the lake was Meng Hao, his hair flying about, his Violet Core spinning inside of him, the strange mark on his forehead glittering. His clothes rippled wildly, and his eyes shone with stubbornness.

There in his right hand... was a golden medicinal pill!

It might be more correct to say that what he held was not a medicinal pill, but a blazing golden sun!

This golden pill was the Perfect Gold Core Pill!

The Patriarchs from the three great Sects, along with the hundreds of other Cultivators, stood there with hearts pounding. The instant they saw the medicinal pill, the Dao Pillars of the Foundation Establishment Cultivators began to tremble, as if they were aware that the results of consuming this pill would be different from that of any other.

As for the Core Formation Cultivators, especially the three Patriarchs, their bodies trembled violently. They could sense intense hope emanating out from the Cores within their bodies. It seemed as if their Cores wanted

to merge with this golden medicinal pill. It only took a moment for the three Cultivators to suddenly understand; were they able to consume this pill, then... they would be able to tread an unprecedented path of cultivation!

Only the three Patriarchs could control themselves; the remaining hundreds of Cultivators instantly went crazy and shot directly toward Meng Hao, intent on stealing the Perfect Gold Core Pill.

However, even as they approached, the sound of thunder filled the air as three lightning bolts congealed. Meng Hao's hair whipped in the air as he used all the power he possessed to place the pill in his mouth and consume it!

Here begins the great Dao of the Gold Core!

Chapter 338: Perfect Immortal Body!

“No!!”

The sight of Meng Hao consuming the pill sent all of the Cultivators, even the Patriarchs of the three great Sects, into a frenzy. Their minds spun, and they couldn't control themselves; they rushed madly toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao was calm as he placed the medicinal pill into his mouth. However, his eyes shone with an extraordinary light. His hair whipped in the air as the Heavenly Tribulation roiled above him. He sat straight and tall in the middle of the golden lake, filled with a sort of divine grace.

The pill did not dissolve, but instead instantly slid down into his abdomen. When that happened, the descending lightning bolt suddenly stopped in mid-air and exploded. Countless sparks of electricity showered out, forming into something that looked like a face.

The face's eyes were closed, but it still seemed as if it could see everything in the world. And it appeared to be concentrating on Meng Hao.

The face faded away, and the Tribulation clouds in the sky seethed with unprecedented intensity. The clouds had been 50 kilometers in diameter, but now they grew with explosive speed. 250 kilometers. 500 kilometers. 1,500 kilometers.... It only took a moment for them to cover a radius of 5,000 kilometers.

For 5,000 kilometers in all directions, black clouds covered everything. Thunder boomed and lightning danced. Flashing light from the Heavens seemed to be preparing to sunder the Earth!

A few hundred kilometers away from Meng Hao, in the field of rubble, the sound of ragged panting could be heard. The old man who was sealed there was observing the proceedings from within his black mist. No one could see him, but as he looked up, he could see the lightning, and it made him laugh. His laughter was hearty and filled with excitement and pleasure.

“A Perfect Immortal Body!” laughed the old man. “One of the three great Immortal Bodies, the Perfect Immortal Body! This kid will reach Immortal Ascension soon!”

Meanwhile, Meng Hao’s body began to shake as the Perfect Gold Core Pill slid down into his abdomen. A fierce expression covered his face, and veins bulged out on his forehead. His body felt as if it were about to be violently ripped into pieces.

The pain was indescribable. After forming his Violet Core, his pupils had taken on a violet hue, but now, the violet was being replaced with gold.

Within him, his Violet Core shook, and cracking sounds could be heard as fissures spread out across its surface. It seemed to be on the verge of breaking into pieces.

At the same time, the hundreds of Cultivators in the area began to descend upon him, their eyes burning red. They seemed to have lost their minds; the only thing that remained was frenzy and greed. Meng Hao had consumed the golden pill, so they wanted to consume him!

It seemed the thought of even taking a single bite of his flesh was enough to drive them to infinite madness.

However, even as they neared him, Meng Hao lifted his head up toward the sky and roared. The sound of the roar slammed into the approaching Cultivators like a wave. Blood sprayed from their mouths as they tumbled backward.

Even the Patriarchs of the three great Sects were sent spinning away, bodies shaking and blood shooting from their mouths.

As they spun away, out of control, Meng Hao’s Violet Core shattered. The pain caused by its disintegration caused Meng Hao’s roar to become even more shocking. His pupils were now more than half gold, and a golden light filled his entire body.

Inside of him, where his Violet Core used to exist, a Gold Core suddenly appeared, whereupon it instantly swept up the shattered remnants of the

Violet Core.

Massive amounts of golden light poured out from the Gold Core, spreading out through Meng Hao's Qi passageways. His entire body was filled with the color of gold.

The pain was instantly replaced with a rapturous feeling. His hair whipped about him as he felt power surging through his body. His heart began to pound. Every rotation of his Cultivation base sent roaring booms in all directions.

His skin was a bit pale, and a bit of a demonic air seemed to seep into his features. He was more handsome, his body taller and straighter. He was surrounded by golden light.

Power! He felt something similar to what he had felt back near the Rebirth Cave, when he reached Core Formation. Back then, the difference between Foundation Establishment and Core Formation had been clear; that was the same feeling he had now.

His Spiritual Sense grew, his physical body became stronger, his bones tougher. Even his mental faculties were quicker than before. Everything about him changed, as if he were going through a massive transformation.

This transformation equated to stepping foot onto a great Dao.

The Great Dao of the Golden Core!

Meng Hao's eyes opened, and when they did, a dazzling golden glow shot out. Golden light shone through his green robe, making his entire person seem like some sort of Celestial warrior!

Off in the distance, the parrot and the meat jelly were cautiously observing. The parrot's eyes were wide and filled shock. It had been with Meng Hao for years, but most of that time had been spent in the copper mirror; Meng Hao actually had many secrets that it wasn't aware of.

As for the meat jelly, it really had no idea about Meng Hao's true level. It only knew that he seemed relatively strong.

Now, both of them watched as he underwent his transformation.

“How bizarre!” muttered the meat jelly. “It’s a Perfect Immortal Body! I never noticed it before!”

“Inhuman!” said the parrot, sounding hurt. “What incredible luck! What amazing destiny! Only a Sublime Spirit Doyen can have a Perfect Immortal Body, and yet, he actually does! Only big shots like Lord Fifth should have a Perfect Immortal Body!

“Three Heavenly Scriptures: Sublime Spirit, Dao Divinity, Heaven Severing. Each scripture contains secrets of the Heavenly Mountains and Seas. Using them, the three great Immortal Bodies can be cultivated. From ancient times until now, only a Sublime Spirit Doyen and a Dao Divinity Doyen have appeared. A Heaven Severing Doyen has never been seen.

“This kid really has Heaven defying luck. A Perfect Immortal Body.... Ahhhhhh, with a body like that, if he reaches Immortal Ascension, he could become a Legacy Apprentice of the Sublime Spirit Doyen.

“Ah, Doyens, truly powerful experts within the Nine Mountains and Seas, Cultivators who can oppose the Lords of the Nine Mountains and Seas. Sure, Lord Fifth doesn’t care too much about them, but... Lord Fifth is in a weak position now, dammit, so he has to rely on their help.”

The parrot was getting more and more animated. “And then there’s that damned legend, which is the reason I’ve met such calamity.... According to the legend, if all three of those scriptures are collected and combined, they will form the Mountain and Sea Scripture! That scripture....” As it started to recall the terrifying Mountain and Sea Scripture of legend, it seemed on the verge of going crazy. [1]

[tl: [1] = The name of the “Mountain and Sea Scripture” is exactly the same as the actual historical Chinese text entitled “Classic of Mountains and Seas” https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classic_of_Mountains_and_Seas]

As for Meng Hao, he took a deep breath as he felt his Cultivation base rotating along with the Gold Core. Great waves of power washed through him, filling him with determination.

“So, is this the power of the Perfect Gold Core...?” he murmured, his eyes glowing with golden light. His entire person radiated dignity. He waved his

right arm, and power exploded out of his Cultivation base.

As it did, a vortex of golden wind sprang into being around him, sweeping across everything.

The hundreds of Cultivators stared in shock. The frenzy was still visible on their faces, but they couldn't stop themselves from backing up, pushed away by the invisible power of the golden wind generated by Meng Hao.

In the blink of an eye, the golden wind swirling around Meng Hao had turned into a screaming cyclone. As it spun through the air, a face appeared within the wind, that of Meng Hao.

"As of this moment," Meng Hao said coolly, "I no longer need to hold back my Cultivation base. It is time to enter the mid stage of the Perfect Gold Core!" The Gold Core within him began to spin rapidly and Cultivation base power surged up. As it grew stronger, the cyclone caused the hundreds of surrounding Cultivators to be thrown backward.

Astonishment filled their faces, especially the Patriarchs of the three great Sects, whose eyes shone with disbelief. It felt to them as if Meng Hao could crush them at any time; the Cores inside of them were even beginning to show signs of instability.

The same question was spinning in the minds of everyone: "What... what pill did that guy just consume?!"

It was at this moment that Meng Hao's Cultivation base reached the pinnacle of its climb, and a great roaring filled his mind. It seemed like his Cultivation base had reached a bottleneck, and that at any moment, it would break through.

The golden storm winds surrounded Meng Hao for a radius of fifty kilometers. He felt himself suddenly break through from the early Gold Core stage to the mid Gold Core stage!

He felt his body grow tougher and his Spiritual Sense stronger. The Gold Core fused with him, forming what seemed like a second soul.

The Gold Core contained his memories, his soul, his life. It was as if his life force and very life itself existed inside of it. In fact it actually felt like a

seed.

The seed of a Great Dao!

The instant he entered the mid Gold Core stage, the golden glow around Meng Hao intensified until it seemed like a golden sun hovered above his head, shining out across the land, turning everything the color of gold.

“It’s about time to form my Core Qi. I wonder what the essence of my Core Qi will be....” He closed his eyes as the golden cyclone whipped around him. In his mind appeared images... from when he was small until now: the Tower of Tang, Yunjie County, Mount Daqing, the Reliance Sect, the State of Zhao, the Southern Domain, the Violet Fate Sect... all the way to the events at the Rebirth Cave.

“Core Qi essence can be abstract or literal....” he thought. Suddenly, he recalled the starry sky he had seen just before he met Choumen Tai.

In that land... he had looked up and seen an ancient starry sky.

Meng Hao also remembered that Ji Hongdong’s Core Qi had taken the shape of a starry sky, except, that was the starry sky of the Ji Clan.

“The starry sky of ancient times, that is the essence of my Core Qi.” He opened his eyes, and as he did, the golden sun exploded. Massive amounts of golden Core Qi expanded out. At the same time, the golden tempest around him suddenly shrank inward. In the blink of an eye it melded into Meng Hao’s body, causing the golden glow which bathed the surroundings to disappear.

The only thing left was roiling Gold Core Qi which took the shape of... a starscape!

It was not a golden starscape, but a black one. However, within the blackness was a myriad of golden stars. Those stars were stars that few people could ever see... the starry sky of ancient times!

The blindingly bright starscape which floated above Meng Hao’s head immediately began to emanate an unprecedentedly shocking pressure. The surrounding hundreds of Cultivators were shaken, especially the Patriarchs of the three great Sects. The instant they saw it, they gasped in

astonishment.

“His Core Qi... its essence... is a starscape!!”

“The power of Core Qi is manifested by the grandness of its essence. What could possibly be more grand than the stars?”

“From ancient times until now, only the truly Chosen of Heaven and Earth have manifested Core Qi as a starscape. This guy....” The three of them began panting, looks of fear on their faces as they slowly backed away.

Chapter 339: Vengeance To Be Had!

Suddenly, thunderous booms could be heard from within the roiling black clouds that stretched out for 5,000 kilometers. A multitude of dancing lightning bolts could be seen within them. In addition, a terrifying Qi suddenly appeared. It was a Qi that wished to destroy everything, a Qi that seemed to desire to wipe out all the people in Heaven and Earth.

Even if it meant destroying the land itself, everyone must die!

Meng Hao looked up at the vast, churning Tribulation clouds up above. It didn't matter how strong he was, it seemed the Heavens would destroy and kill everything!

An intense golden light shone in Meng Hao's eyes. There was something different about acquiring the Perfect Gold Core than the time he had acquired the Perfect Foundation. A change had occurred within him, as if a Great Dao had opened up in front of him.

However, before anything else, he needed to transcend this Heavenly Tribulation!

"Dammit, Lord Fifth is gonna have to risk it all!" cried the parrot. "This master is different from the others and I can't pull the wool over his eyes. His luck and fortune can't possibly measure up to mine, but after all these years I haven't seen anyone better! He's the one. YOU'RE the one, kid! Lord Fifth is gonna go all out! Let's delay this Heavenly Tribulation!" The parrot's eyes turned red as it suddenly shot forward. At the same time, it lifted its claws up to tie a black band around its head, covering its right eye.

As the parrot flew out, the lightning up above began to coalesce. The sheer amount of it vastly surpassed that from the Pill Tribulation. Furthermore, this lightning was red in color.

Meng Hao's hair flew wildly around him, and his body shook violently. His eyes turned as crimson as if they had been ripped into pieces. The lake water beneath him boiled, rapidly transforming into myriad golden beads that slowly began to rise into the air.

“Parrot!” roared Meng Hao. At the same time, he began to use a technique the parrot had taught him to exercise control over his consciousness. In the blink of an eye, the golden light in his eyes vanished, as did all of the Qi he was emanating. His body suddenly seemed to wither, and his expression grew dull.

The parrot soared up into the air and let out a furious shout: “Deceive the Heavens!”

Along with the shout, its body exploded with countless multicolored beams of light. The nearby Cultivators trembled as wisps of Qi began to emerge from the tops of their heads. The strands of Qi floated up into the sky and merged together with the light to form a huge net.

In the middle of its descent, the red lightning suddenly hesitated, as if it couldn’t locate Meng Hao’s Qi.

“Ultimate Vexation, get over and help, bitch!” the parrot roared.

The meat jelly hesitated for only a moment. Then, a pop could be heard as its body suddenly transformed into a million illusory phantoms that shot up into the air to form a second net.

The Tribulation clouds in the sky seethed, and more lightning bolts writhed about, apparently searching for Meng Hao’s Qi.

“Luckily you’re asleep in your own Heavens of Ji!” cried the parrot arrogantly. “Only a sliver of your will exists. Maybe I couldn’t fool your true self, but you think I can’t hoodwink a bit of your will? Lord Fifth is omniscient! Alright, all I have to do is hold on for three days, and this Tribulation can be delayed for sure!” As soon as the words were out of its mouth, the red lightning bolt descended. Being unable to find Meng Hao’s Qi, it shot toward the first large net.

A boom could be heard as the illusory net shattered. The hundreds of Cultivators surrounding Meng Hao spat up blood and then, with the exception of the three Patriarchs, all of them... instantly exploded.

The three Patriarchs coughed up blood, and their bodies shrank and withered. Inside, cracks spread out across their Cores, as if they might

collapse at any moment. After a moment, their eyes grew clear and their faces filled with astonishment and fear. They retreated at top speed, scalps numb. The only thing they could think about was running away!

“Bitch! Why don’t you keep searching for the correct will!” raged the parrot. “Instead, you’re just blowing random things up! You’re, you’re, you’re... you’re cheating! Fine, so can Lord Fifth! I’ll screw you to death! Tribulation schmibulation! Lord Fifth is gonna screw you to death! Ultimate Vexation, come help me, bitch! Turn those clouds into my favorite Fluffy!” It seemed to feel its dignity had been severely challenged. With a howl of rage, it bit down on one of its own multicolored feathers, then whipped its head about and threw it down. Eyes brimming with insanity, its body suddenly grew larger and larger, and it shot up into the sky.

It flew at high speed directly into the Tribulation clouds!

At the same time, a beam of light shot out from the meat jelly net, seemingly a bit resentfully. It entered into the Tribulation clouds and spread out through all of them. Suddenly, the clouds began to twist and distort. Meng Hao gaped open mouthed as he saw the Tribulation clouds begin to change shape.

They changed into... a gargantuan, plump animal, covered with white fur.

The luxuriant furriness of this animal is difficult to describe. The fur draped off of the enormous creature which stretched out for thousands of kilometers in every direction, so large you couldn’t see from one end to the other.

As for the parrot, it gave an excited squawk as it dove into the fur. It emerged again in a moment, but showed no signs of being tired, instead diving enthusiastically back in from a different angle. This process repeated over and over again.

As Meng Hao watched on, his mind went blank. He could never have possibly imagined that the Tribulation clouds could be changed into this appearance....

What had previously been a very solemn and momentous occasion, had suddenly turned somewhat comical....

Meng Hao shook his head. Suddenly, the furry Tribulation cloud let out a massive boom. The countless lightning bolts dissipated in all directions. Within the cloud, the parrot was visible, its body dark, but still stubbornly persisting.

“Fluffy, I’m gonna screw you to death. Wench! I’m definitely gonna screw you to death!” The excited parrot didn’t seem to want to stop.

However, the masses of lightning in the area began to fall, accompanied by thunderous booms. They shot toward Meng Hao, seemingly without number, tens of thousands of them. Meng Hao’s scalp went numb. The Heavenly Tribulation when he had acquired his Perfect Foundation had seemed solemn and imposing in its desire to destroy all living things.

But this... the seemingly endless amount of lightning gave off a Qi that made Meng Hao feel uneasy. It seemed that this Tribulation sent against his Perfect Gold Core had somehow changed, thanks to the interference of the parrot.

As the lightning descended toward Meng Hao, the meat jelly net let out a disgruntled howl and moved to cover over Meng Hao. A massive boom sounded out, shaking the earth. The lightning slammed onto the meat jelly, causing Meng Hao to shake in trepidation.

A blinding light filled his eyes that made it impossible to see anything around him. After a very long time, the lightning and thunder gradually faded away. Meng Hao looked back up to find that the massive ball of fur in the sky was gone.

His eyes widened and he took a deep breath. Everything looked placid, but Meng Hao knew that such massive quantities of Tribulation clouds couldn’t possibly vanish like this. The sense of crisis he’d felt because of the Heavenly Tribulation had not departed.

The pitch-black parrot fell to the ground with a flopping sound. It struggled to its feet and then slapped itself roughly on the chest.

It was panting. Its expression was somewhat listless and its Qi weak. However, its voice was as arrogant as ever as it said, "Is Lord Fifth badass or what? The Heavenly Tribulation has been delayed for you. Time to give your profound thanks. Without Lord Fifth, it wouldn't matter if you had Ultimate Vexation here. The Heavenly Tribulation would just keep going on forever until he was smashed to pieces.

"Don't get too excited, though. I went all out to delay the Heavenly Tribulation, but there's no way to tell for how long. You need to get ahold of your Tribulation Transcending Life Form as quickly as possible. Alright, it's time for Lord Fifth to rest up. Don't be too moved. Oh, and don't forget to find some more furry, feathered creatures." With that, it fell flat onto its face. Its body transformed into gray ash which drifted away with the wind. However, along with the ash was a multicolored glow that flew into Meng Hao's bag of holding.

Meng Hao's mind and heart shook. He quickly checked the copper mirror inside the bag of holding. The parrot loved to brag, and wasn't very reliable, but Meng Hao would never forget how much it had helped him just now.

Dispersing the Tribulation clouds had seemed simple, but seeing the parrot in the state it had been just now, Meng Hao knew that it had paid a high price for its actions.

"No need to check on it," said the meat jelly languidly. Its body was tattered and listless. "It's not going to die. After it rests for a few days it'll be fine. Poor me, always struck by lightning. I like eating it, but sometimes I just get so full." It transformed into a hat which settled onto Meng Hao's head.

"You need to be careful," it continued, its voice growing weaker. "That wicked parrot and I once helped a young girl delay Heavenly Tribulation. Later she got pissed off and tried to kill us. She chased us for years and years. Repaid kindness with enmity. I really hate people like that." Eventually it trailed off into a muffled murmur, and then stopped talking.

Meng Hao sat there thinking for a long moment. He looked around, and

then waved his hand, causing more than a hundred medicinal pills to fly out. They crumbled in mid-air as they shot toward the unconscious Cultivators that the parrot and the meat jelly had been protecting. After the medicine entered their bodies, the Cultivators trembled, and then slowly began to open their eyes.

After coming to their senses, they appeared somewhat confused. It didn't take long for them to compose themselves and begin to look around.

The mountain, and everything around it, was gone. The medicinal cistern was gone, and the buildings they had constructed were now nothing but crumbled ruins. The lake that had formed was also gone; left behind was only a large crater.

They looked at it all silently, bitterness filling their hearts. They had gone to a lot of trouble to seek safety in this place, to find somewhere to practice cultivation in a convenient fashion. But now, everything was gone.

"The Immortal's cave is gone," said Meng Hao. "But I can find you another one!" The more than one hundred Cultivators lifted their heads up to look at him.

"The medicinal cistern is gone, but I can make you a new one!" This second sentence caused a bright glow to appear in their eyes. It seemed their resolve had been ignited.

"If you are willing," said Meng Hao, his voice resonating loudly, "follow me! There is vengeance to be had! The time has come to kill!" He flicked his sleeve and shot up into the air. Behind him followed the more than one hundred Cultivators, their eyes flashing with intense killing intent. These were Black Lands Cultivators, and they understood what it meant to exact vengeance!

Meng Hao's Spiritual Sense spread out to track down the fleeing Patriarchs from the three great Sects.

Chapter 340: One Qi, Three Bodies

Meng Hao was in the lead, followed by well over a hundred Cultivators. They whistled through the sky in formation; the sight of it was very imposing.

Meng Hao could clearly make out the three fleeing Patriarchs with his Spiritual Sense. They had chosen to flee in different directions. However, their speeds were all different; obviously they were using various secret techniques to go as fast as possible.

“Three directions....” Meng Hao gave a cold snort and then extended his hand to point down at the ground. Immediately a buzzing sound could be heard. No one else could see anything happen, but Meng Hao saw ghost images spring up everywhere, after which vast quantities of Demonic Qi appeared. It swirled up and rapidly began to coalesce in front of Meng Hao.

In the blink of an eye, it had transformed into two figures. They were indistinct, blurry. The only thing visible was the Qi, gradually spreading out. As for everyone else, they saw nothing at all.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he waved his right hand, causing two Blood Clones to materialize in front of him. They moved forward to merge with the Demonic Qi, which was a shocking sight.

This was a technique Meng Hao had come up with earlier. By merging a Blood Clone with Demonic Qi, it would make it both easier to control his Etheric Incarnation as well as simpler to recall it if necessary.

The two Blood Clones' battle prowess was not equal to that of his true self, but the Blood Clone Demonic Qi combination could explode with incredible power.

If the Patriarchs of the three great Sects were at the peak of their power, they could easily defeat these Blood Clones. However, Meng Hao could see that, with the exception of Patriarch Big-head, they had all sustained internal injuries as well as Cultivation base reduction. Even more importantly, their minds had been shaken. Combine this with their

lowered Cultivation base, and they couldn't be in a weaker position.

Meng Hao was confident that his Incarnations could definitely exterminate them!

Considering the level of his Spiritual Sense he could definitely control both of these Incarnations; if anything unexpected happened, there were other options he could employ to handle the situation. He sent his will into the two Blood Clone Demonic Qi Incarnations and then sent them shooting off in two different directions.

He also split the more than one hundred Cultivators into three groups, two of whom he sent to follow the Blood Clones off into the distance.

Then, he raised his head and locked his Spiritual Sense onto the only of the three great Sect Patriarchs who had a bag of holding: Patriarch Big-head. Followed by around fifty Cultivators, he headed directly in the man's direction.

"You followed me for days with murderous intent. You destroyed the spell formation of my Immortal's cave! Do you really think I would let you get away with that!?" Meng Hao's eyes flashed with killing intent. These people had been courting death, and Meng Hao wouldn't be softhearted with them.

Most importantly, they had seen something they shouldn't have! The consequences for them would be death!

Filled with killing intent, Meng Hao shot along at top speed.

Meanwhile, in another location, Patriarch Rubicund was zooming along, his face pale. Currently, he was only able to wield about forty to fifty percent of the power of his Cultivation base. Furthermore, his bag of holding was empty; he had no medicinal pills, no magical items, nothing with which he could use to recover.

A feeling of desolation rose up in his heart, which then transformed into intense regret. And yet, how could he ever have imagined that the situation would have turned out so opposite to expectations?

"I have to get out of here. I need to go into secluded meditation and

cultivate. After my Cultivation base is recovered, I'll recruit some more Fellow Daoists to go kill that guy!" His eyes radiated vicious hatred. All he had to do was spread the word about a man who could concoct golden medicinal pills, and there would be plenty of Black Lands Cultivators willing to go after him.

In fact, there may even be some Nascent Soul eccentrics. If that were the case, it wouldn't matter what superhuman powers the guy had, he would be dead without a doubt.

Suddenly the reflection of a bloody glow could be seen in the old man's eyes. His heart lurched and an intense sensation of imminent crisis filled his mind and heart. He veered off to the side without hesitation.

The instant he shifted his momentum, a bloody beam of light whistled past him at high speed. Ripples emanated out through the air as it passed, causing Patriarch Rubicund's face to flicker. His heart pounded; he knew that if he hadn't evaded at the right time just now, his head would have exploded!

An intense, grim sound filled the air as the rippling passed the old man. As the sound emanated out, the red glow in the air exploded.

"SMASH!"

The ripples transformed into an intense attack. Booms filled the air as the old man, even in the middle of dodging and retreating, coughed up a mouthful of blood. His face pale, he turned around.

The first thing he saw was a blood-red figure. Its hair was red, its robe, even its skin. It approached slowly, and as it did, the old man could sense an invisible but powerful Qi. It was bizarre, but as it emanated out, it transformed into an intense dread.

He couldn't see this thing's Cultivation base!

The bloody phantom's eyes seemed to be completely blank, and even more strange, the closer the old man looked, the more he realized it was impossible to tell whether it had cultivated some heretical technique, or was a puppet.

“Who are you, your excellency?” said the old man, sounding frustrated. Were his Cultivation base at the peak of its power, he wouldn’t care, but at the moment, he was seriously injured, with an empty bag of holding. The circumstances couldn’t be more inauspicious.

The Blood Clone’s eyes suddenly flickered and seemed to come to life. The look in its eyes suddenly resembled that of Meng Hao’s. “Did you really forget me so quickly?” it said. “Didn’t you say you would chase me to the ends of the earth to kill me?”

Great waves of emotion suddenly flickered across Patriarch Rubicund’s face. Without thinking about it, he backed up, his heart racing.

“It’s him.... But... but how could he be using a puppet like this? Is it a puppet, or... could it be... an Etheric Incarnation?” When his thoughts reached this point, his mind began to spin, and the blood completely drained from his face. The technique to form Etheric Incarnations was not something Core Formation Cultivators could master. It was a divine ability that only Nascent Soul Cultivators could employ!

As the old man began to flee, he suddenly heard the sound of running. A black mist appeared as the fifty or more Cultivators arrived, running together according to the parrot’s spell formation.

“Just who is this guy...?” Patriarch Rubicund’s scalp went numb, and his eyes filled with despair and frenzy.

Meanwhile, in another location and a different direction, Patriarch Pockmarks of the Han River Sect was speaking similar words, his face filled with bitterness.

He was surrounded by a red mist, outside of which were fifty Cultivators running in formation. In front of him was a figure dressed in a red robe, with indistinct facial features. The only thing he could make out were two blood-red eyes.

The eyes seemed to contain no emotions at all; they were completely merciless.

Patriarch Pockmark’s face was pale; his Cultivation base was actually

the weakest of the three; he was of the late Core Formation stage, but his injuries were severe. Cracks covered his Core, and he could only wield roughly thirty percent of his power.

He hesitated for a moment then said, "Look, all of this is just a misunderstanding. Sir...." Suddenly, a boom filled the air, and the entire area was covered in mist.

Off in another direction, Meng Hao's face was calm as he shot through mid-air in a band of light. Up ahead of him, Patriarch Big-head's scalp was numb as he used everything he could muster to fly forward.

Occasionally he would spit up some blood; Meng Hao wasn't sure what secret technique he was using, but it continued to rapidly boost his speed. Meng Hao followed, frowning. At the moment, he was pushing forward with all the speed he could muster, but was still unable to catch up. He could only maintain the current distance.

"Just what technique is he using to achieve such speed?" thought Meng Hao, his eyes flashing. He suddenly waved his right hand out and pointed with his index finger. "Demon Sealing, Eighth Hex!" His finger descended, and ghost images sprang up everywhere as a bizarre power shot toward Patriarch Big-head.

As it descended, the man's expression changed dramatically. However, just a moment later, to Meng Hao's shock, he spit up a mouthful of blood and used some method to seemingly unfetter his body and shoot forward in a flash.

Meng Hao was visibly shocked.

Patriarch Big-head's heart trembled. "Dammit! This guy just recently broke into mid Core Formation. He just cultivated Core Qi! How could he be so inhuman? And what technique was it that he just used? It forced me to use a forbidden legacy technique to get away!" His escape had seemed nonchalant to Meng Hao, but in truth, the forbidden legacy technique was self-destructive; his injuries were now even worse.

"I can't keep doing this," he thought. "At this rate, he won't even have to make a move. I'll eventually just die from my injuries!" Grinding his teeth,

he suddenly stopped in mid-air and slapped his bag of holding to produce a grain of pure white rice. He threw it out in front of him.

Flashing incantations with both hands, he then pointed toward the grain of rice and said, "Luminous rice, transform into a Heavenly army!" His voice was accompanied by a roaring sound which echoed out. The grain of rice transformed into a raging torrent of blackness. Popping sounds filled the air as more than a hundred evil spirits appeared.

Patriarch Big-head's neck was purple, and his extremely large head was covered with cold sweat. His breathing was ragged as he utilized the technique. His injuries had apparently worsened even further; blood sprayed from his mouth and his eyes filled with viciousness.

At this point, he didn't hope to slay his opponent, but just to delay him.

Unfortunately, as soon as the hundred or so evil spirits appeared and shot screaming toward Meng Hao, Meng Hao calmly said: "Amateur!"

Suddenly, Core Qi exploded out above his head. The golden Qi transformed into a starscape filled with golden, glowing stars. The light from the stars shot out toward the incoming evil spirits.

A booming explosion echoed out; the evil spirits could do nothing to block Meng Hao. They dissipated along with miserable screams. Patriarch Big-head's face went pale as he continued to retreat. However, Meng Hao had already lifted up his hand.

Mania poured from the eyes of Patriarch Big-head. Seemingly risking everything, he performed an incantation with his left hand, simultaneously slapping his bag of holding with the other hand to produce a magical item. His heart filled with bitterness, but he knew that he would have to risk it all in this battle in order to have even the slightest chance of making it out alive.

Chapter 341: Chase Big-Head to the Death!

However... just as Patriarch Big-head was about to go all out, the bright, sunny sky was suddenly split by the appearance of a bolt of lightning. The Tribulation clouds were gone, but the lightning bolt shot down toward Meng Hao nonetheless.

It descended with incredible speed, landing directly onto the hat on Meng Hao's head. A deafening boom filled the air.

Meng Hao wasn't hurt, but wisps of greenish smoke rose up from the hat. Meng Hao gaped in shock. He looked up into the sky only to find it as beautiful as ever. The lightning bolt seemed to have been a fluke.

"That was the Qi of Heavenly Tribulation..." thought Meng Hao with a frown. Thankfully, the lightning bolt hadn't done any damage; it had been absorbed by the meat jelly hat.

The scene also shocked Patriarch Big-head, who looked up into the sky as well. However, he quickly recovered and began to flee with all the speed he could muster. He wanted to establish as much distance as possible between himself and Meng Hao.

Meng Hao frowned. He suddenly had a very bad feeling. The lightning bolt just now had been too sudden, without any warning whatsoever. The sky above was a deep, beautiful blue. Meng Hao's gaze once again came to rest on the fleeing Patriarch Big-head.

Meng Hao gave a cold snort, then strode forward.

Mustering incredible speed, he shot off, disappearing in an instant.

Patriarch Big-head's face was paler than ever as he fled. He had already been running for an entire day, and his bag of holding was now devoid of medicinal pills used for healing. His internal injuries were getting worse, and he could only employ forty percent of the power of his Cultivation base.

“Dammit, dammit....” His eyes were bloodshot and he gnashed his teeth. Meng Hao followed behind, stuck onto him like marrow onto bone.

Occasionally, a blast of Core Qi would whistle toward him, which would leave Patriarch Big-head scared witless. He couldn’t think of anything else to do other than to run away with all the power he could muster.

“Just how long is he gonna keep following me!?!?” Patriarch Big-head felt like he was about to collapse. He could sense nothing but ill tidings regarding Patriarch Rubicund and Patriarch Pockmarks. Of the hundreds of people who had begun this matter, he knew that he was the only one left alive. He was filled with regrets; the dogged pursuit he was enduring left him filled with despair and dread.

Suddenly, a Core Qi attack shot toward him. In response, Patriarch Big-head spit up a mouthful of blood. The air beneath his feet seethed as a cloud of spectres appeared, boosting his speed and instantly increasing the distance between him and Meng Hao.

A strange light shone from Meng Hao’s eyes. There had been multiple occasions throughout the day during which he was just about to catch up to his opponent; however, every time, Patriarch Big-head would use some method relating to evil spirits to add distance between them.

Meng Hao hadn’t encountered situations like these very often. Behind him, the more than one hundred Cultivators were also in pursuit. Their speed couldn’t compare to Meng Hao’s, but they had Meng Hao’s Blood Clones to lead them, so they were able to follow along nonetheless.

As dusk fell, it grew more difficult to see things clearly. Up ahead was a wide plain which was filled with residences organized in rings and surrounded with a stockade.

The stockade village was home to more than a hundred Cultivators, who had been meditating moments ago, but who had stood up and were now looking out toward Patriarch Big-head as he approached. Three old men flew out to meet him.

“It’s the Patriarch of the Talisman Sect from Dongluo City, Senior Ouyang!”

“It really is Senior Ouyang. But who is he fleeing from?”

The three old men’s faces flickered, and they hesitated for a moment. Patriarch Big-head neared, his eyes filled with a look of pleasant surprise.

“Fellow Daoists, please help me by stopping this hoodlum!” said Patriarch Big-head. There was no anxiety in his voice, only calmness, lending much credibility to his words. “I was in secluded meditation when he launched a shameful sneak attack. I was injured and my Cultivation base damaged. Fellow Daoists, if you can just delay him for a few moments, maybe enough time for half an incense stick to burn, then I can recover my Cultivation base. Fellow Daoists, after I slay him, I will definitely be in your debt. I’ll even help you to reach Core Formation!”

Without even waiting for a response, Patriarch Big-head shot off into the distance. As for whether these people would comply with his request, he didn’t stay around to find out. If they did, great; if they didn’t, there was nothing he could do about it.

The three Cultivators were in the late Foundation Establishment stage. After hearing Patriarch Big-head’s words, their hearts began to pound. There was little that could entice them more than the prospect of assistance in reaching Core Formation.

They hesitated for a moment. For someone to successfully launch a sneak attack against a Sect Patriarch meant that whoever was chasing him was no weakling. He would definitely be of the Core Formation stage. However, the prospective reward was too enticing; they exchanged glances as Meng Hao approached, followed by the more than one hundred Cultivators.

The sight immediately caused these late Foundation Establishment Cultivators to grow more nervous and hesitant. One of them finally gritted his teeth and flew forward, clasping hands and bowing to Meng Hao.

“Senior, please wait a moment, I...”

“Screw off!” said Meng Hao, his expression cold, flying directly past the man.

The bowing Foundation Establishment Cultivator's face flickered and his scalp went numb. Meng Hao's glance just now had caused his heart to tremble with fear. However, the reward promised by Patriarch Big-head nagged at his heart.

The other two Foundation Establishment Cultivators held him back, then clasped hands in salute to Meng Hao. They didn't dare to do even the slightest thing to try to delay him. They, too, thirsted for the reward promised by Patriarch Big-head, but Meng Hao's words and cold glance left their minds reeling and their Dao Pillars quivering.

Meng Hao didn't slow down in the slightest. He whistled through the air, followed by the more than one hundred Cultivators who were still being led by the Blood Clones. They glanced at the local Cultivators with cold smiles as they passed, shooting through the air like meteors.

Some time after they were gone, the three late Foundation Establishment Cultivators let loose sighs of relief. Their faces were somewhat pale, because they knew that their greed just now had led them halfway to the grave.

"Who was that guy?" they thought, exchanging glances. "He managed to make Senior Ouyang take to flight...."

As he flew through the air, Meng Hao waved his hand out in front of him. The air rippled as arcs of golden light appeared. They shot toward Patriarch Big-head, but before they could get too close, the man spit up some more blood. The air around his feet grew blurry, and his speed increased, allowing him to evade Meng Hao's attack. In the blink of an eye, he was roughly three thousand meters away.

"So fast!" thought Meng Hao, giving a cold harrumph as he continued onward. Throughout the course of this chase, Meng Hao's interest in Patriarch Big-head's legacy techniques had certainly been aroused.

Patriarch Big-head's face was pale. He gritted his teeth and continued to flee, his heart pounding. A sensation of life-or-death danger floated in his heart. The only thing he could think to do was use every possible means to evade the pursuit and escape death.

Bitterness filled his heart. After reaching Core Formation, he had always been the one to chase and kill others. This was the first time he had been pursued like a stray dog.

“If I can make it out of this, then all of this humiliation will be paid back a hundredfold!” he thought, his eyes filling with madness. He increased his speed, traveling another three thousand meters in the blink of an eye.

After half a day of employing the ultimate speed possible within the Core Formation stage, Patriarch Big-head spotted some earthen walls off in the distance. This city was not as flourishing as one of the United Nine, but clearly a powerful group resided within.

As he neared, Patriarch Big-head cried out, “Fellow Daoist Chen!” Immediately, a beam of colorful light shot out from within the city. Inside was a muscular, bare-chested man of the mid Core Formation stage, with flowing black hair. When he saw Patriarch Big-head, he gaped in surprise.

“Big Bro Ouyang, what’s going on...?”

“Fellow Daoist Chen, please stop the hoodlum that’s chasing me!” he gushed as he shot past the muscular man. “You and I have similar Cultivation bases, but I was ambushed while in secluded meditation. I’ve been poisoned and I need an incense stick’s worth of time to suppress the poison. I owe you!”

The muscular man’s eyes glittered as he saw Meng Hao approaching.

Meng Hao glanced at the earthen city wall, and the muscular man who hovered in mid-air.

“Another person who doesn’t know the difference between life and death,” said Meng Hao as he flew forward.

The muscular man hesitated for a moment, but after seeing Meng Hao, he got the impression that since Meng Hao’s Cultivation base was only at the mid Core Formation stage, he wasn’t someone to be too worried about. However, the golden glow surrounding Meng Hao, as well as the sense of danger that radiated out from him, caused the man to be cautious. “Fellow Daoist, please wait a moment. There’s no flying allowed in my city!”

As the words came out of his mouth, the more than two hundred Cultivators within the city flew out. Their Qi billowed out, forming into a sealing power. They stood there glaring hatefully at Meng Hao.

These people had a variety of different Cultivation bases. Some were Core Formation, most were Foundation Establishment or Qi Condensation. However, all of them radiated dense killing intent. Obviously they had killed many people in the past.

Meng Hao didn't care at all about people such as this who were clearly seeking to die. He continued forward without stopping, causing the muscular man's expression to flicker. He lifted his right hand to perform an incantation, when suddenly he saw the look in Meng Hao's eyes.

It was a coldness filled with killing intent. As the gaze passed over him, the muscular man's heart began to pound. Cracking sounds could be heard coming from his Core, as if it might shatter into pieces. He was astonished, but before he could retreat, Meng Hao was upon him. Meng Hao slammed a fist into the man's chest, and then shot past him. As Meng Hao passed, blood sprayed from the man's mouth; then he trembled and... directly exploded into bloody pieces.

His death caused looks of terror to fill the faces of the rest of the Cultivators from the city.

"Everyone here who pledges allegiance to me will live. Anyone who doesn't...." Meng Hao knew that in the Black Lands, one could not be softhearted. The only way to establish power and gain respect was through ruthlessness. As his voice rang out, his Blood Clones approached, along with the hundred or more Cultivators, whose killing intent billowed to the Heavens. They shot toward the city Cultivators, and immediately the sound of killing rose up, accompanied by miserable screams and cries.

Meng Hao glared at Patriarch Big-head, his eyes flashing with killing intent. "Let's see how many people you manage to get killed along the way!" He shot off again in pursuit.

This Cultivator was a strange one. No matter what powers Meng Hao employed, he was like a loach, slippery and difficult to lay hands on.

This was especially true considering his secret art of speed boosting. He had used it multiple times to put more distance between himself and Meng Hao. Even more bizarre was his fearsome ability to sense danger. Every time Meng Hao attacked, he seemed capable of predicting it and dodging out of the way.

“That damned no-good fool, he couldn’t even hold the guy up for half a second!!” Patriarch Big-head gritted his teeth. Hair in disarray, clothing ragged, breathing heavily, he shot forward. He was exhausted, but Meng Hao was still chasing him. He lifted his head up to the sky and howled.

Chapter 342: Patriarch Golden Light!

Two days later, a black-robed figure flew out from a valley.

“Don’t worry, Big Brother Ouyang,” said the voice arrogantly. “I shall help you take care of this despicable fellow. It won’t be long before we can use his skull to drink alcohol together!” The figure shot through the air to meet an incoming beam of golden light.

This person possessed Core Qi in the form of an enormous mountain. The power of the Core Qi was joined by a howling totemic Giant Ape which smashed down toward Meng Hao.

Big-head was off in the distance looking on with an expression of appreciation. He’d finally found a friend willing to do something to help him.

The first thing he did was to turn and flee off into the distance as fast as possible.

However, before he had flown for the space of a few breaths, a blood-curdling scream rang out, which was cut off by a massive explosion.

Heart trembling, Big-head looked back to see the giant ape falling to pieces and the mountain crumbling. The Cultivator who had been attempting to block Meng Hao’s way exploded. All of that was the result of a single fist strike from Meng Hao.

The sight of Meng Hao’s right fist caused Big-head’s scalp to grow numb. Spitting out another mouthful of blood, he went all out to flee as quickly as possible.

“What a psycho! When did someone so inhuman show up in the Black Lands? And how come I had to provoke him...?” Heart filled with bitterness, he lowered his head and shot forward at top speed.

Four days later a dusk....

“Fear not, Brother Ouyang!” said a bald Cultivator, lifting up his glass. “We, the Black Mountain Nine Saints, might not measure up to you in terms of Cultivation base, but when it comes to our spell formation, we

can trap anyone under the Nascent Soul stage for at least three days.”

Big-head, his face pale, reluctantly lifted up a glass of alcohol. However, his glance was drawn off into the distance, where eight figures were shooting toward an approaching beam of billowing, golden light.

“Brother Ouyang, you really don’t need to worry. Just don’t think about going back on your word about the Gilded Lizard totem you said you would give us.” The bald-headed Cultivator laughed, but within his gaze was an imperceptible trace of scorn.

According to the rumors he had heard, this Ouyang from the three great Sects of Dongluo City had offended a mid Core Formation Cultivator of the junior generation. The two had been involved in a deadly chase across half of the western region of the Black Lands.

Seeing the terrified state of Ouyang, the bald Cultivator couldn’t help but look down on him, and had come to the conclusion that the man’s previous reputation had been considerably inflated.

The bald Cultivator took a drink of alcohol and then said, “How come a trifling mid Core Formation Cultivator is being called Patriarch Golden Light? How laughable! We Black Mountain Nine... huh?” Before he could even finish speaking, a massive boom filled the air, and the ground trembled. Even more shocking to the man was that even though it was clearly midday, in the location where the fight was going on could be seen a starry sky!

Even as the bald Cultivator was shocked into silence, Ouyang’s mind began to buzz. A forlorn expression appeared on his face as he tossed the glass of alcohol down. He slapped his chest, forcing some more blood out of his mouth to activate his secret technique. He shot off into the distance at high speed, something that had already become a force of habit. The bald Cultivator watched on with gaping mouth.

A mocking look appeared on the man’s face. A moment later, while the look was still plastered there, the hair all over his body stood on end. An intense feeling of danger suddenly filled his mind. He spun as if he had been struck by lightning. There in front of him was a scholarly young man

bathed in golden light. It was impossible to say when he had arrived. He picked up the flagon of alcohol and took a sip.

“You....” said the bald Cultivator. He turned to look off into the distance, where the bodies of his eight compatriots were still falling down from mid-air.

He gasped, and backed up. Everything began to go dark.

However, before everything went black, the bald Cultivator blurted out: “I’ll pledge allegiance to Patriarch Golden Light!” Suddenly, his vision went back to normal.

The chase continued for seven more days!

Patriarch Big-head chose not to return to his Sect; he was a Patriarch, and had brought the Sect Elders with him on his excursion. The only people left back in the Sect were of the Foundation Establishment stage. There wasn’t even a single Core Formation Cultivator.

Furthermore, in his current state, he would be incapable of operating the Sect’s Grand Spell Formation. Also, he knew that if he stopped anywhere, he was dead for sure.

Therefore, he could do nothing other than flee, seeking out the powerful people he was familiar with in the area. Unfortunately, none of those people had sufficient Cultivation bases; not a single one was of the Nascent Soul stage.

Generally speaking, Nascent Soul Cultivators were the most powerful experts one would see in the Black Lands. Under other circumstances, he should have been able to go plead for help from some Rogue Nascent Soul Cultivators. Unfortunately... because of the chaos in the Black Lands, Nascent Soul Cultivators were now extremely valuable assets to the Alliance of United Nine Cities and the Black Lands Palace. Both forces were using everything they had at their disposal to recruit them; Big-head clearly couldn’t compete with that.

So he fled from place to place in bitter struggle. He thought of going to Dongluo City, but he was well aware of the ruthlessness of Black Lands

Cultivators. Considering his current condition, he wasn't worth anything to Dongluo City. They wouldn't do anything for his sake. If he had pledged himself to them earlier, it would have made things easier; they would have been forced to help him.

Unfortunately, in order to try to get the most out of the deal, he had told them he would consider their offer, but hadn't formalized an agreement. As such, it would be difficult to solicit their aid.

"Dammit! When did such an inhuman beast appear in the Black Lands!" he thought, cursing Meng Hao in his heart. Suddenly, he caught sight of a golden beam of light behind him. He spat up some more blood and fled. It felt as if he had spat up a lifetime's worth of blood recently. His face was pale white, and his injuries were even more severe, exacerbated by his blood loss.

However, he had no other options. He couldn't fight, so he had to run.

Behind him, Meng Hao whistled through the air surrounded by surging golden light. Following him were nearly four hundred Cultivators. These were people from the power groups that Big-head had tried to get help from. Faced with the prospect of death, they had chosen to side with Meng Hao.

One of them was the bald mid Core Formation Cultivator from Black Mountain. The entire group flew through the air, looking up ahead at Meng Hao and the golden light.

Strength came with numbers. During the past seven days, this group had gained quite a bit of fame in this western part of the Black Lands. Wherever they passed, their shadows darkened the land and blotted out the sky. When you added in Meng Hao and the golden light which he intentionally caused to shine out from his body, it was really a shocking sight.

It was hard to say who first called out the name Patriarch Golden Light, but word began to spread, and soon all the powers in the area knew of the name.

A day later, Big-head was exhausted to the extreme. Despite that, he

gritted his teeth and flew ahead toward a tall mountain. The mountain was a sinister one, the base of which was surrounded by black waters. Five enormous vultures circled around its peak, occasionally calling out with shrill shrieks.

Sitting cross-legged at the very top were three old men. The one in the middle wore a seven-colored robe and was of the late Core Formation stage; the other two were of the mid Core Formation stage.

Unsightly expressions covered their faces. They sat there cross-legged, seemingly in meditation. However, their Cultivation bases were rotating, and they appeared to be on guard. Their eyes were fixed on the approaching big-headed Cultivator and massive golden glow that was following him.

“Dammit, it’s Patriarch Golden Light!”

“The past few days, everyone has been talking about how Patriarch Golden Light is trying to kill Ouyang. Anyone who helps out Ouyang ends up getting slaughtered!”

“I heard that more than ten Core Formation Cultivators have died at Patriarch Golden Light’s hands.... The weakest were of the mid Core Formation stage, and there were two of the late Core Formation stage!”

“Have you forgotten about the three great Sects of Dongluo City? Ouyang is on the run for his life, but the Patriarchs of the other two Sects haven’t appeared. They must have already met a dark end. If you add them in, it means that the number of Core Formation Cultivators who have fallen to Patriarch Golden Light is incredible!”

Their faces were incredibly unsightly by this point. They were friends with Big-head, but that friendship wasn’t enough to get them to stand up to Patriarch Golden Light. And yet, Big-head was clearly heading to them seeking refuge.

“Fellow Daoists, save me!” he cried, his voice filled with a pleading tone. Considering his status and the level of his Cultivation base, for him to cry out in such a manner showed what a wretched position he’d fallen into. His voice reached the mountain peak, and the ears of the three old men.

They couldn't help but feel a bit sympathetic.

Meng Hao approached, whistling through the air, surrounded by golden light. "Do the three of you want to get involved too?" he said coolly, his voice echoing out in all directions like thunder.

The faces of the three old men flickered. This was especially true of the two men with the weaker Cultivation bases. Their minds spun and their faces drained of blood. Their Cores quivered inside of them. All three men took in deep breaths.

They couldn't help but think about the rumors that had been spreading regarding Patriarch Golden Light.

He ripped the Cores out of Cultivators and ate them raw! He massacred, leaving no survivors! His methods were cruel and vicious!

It wasn't clear how such rumors had begun to spread about Meng Hao. He actually hadn't killed very many people in the past few days; most of the deaths were caused by his hundreds of followers.

In any case, as soon as Meng Hao's words fell upon the ears of the three men on the peak of the mountain, the old man with the highest Cultivation base, the one with the seven-colored robe, shot to his feet. A smile covered his face as he clasped hands and bowed.

"Greetings, Patriarch Golden Light. We will definitely not interfere in the matter between you two." Having said that, he stamped his foot down, causing a glowing shield to rise up around the mountain. Big-head had absolutely no chance to enter.

Big-head let out a plaintive wail. He spit out some more blood to activate his secret technique and speed away. He was now emaciated and frail, which made his big head even more conspicuous. He flew along in the air, so weak he could barely even form a fist, his head drooping down.

Grief and indignation filled his face as he charged onward.

Two days passed. Big-head's indignation continued to grow. No matter where he went, his friends all began to use their magic to block his way. It was like he had turned into some sort of plague.

In fact, there was one power group who had been slow in employing their spell formation. When he slipped in to beg for help, his friend had flipped out and attacked him. Apparently the man had been afraid of causing a misunderstanding with Patriarch Golden Light.

Big-head was now completely without hope. He floated in mid-air looking around in all directions. Unfortunately, there was no one he could turn to for help. He was out of power, and could flee no more. Face ashen, he turned and looked at the approaching Meng Hao.

After the space of about ten breaths, Meng Hao came to stop in front of him. "Done running?" he asked coolly.

Chapter 343: Rent by Lightning!

Big-head stared at Meng Hao, his heart filled with a feeling of powerlessness. The days on the run, the constant pursuit, the despair he felt after repeatedly begging for help, all of it had left him completely drained and exhausted. He was dog-tired, and the constant use of his forbidden technique had pushed his injuries to the point where they could no longer be fully healed. At the moment, he could only use about twenty to thirty percent of the power of his Cultivation base.

To use such limited power to fight against Meng Hao, who led a group of hundreds of Cultivators, and who had already killed so many of the people Big-head had recruited to help him... well it was simply impossible. He had no way to resist or fight back, not even in the slightest.

Big-head knew all of this, as soon as Meng Hao spoke, he let out a roar. This was not an attack, nor was it a self-detonation. It was a roar to release all of the pressure that had been pushing down on him. The sound of it echoed out.

“Even if I, Ouyang, die, I won’t bow my head to a villain like you! Even if I die today, I’ll be a Cultivator again in the future! Destroying my soul won’t keep me from the cycle of reincarnation. Maybe I can’t decide how I’ll be born, but I can decide how I die, you lightning-damned, evil....” Even as his words rang out, even as he gave vent to all his rancor, and seemed about to really lay it on thick, suddenly....

Without any warning, a lightning bolt appeared in the blue, cloudless sky. It shot down toward Meng Hao at incredible speed, seemingly giving no chance at all for a reaction. The lightning bolt slammed onto Meng Hao’s hat with a boom.

Sparks showered off of the hat, some of them landing on Meng Hao, which caused his hair to stand on end. A greenish smoke rose up off of the hat.

It almost looked like the Heavens viewed Meng Hao’s pursuit to be immoral. After all, the lightning had struck down right in the middle of

Big-head's speech....

Big-head gaped in astonishment at Meng Hao. This was the second time recently that he had seen lightning suddenly fall from the sky for no reason. The lightning appeared ordinary, but it actually had the power to eliminate an early Core Formation Cultivator.

"Retribution!" roared Big-head. "This is the retribution villains like you receive! To be rent in two by lightning!" Trembling, he began to laugh uproariously. As for Meng Hao, his face was a bit unsightly. He knew that Patriarch Big-head had already lost all of his will to fight, so his attention was now more focused up above.

"This is the second time," he thought. The bad premonition in his heart only continued to grow more intense. Not even half a month had passed, and two bolts of lightning had already randomly come after him. Their speed was incredible, and they didn't seem to be associated with any particular time or location. Furthermore, each of these bolts of lightning had emanated the Qi of Heavenly Tribulation.

Others would have a hard time recognizing such a Qi, but Meng Hao was familiar with Heavenly Tribulation. He was absolutely certain that this was none other than Tribulation Lightning.

"Why is it doing this?" he thought. "It happened twice already. Does that mean it will happen a third time? Perhaps more...?" Suddenly, he thought back to what the meat jelly hat had said shortly after the parrot went to sleep, and before it began to rest. It had said that it and the parrot had helped someone transcend Tribulation once, only for that person to end up trying to kill them.

"Don't tell me... this is the aftermath of delaying the Tribulation? Lightning is going to constantly be falling down onto me?" Meng Hao's face twisted as he looked back at Big-head and coolly asked, "Do you want to choose how you'll die?"

The soil below churned as vicious vines exploded upward. They swayed about, not approaching; however, the mouths at the end of the vines were filled with razor sharp teeth that dripped with viscous fluid.

Their reddish color, their bizarre undulation, their fearsomeness, as well as the rotten smell that emanated out from them would cause anyone who saw them to feel shocked.

“I...” Big-head laughed coldly and gave Meng Hao a scornful look. His expression was one of pride as he lifted his hand up toward his forehead.

He had no intention of begging for his life. Considering the bloody path left behind by his pursuer, Big-head knew that he had little chance of escaping this calamity. Therefore, if he was going to die, he would die in robust fashion.

However, the instant his hand was about to press down onto his forehead, another bolt of lightning suddenly appeared out of the blue. It shot down toward Meng Hao with such speed that in the blink of an eye it was less than ten meters away from his head.

However, because of the previous two lightning bolts, Meng Hao had already begun to keep some of his attention focused on the sky. In almost the same instant that the lightning bolt began to fall, he slapped his bag of holding and pulled out a semi-transparent soul embodiment.

This soul embodiment was none other than the Li Clan Patriarch. A thin thread connected him to the blood-colored mask, making it so that even though he was now floating outside, he would be unable to flee. His life or death could be determined by a single thought from Meng Hao.

Suddenly being pulled out in this fashion caused the Li Clan Patriarch to look around in confusion. This was the first time in many years that he had ever seen the sky in the outside world. However, before he could heave any emotional sighs, he was flung up into the air by Meng Hao.

A boom rattled out as the lightning bolt slammed into the Li Clan Patriarch's soul embodiment. A miserable shriek echoed out as the Li Clan Patriarch quivered. A roar of pain and rage bellowed out from him. His soul embodiment had nearly been shattered, giving him quite a scare. He rapidly did everything he could to solidify it.

If the soul embodiment dissipated, then he truly would turn into dust on the wind.

His confusion quickly vanished, forced away by the unfortunately circumstances. He roared, gnashing his teeth as he floated there in mid-air, looking down at Meng Hao. If hatred itself could kill, then he would rip Meng Hao to pieces mouthful by mouthful.

The lightning didn't stop at three bolts, however. After a few breaths' time, a fourth lightning bolt descended. Before it could fall, Meng Hao, his face expressionless, tossed up the Li Clan Patriarch.

The lightning slammed into him, causing the Li Clan Patriarch to let out a miserable cry. Thankfully, his soul embodiment was vigorous. After being subjected to the torment of the meat jelly, it was actually quite resilient, despite its weak appearance.

After the boom echoed out, the Li Clan Patriarch grew almost completely illusory. And yet, before he could even catch his breath, a fifth lightning bolt fell, and another miserable shriek echoed out. Big-head watched all of this with gaping eyes.

For the first time while standing in front of Meng Hao, he couldn't hide the fear in his eyes. He sympathized with this soul embodiment. As far as he was concerned, Meng Hao was absolutely the most savage Cultivator in existence. It seemed he would shrink from no evil, and did not shirk from outraging men and gods alike.

"This soul embodiment is already in a wretched state, and yet he does this to it," thought Big-head. "I wonder what great enmity exists between them.... That soul embodiment seems on the verge of dispersing completely." He sighed inwardly, his mind spinning because of Meng Hao's viciousness. His impression was now thoroughly settled.

"That guy must have just been too attached to life, and wasn't decisive enough. His soul got snatched up by this vicious Cultivator. I, however, have steady resolve. I won't end up like that. If he stole my soul, I would end up like this, tormented into dissolution." Having psyched himself up to this point, Big-head lifted his hand to strike his forehead, when suddenly his body began to shake, and his resolve shattered.

His eyes opened wide, filled with disbelief and intense dread. This was

because just as the soul embodiment seemed about to be shattered by the lightning, a violet glow flickered in Meng Hao's eyes. He spit out a mouthful of golden Qi, which was filled with his own life force. There wasn't much, but after it merged with the Li Clan Patriarch's soul embodiment, all of his wounds began to recover.

Just when he was almost completely recovered, a sixth lightning bolt fell. A thunderclap rang out, accompanied by a miserable cry. Grief filled the eyes of the Li Clan Patriarch, along with despair. It was a hopelessness in which the desire for death exceeded the desire to live.

The sight caused Big-head's scalp to go numb and his face to turn pale white. He began to quiver. He had been preparing to say some grand words just now, but now he could only swallow with a gulp. The hand that had been moving toward his forehead fell to his side. The pride in his eyes had been replaced by hopelessness.

He suddenly realized that even if he managed to deliver a deadly blow to himself, he was a Cultivator. In the moments after his death, there were a variety of methods that could be used to extract his soul.

He could attempt to self detonate, but seeing how adept Meng Hao was with inflicting torment, Big-head could see that dying was not necessarily a way of escaping.

He didn't fear death, but what he did fear, was living a life worse than death.

Meng Hao was currently ignoring Big-head, and was instead focusing completely on the lightning, as well as the Li Clan Patriarch's soul.

What he noticed was that even as the soul embodiment was on the verge of collapsing, sparking remnants of the lightning were fusing into the soul. Thanks to the healing provided by Meng Hao's life force, the recovery of the Li Clan Patriarch's soul embodiment resulted in much more lightning residing within him.

"Refine a Soul of Lightning, huh...? It seems it requires a bit of a sacrifice to refine such a thing!" Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he looked around for more lightning. After enough time passed for half an incense stick to

burn, a final bolt of lightning appeared. After the Li Clan Patriarch absorbed it, Meng Hao put him back into the blood-colored mask. He cursed Meng Hao vigorously the entire time. [1]

[tl: [1] = The Soul of Lightning was originally explained in chapter 326]

Finally, Meng Hao looked thoughtfully back at Big-head. He lifted his hand up and was about to kill him and then let the vines consume him and pull out his special techniques.

After all, Big-head's attitude just now had been one of firm resolution, even willingness to die. No matter how much Meng Hao tormented him, there would be no way to know of if he was telling the truth about this techniques.

However, even as Meng Hao lifted his hand up, Big-head began to quiver and his face filled with intense dread.

"Fellow Daoist.... Fellow Daoist, listen to me," he gushed. "I happen to know the location of the secret Treasure Pavilions of all the three great Sects. There's lots of stuff hidden there! I'll give all the treasures of my Talisman Sect to you as a gift. I'll do anything you ask, I'll even face mountains of swords and seas of flames. I, Big-head, won't even frown!" Meng Hao's methods just now had left him trembling; he had no desire to have his soul tormented after he died.

Meng Hao gaped at Patriarch Big-head for a moment. This caused the man to begin to pant and get more nervous. He could hear the sound of his own heart pounding. However, a look of resolve appeared in his eyes. He swore a poison oath, and, gritting his teeth, even extracted some soul blood from his forehead which he offered to Meng Hao. With that, Meng Hao would be able to kill him at any time.

Big-head believed that it was only with such a resolution that he could truly evade calamity.

Meng Hao thought about it for a moment; it didn't take him long to figure out what Big-head was thinking. He looked at the man for a moment and then a faint smile touching his face. Finally he reached out and accepted the soul blood.

“Now,” said Meng Hao coolly, “explain to me that bizarre legacy of yours.”

Chapter 344: The Great Church of the Golden Light!

Bitterness filled Big-head's heart; however, in order to preserve his life, he put on a delighted expression and then obediently retrieved a small jar from his bag of holding.

It was about the size of a fist, and a handful of holes could be seen on its surface. When wind blew through the holes, they would emit a mournful whistling. There didn't seem to be anything special about the sound, and looking at the jar, Meng Hao couldn't see anything very unique about it. Even his Spiritual Sense didn't reveal anything special.

In fact, had he slain this Patriarch Big-head, upon searching his bag of holding, even if Meng Hao happened to pick up the jar, he would most likely have taken it to be some sort of musical instrument and then paid it no more heed.

Apparently fearing some sort of misunderstanding, Patriarch Big-head quickly bit his left index finger, then dropped some blood into nine of the holes which covered the jug, doing so in some specific order.

It appeared as if it were some type of locking mechanism that Meng Hao had never seen before. Now that it had been opened by Big-head, the jar began to emit a black glow. There was clearly no wind in the area, and yet the jar continued to make the whimpering noises.

Suddenly, streams of magical symbols began to float up from the small jar. They circled around the area, along with a sinister Qi.

Meng Hao took a deep breath. He lifted a finger on his right hand, causing the black jar to fly over to him. It landed on his palm, whereupon he examined it closely.

Gradually, Meng Hao began to get excited. The magical symbols were forming together to make the images of howling souls. Looking at it, he got the profound sense that this was indeed some sort of legacy.

"This is a treasure I stumbled upon in some ruins many years ago," said

Patriarch Big-head, choosing his words carefully, and not daring to leave anything out. “I discovered it on the body of a Demonic Cultivator that had two horns on its head. It also had a jade slip, which I read and then destroyed. Recorded within was the method for using this Evil Wind jar. It also said that the Demonic Cultivator came from some place called the Fourth Mountain, and that before dying, needed to pass on the legacy.”

If Patriarch Big-head hadn’t mentioned the Fourth Mountain, then Meng Hao might have continued to be suspicious. But after hearing the term, an imperceptible flicker ran through his eyes.

Matters regarding the Nine Mountains and Seas were not things that average Cultivators knew about. In Meng Hao’s estimation, people who were aware of such topics were definitely extremely scarce.

Without batting an eyelid, he gathered up the small jar and then looked at Patriarch Big-head.

The man immediately began to grow more nervous, and quickly said, “Fellow Daoist, when I’m around, the Treasure Pavilions of the three great Sects should be safe. But since the other two Sects know that their respective Patriarchs are dead, it won’t be long before their disciples start dividing up the treasures. Sir, don’t you think we should get there as quickly as possible?”

At the moment, hundreds of beams of light were approaching from off in the distance. The impressive sight of so many people made Big-head even more nervous.

His fear of Meng Hao couldn’t become any greater. His trepidation reached deep into his heart; if he could go back in time, he definitely wouldn’t ever provoke this inhuman creature.

Even if he did provoke him somehow, he definitely wouldn’t do anything to break the man’s spell formation. In fact, to save his own life, he would immediately kill the other Patriarchs from the other two great Sects.

Meng Hao could tell what he was thinking with a mere look. After a moment’s thought, he nodded.

Big-head let out a sigh of relief, but then suddenly became nervous once again. He really was worried that the disciples of the other two great Sects would divvy up the treasure. Moments later, he and Meng Hao became prismatic beams of light that shot back toward the region of Dongluo City.

A few days later, a glowing yellow shield could be seen covering a snowy white mountain which was some distance from Dongluo City. The whiteness of the mountain and the yellow glow mixed together to make a beautiful sight, albeit a bit incongruous.

Meng Hao hovered outside of the mountain. He hadn't personally attacked. No, that had been left up to Big-head and the bald-headed Cultivator who had once been a member of the nine Cultivators from Black Mountain. They, along with the hundreds of other Cultivators following Meng Hao, filled the sky. Booming explosions rang out from all directions.

Big-head spared no effort whatsoever. His eyes were bloodshot; he feared that they would be unable to break through the shield to get inside. The bald Cultivator was thinking similar thoughts, and clearly wanted to ingratiate himself to Meng Hao. The two of them almost seemed to be competing as they went all out with various techniques.

Beneath the powerful attacks of two people like this, bolstered by hundreds of other Cultivators, this trifling great Sect was only able to hold out for the time it takes an incense stick to burn. Then, the shield collapsed into countless fragments of yellow light. As the shield disintegrated, the whiteness of the snowy mountain beneath became visible.

No massacre was necessary; after the shield broke, the nearly one hundred Cultivators of the Han River Sect immediately pledged allegiance to Meng Hao.

Furthermore, they respectfully handed over the wealth and treasures of their Sect. Meng Hao's forces now numbered nearly six hundred as they headed toward another of the great Sects.

They moved with incredible speed, but this time, they met some

resistance. It was a middle-aged man who had three totem tattoos on his body. He was quite tall, and his attacks were accompanied by the illusory image of a mountain and river as well as a writhing Poisonous Flood Dragon. Even as everyone else pledged their allegiance, this man launched a vicious sneak attack. He instantly killed several of the other disciples who had suggested to capitulate, and then attempted to flee.

Even as he attempted to break past the sealing spells to escape, Meng Hao's eyes glittered coldly. He shot forward, and in the blink of an eye was in front of the man. He punched him lightly with one fist.

A boom filled the air, and blood sprayed from the man's mouth. His eyes filled with venomous hatred, but before he could use any magical techniques, Meng Hao punched him again. He didn't kill him, but instead took control of his Cultivation base and then knocked him out.

As for the final Sect, the Talisman Sect, there were no problems there. With Big-head present, there were no defenses to break through, and the hundred or so disciples of the Sect welcomed Meng Hao respectfully.

The main gate of the Talisman Sect was located in a wide basin surrounded by mountains. The Sect was quiet and tasteful, constructed in an orderly fashion. Upon seeing it, Meng Hao decided to occupy the place for the time being.

A few days later, the parrot and the meat jelly both regained their senses. The parrot was extremely excited to see the roughly seven hundred new followers. It flapped his wings, squawking out orders as it began to train the Cultivators.

As for the meat jelly, it lazily flew onto the head of someone who caught its eye, whereupon it continued to deride and criticize the parrot as usual.

Meng Hao asked them about the lightning randomly falling down from the sky. However, each time he brought it up, the parrot and meat jelly would glance around quickly and then suddenly disappear.

Finally Meng Hao intentionally provoked the parrot. Once its honor was challenged, it blurted out something that caused Meng Hao's face to look unsightly: "So what!" it said. "Lord Fifth delayed the Heavenly Tribulation.

Of course some lightning will slip through every once in a while. It's not going to kill you, it's only a bit of lightning!"

With that, the parrot flapped its wings and quickly flew off, leaving Meng Hao alone in the secluded meditation chamber that used to belong Big-head.

Time flashed by, and soon it was half a month later. During the half month, the name of Patriarch Golden Light had risen to complete prominence in this entire region of the Black Lands. Granted, the name hadn't traveled too far, but all the local Cultivators knew the name.

According to the growing legend, Patriarch Golden Light loved killing Cultivators. He drank alcohol out of Dao Pillars, consumed Cores, and committed any imaginable evil. Such descriptions grew more and more exaggerated, until everyone who talked about him grew pale in the face from fear.

Patriarch Golden Light, a fierce Cultivator and leader of a generation. He was now thoroughly entrenched as a power in the area.

People in the Black Lands were becoming more anxious. Ten days before, one of the eight remaining Clans of what had once been the Alliance of United Nine Cities, was suddenly attacked by the Black Lands Palace. It was completely exterminated, and overnight, the city changed hands. Then, the Black Lands Palace issued a command throughout the entire Black Lands.

It said that the Black Lands Palace was now the only power within the Black Lands. As for the seven other Clans who made up the so-called United Nine, they were to be exterminated.

A great war had truly begun!

Amidst the chaos and general feeling of nervousness, Meng Hao's power base suddenly became something of a safe haven. More and more Cultivators joined, including some of the Core Formation stage.

During the half month in which all of this happened, Dongluo City grew emptier and emptier. Suddenly, they began to look toward Meng Hao and

his force of nearly a thousand people the same way that a tiger eyes its prey.

A few days later, the term 'Church of the Golden Light' began to spread. Other than the Dongluo Clan itself, it was now the most powerful force in the region of Dongluo City.

In this wartime situation, Meng Hao's force of nearly one thousand men continued to grow. He was thoroughly in command in this area!

Actually, Meng Hao wasn't really aware of a lot of the developments. The parrot and the meat jelly seemed incredibly interested in recruiting more Cultivators. The meat jelly felt that converting a thousand people at once was definitely something it had never done before, and would be an amazing accomplishment regardless of whether you were talking about past, present or future lives.

As far as the parrot was concerned, when it heard the voices of roughly a thousand people chanting the words regarding having faith in the Lord Fifth to gain eternal life, all of the feathers on its body would stand on end.

It seemed to have already forgotten about how every few days lightning would fall from the sky and shoot toward Meng Hao.

Chapter 345: Lotus Sword Formation!

Boom!

One early morning, a bolt of lightning appeared above the elegant basin, outside one of the buildings.

The roof of this building was long since gone, apparently destroyed. Black ash was visible everywhere. There were roughly a thousand Cultivators here now, and all of them were more or less used to the lightning.

As the parrot soared through the air, it looked up into the sky and gave a sympathetic sigh, then thought about how helpful it had been. After that, it wheeled off with determination to go train the Cultivators in the use of the Celestial spell formation.

“This formation uses people as its base! With hundreds, you can rock Core Formation. With thousands, you can strand Nascent Soul. With tens of thousands, Spirit Severing doesn’t count for a fart! With millions, you can shake Immortals! Back when Lord Fifth swept over the nine great Mountains and Seas, no one refused to bow to him!” A wistful look appeared in its eyes, and it sighed as it seemed to recall its past glory. Then, it redoubled its efforts to train the Cultivators.

Inside the building that had just been struck by lightning, Meng Hao’s face was unsightly. Even more unsightly, however, was the face of the Li Clan Patriarch, who looked as if he were on his last legs.

“You’re my ancestor!” he wailed, his soul embodiment trembling. He seemed to be on the verge of going crazy. “My ancestor, okay?! Just let me go.... I can’t hold on much longer. Just let the lightning rend me in half, okay...?”

Meng Hao didn’t say anything. He put the Li Clan Patriarch’s soul embodiment away, then looked back up at the sky. It seemed clear, completely devoid of any lightning. At this point, he wasn’t quite numb to the situation, but had gotten used to it.

After some practice, he had developed some methods to pull out the Li Clan Patriarch even more quickly. By now, it had developed into a sort of intuition; as soon as a bolt of lightning appeared, the Li Clan Patriarch would be called upon.

Currently, Meng Hao didn't reach complete success at first. However, the dangerous training method worked, and soon he was able to use the technique almost perfectly each time.

Under these circumstances, Meng Hao's intuition with the lightning gradually formed into a type of instinct.

At the moment, Meng Hao couldn't quite keep his face completely calm; it still looked a bit pained, although not as much as the Li Clan Patriarch's. Meng Hao looked over at the middle-aged man who lay in front of him, body trembling, face pale, seemingly locked in place and unable to move. This man was even worse off than the Li Clan Patriarch.

This Cultivator was not from the Black Lands, but rather the Western Desert. This was the man Meng Hao had knocked out earlier, the one who had three totem tattoos. Meng Hao had taken him here, sealed him to prevent him from moving, and began to study him.

Meng Hao loved studying. Back when he was a scholar, he would study books. After he entered the Cultivation world, he would study magical techniques or contemplate alchemy.

It didn't matter when, as long as he had some time on his hands, he would take time to study something. This always led to further understanding on his part.

However, this was his first time studying a person.

Meng Hao had already been studying him for three days, inside and out. Whenever he encountered some area he didn't understand, he would make some cuts and focus further until he understood.

Meng Hao had learned a lot in these three days, which left him very excited. As for the middle-aged man, however, it was a nightmare, as if he were residing in the depths of hell. The feeling was hard to describe. His

coldness had turned into misery, cursing and insanity. Eventually, he just began to wail, and to truly believe that Meng Hao was the most fearsome person in the entire Cultivation world.

At the moment, Meng Hao was studying the Cultivator's blood. He reached out toward the man's arm, which was covered in wounds and scabs. Some of it was even missing pieces of flesh. Meng Hao made a long scratch and then collected some blood.

He placed the blood into a pill furnace and began to refine it.

The man's face was ashen, his eyes listless and filled with despair. He didn't know how much longer this treatment would go on, and his mind was on the verge of collapse. In fact, the previous night when Meng Hao was preparing to study his brain, the fear caused tears to leak out of his eyes.

At that point, Meng Hao had hesitated and then decided not to proceed.

Meng Hao had always been extremely interested in the totem tattoos of Western Desert Cultivators. After much analysis, he had come to the conclusion that they contained a power similar to medicinal pills, a power that came from outside the body of the Cultivator

For example, totems could be used to break through from Qi Condensation to Foundation Establishment, and then to Core Formation. This realization gave Meng Hao quite a bit of enlightenment.

Meng Hao had long since had the feeling that he could break through from the mid Perfect Core Formation stage to the late stage. The feeling only grew more intense. Eventually, he realized that in order to break through to late Core Formation, he would need to allow the Heavenly Tribulation to bear down on him in full. After transcending it, he would then be able to enter late Core Formation.

However, once that happened, he had little confidence regarding the Nascent Soul stage. The Nascent Soul stage was a huge step that few Cultivators were ever actually able to take.

Throughout the years, many Cultivators could reach the late Core

Formation stage. However, few were able to break through to Nascent Soul. It might seem like there were a lot of Nascent Soul Cultivators, but that had more to do with their vastly extended lifespan. Few members of any particular generation would ever actually break through.

One of the most critical factors for Meng Hao was the fact that he was missing the section of the Sublime Spirit Scripture that had to do with the Gold Core. Without the proper technique, it would be difficult to achieve a Perfect Nascent Soul.

It wasn't very likely that he would be able to acquire the manual, either. He had no idea where it was. However, Meng Hao had the strong feeling that the totems of these Western Desert Cultivators would enable him to forge his own path toward the Perfect Nascent Soul.

Meng Hao focused on the blood in the pill furnace as it slowly transformed into a mist. Eventually it dissipated, whereupon a bright glow shone in his eyes. "Interesting. There is no totemic Qi within the blood."

"Skin, muscle, bone and blood. Without exception, they are all completely ordinary!" Meng Hao sat in thought for a while and then looked back up at the man in front of him. The man's heart trembled, and he was about to open his mouth to beg for his life when Meng Hao's right hand descended onto the totem tattoo on the man's arm.

"This totem has faint traces of Demonic Qi, which is also the so-called Essence of the Ninth Mountain and Sea." As Meng Hao lifted his hand back up, the man let out a shrill wail. The totem tattoo slowly separated from his skin, pulling up until Meng Hao held what looked almost like a patch of skin in his hand. After separating, it rapidly faded away until it was completely gone.

"So once it leaves the body of the Cultivator, the totem vanishes." He frowned. "Just what is a totem? The manifestation of some great Demon of Heaven and Earth?"

Meng Hao looked outside; it was already evening, and the sky was filling with clouds. A variety of thoughts spun through his head, but no answers.

After a while, Meng Hao waved his hand; the seals binding the middle-

aged Cultivator vanished. He rose to his feet, trembling. He immediately clasped hands and bowed to Meng Hao, continuing to shake violently.

“You can go,” said Meng Hao coolly.

To the man, the words seemed like those of a Celestial being. His heart was filled with so much appreciation that he wanted to weep. He immediately left, speeding away as fast as possible to leave this land of nightmares.

More time passed. Meng Hao bowed his head and laughed. “I think I’m getting ahead of myself,” he murmured. “I have the power to bestow Demonic Qi, but to understand totems will require a lot more time. Full enlightenment can’t be gained in a short period of time.” However, determination gleamed in his eyes; he would not give up on his desire to understand totems.

He smacked his bag of holding to produce an earth-yellow band of soft, cloth-like paper with uneven edges.

This was none other than the object which had led to the rise of Patriarch Golden Light, the flag which the parrot had helped Meng Hao to steal from the auction. After waking up, the parrot had helped him to refine it.

“A talisman used by an Immortal, which can help me to gain enlightenment regarding the magical symbols in the Black Lands. This will definitely be a huge help.” He rubbed the paper as he thought about the vastly expanded area within which his followers could search for the Celestial soil now that he was Patriarch Golden Light. Obviously, it was much greater than before.

Vast quantities of Celestial soil were being delivered to him. Now, all he had to do was touch the soil to this talismanic paper, and it would immediately suck in the Qi of the soil, leaving the soil completely ordinary in nature.

After sucking in the Qi, magical symbols would appear on the paper, which were gradually forming into the shape of a seal.

Meng Hao was sure that after enough time had passed, and enough soil was collected, more magical symbols would appear on the paper. With further enlightenment of the symbols, he would definitely be able to employ some shocking divine ability.

It was in this way that he planned to have completely unique Celestial magic prepared for when he reached the Nascent Soul stage!

The next day at dawn, Meng Hao put away the talismanic paper and then took out the Wooden Time Sword and began to further refine it. He had consistently been working on this particular sword since arriving in the Black Lands, and as of now, it contained three sixty-year cycles of Time.

In addition, he had quite a quantity of Spring and Autumn trees in his bag of holding that contained two sixty-year cycles.

“It’s not very difficult to forge a Time treasure that contains a sixty-year cycle,” he thought. “It only takes a bit of effort. As for two sixty-year cycles, I only have a thirty percent chance of success. Failure means complete loss of all the resources. That’s not really a big deal, though. What’s truly scary is the Time treasures of three sixty-year cycles. There’s only half a percent chance of success. Without the copper mirror, I probably wouldn’t be able to forge even one in my entire life.” He looked at the sword in his hand, which emitted a blinding blue light. Its surface seemed to flow like flowing water, and waving the sword through the air caused ripples to spread out. The ripples caused the surrounding structures to immediately show signs of decay.

Meng Hao was just about to put the sword away when suddenly, he lifted his head up and looked at something far off in the distance. He frowned.

“So, the Dongluo Clan really just can’t hold themselves back,” he muttered. He sent his Spiritual Sense out to find the parrot and impart some instructions. Next, his body began to grow blurry, and ghost images sprang up. Moments later, a second Meng Hao appeared. One was sitting cross-legged, the other slowly sank down into the ground.

Meng Hao waved his right hand, whereupon ten Wooden Time Swords

flew out from his subterranean chamber to circulate about in the air overhead.

The tips of the swords faced outward, and as they spun, they began to create a vortex in the shape of a lotus flower. The power emanated by the lotus-shaped sword formation caused the building Meng Hao was in to begin to decay. Soon, it was nothing more than ash. All of the Qi in the area soon began to fill with ancientness and decay. The minds and hearts of the thousand Cultivators trembled. They immediately dispersed, looking back wide eyed at Meng Hao, who sat cross-legged, a giant lotus spinning above his head. Around him, everything in the basin was beginning to decay.

It was at this moment that the moon rose. Moonlight cascaded downward onto the swords, causing them to gleam with a silver glow. They looked like a blooming lotus, bizarre and beautiful.... Everyone who observed the spectacle would remember it for the rest of their lives.

As the lotus rippled, the Patriarch beneath it lifted his head and said in a cool, echoing voice: "This is my Time Sword Formation!"

Chapter 346: Who The Hell Are You?!

Meng Hao gazed at the Lotus Sword Formation. It came from the three-page booklet he'd acquired when conning the hundreds of Cultivators who were chasing him. As for who it had originally belonged to, he had no idea.

However, the small booklet had given Meng Hao a sense of great enlightenment. Before, he'd never realized that swords... could be organized into formations!

His research in recent days hadn't been limited to totems and the small jar that was a legacy from the Fourth Mountain. He'd also spent significant time studying sword formations. The three-page booklet had no text, only illustrations; if you understood it, you understood it. If you didn't, you never would.

Meng Hao didn't understand very much, but based on what he did, he could form the lotus that he had just now. Even still, the sword formation was able to emanate shocking, explosive power.

Creating a formation like a lotus enabled him to unleash the deadly power of Time!

He paid little attention to the surrounding thousand Cultivators, but they had no choice other than to pay close attention to him. Meng Hao was their Patriarch, the soul of the Church of Golden Light. The name of Patriarch Golden Light had long since been placed in the highest position in the area.

Everyone's hearts shook as they observed Meng Hao, the spinning lotus, and the decaying buildings in the basin. Big-head's face was pale and his breathing ragged. His eyes filled with intense fear. Before, he had assumed Meng Hao had used all the power he possessed to chase him; however, the sight of this sword formation caused him to tremble in terror.

"Who in the Core Formation stage could possibly stand up against a sword formation like that?" he thought, his heart and mind trembling uncontrollably.

The lotus spun and Time danced. Heaven and Earth were shaken, and everything in the area crumbled. It was impossible for Meng Hao not to be the center of attention.

The parrot looked on in shock, its eyes filled with an expression that rarely existed there. It stared fixedly at the Lotus Sword Formation, panting. Next to it, the meat jelly gaped with equally wide eyes.

The two of them hadn't noticed the booklet, and had been focused on managing the thousand Cultivators. They hadn't paid attention to Meng Hao and his research of sword formations. Without thinking about it, they exchanged a glance, whereupon they noticed the mutual look of shock in each other's eyes.

"I've never heard of this Lotus Sword Formation," said the parrot, blinking. "However... looking at it gives me the chills...."

"It's too wicked," said the meat jelly solemnly. "An evil sword formation like this is too domineering. The Qi is too bizarre. It should be destroyed! Such a thing should not even exist!"

"Lord Fifth feels a certain lack of understanding regarding this particular Master...." murmured the parrot.

Meanwhile, a group of a few dozen Cultivators hovered in the air at the edge of the basin, looking at the Lotus Sword Formation. One of their number was an old man. He watched on with a look of concentration, his eyes shining with a brilliant light.

This was one of the three Nascent Soul Patriarchs of the Dongluo Clan who had infuriated the parrot back in Dongluo City. Behind him were none other than Dongluo Ling and Dongluo Han, as well as other Dongluo Clan Cultivators.

All of them watched on in silence. The Cultivators who were under the Nascent Soul stage saw the ripples emanating out from the sword formation, and were shaken. They saw the decaying power contained within; the mountains grew old and even the ground itself was becoming ancient.

It was at this moment that Meng Hao's eyes suddenly opened. They gleamed brightly as he waved his right hand. The Lotus Sword Formation streaked through the air toward the Dongluo Clan Cultivators.

The Nascent Soul Cultivator who floated in the lead position immediately waved his hand. A glowing shield appeared directly behind him and in front of the other Dongluo Clan members.

Meng Hao's expression never changed. His right hand flickered in an incantation gesture, and then he waved a finger toward the sword formation. A buzzing sound filled the air. The lotus no longer rotated; the ten Wooden Time Swords transformed into ten beams of light that shot toward the old Nascent Soul Cultivator.

The man's eyes glittered as he raised his right fist up into the air. Then, he slowly opened it and said, "Stabilize!"

As soon as the word left his mouth, the air seemed to collapse. A boom resonated out, and the land shook. The ten Time Swords suddenly stopped moving; they seemed incapable of flying forward even a teeny bit. However, the Nascent Soul Cultivator's face suddenly fell.

The shield behind him began to fall into pieces, as if it had been in existence for a very long time. As it collapsed, the man's face suddenly seemed to grow older.

It was as if his longevity were being sucked away. Even as his expression flickered, Meng Hao waved his right hand. The ten swords immediately flew back toward him and then disappeared.

Meng Hao rose to his feet. His black hair floated in the wind, and his long green robe gave him an elegant, erudite appearance. His refined features contained both the dignity of a scholar and the loftiness of a Cultivator. "I was working on my spell formations just now," he said coolly, "and was a bit careless. Senior, I hope you can forgive me."

It was only at this moment that the surrounding thousand Cultivators realized that dozens of Dongluo Clan Cultivators had appeared on the nearby mountain ridges. The eyes of the thousand Cultivators began to glow, and their power merged together to form a crushing weight that

emanated out in all directions.

This land was their Sect, a place that outsiders were not permitted to enter without permission. Any visitor should announce themselves and make a formal request to pay a visit. However, the Dongluo Clan had showed up without any of the formalities.

Clearly, they came with ill intentions. This was even more apparent... because of the presence of the Nascent Soul Cultivator leading the group.

“Don’t worry about it,” said the Nascent Soul Cultivator with a laugh. “There’s no need to blame yourself, lad.” He advanced forward into the basin, followed by the dozens of Clan members. As he moved forward, his expression was normal, but his heart was filled with shock. The thousand Cultivators present all had different Cultivation bases, and yet the feeling they gave off was that they were integrated into a whole.

The feeling caused the heart of the Nascent Soul Cultivator to fill with amazement. Then he saw the decayed buildings in the area, and suddenly began to feel a bit of hesitation.

What caused him to hesitate was not Meng Hao’s Cultivation base, but rather the sword formation that he had just employed.

“This sword formation can absorb longevity....” The Nascent Soul Cultivator couldn’t shake the feeling that this place was completely bizarre. The two things that Nascent Soul Cultivators valued most were their lives and their longevity.

They had long lifespans, and because of that, any reduction to their longevity was very bothersome.

The original plan had been to travel to this place and force Meng Hao and his followers to join the Dongluo Clan. Should he refuse, the Dongluo Clan would resort to certain methods of force.

Meng Hao had grown a bit too powerful in the area, leading the Dongluo Clan to their current course of action.

However, it only took a moment for hesitation to fill the heart of the Nascent Soul Cultivator. He had just barely made contact with Meng

Hao's Lotus Sword Formation, but could tell that he had lost several months of longevity.

The next thing that happened was that he saw the parrot flying through the air. Suddenly, he sighed inwardly. At this point, he was quite certain that the parrot was the same as the muscular man he had encountered back in Dongluo City, transformed via some unknown technique.

All of these things, however, merely made him hesitate. They by no means made him abandon the plan laid out by the Dongluo Clan. He continued to advance until he was a bit more than thirty meters away from Meng Hao, whereupon he stopped. His eyes suddenly blazed with an aggressive aura as he stared at Meng Hao.

Hands clasped behind his back, he slowly said, "Unfortunately, lad, if word of your inadvertent actions spread, then it would have an adverse effect on my reputation." He gave Meng Hao a meaningful look. "I assume you know why I've come here today. Please provide your response. What happens here today all depends on you." His words were filled with an air of authority. Behind him, the dozens of Dongluo Clan members glared out in all directions.

It was only Dongluo Han who had an apologetic aura to him. Next to him, Dongluo Ling was the picture of loftiness; her expression was one of scorn as she stared at the hated Meng Hao, just waiting for him to bow his head in acquiescence.

As the old man's words rang out, one figure after another suddenly appeared in the region surrounding the basin. They simply stood there, not entering the basin, but slowly emanating crushing pressure which descended upon the thousand local Cultivators.

The parrot looked around proudly, even scornfully. The meat jelly was currently perched atop the head of Huang Daxian, who was trembling in fear. A look of dignity covered its face as it attempted to count how many people were surrounding them.

However, no matter how it counted, there only seemed to be three....

As for the thousand Cultivators, their faces were filled with anxiety. It

was only Big-head who set his jaw and then muttered to himself, “These Dongluo City people can mess with anyone they want, and they choose to mess with this inhuman villain....”

Meng Hao looked calmly at the Nascent Soul Cultivator in front of him. His Cultivation base was at the early Nascent Soul stage. He stood there like some kind of mountain, exerting powerful pressure. He held himself like the Lord of this area, as if he were in charge of the thousand Cultivators, as if their lives or deaths could be determined by a mere thought on his part.

His expression the same as ever, Meng Hao asked, “How will joining the Dongluo Clan benefit me?” It was as if he hadn’t even noticed the people standing on the surrounding mountain ridges.

“By becoming an auxiliary branch of the Dongluo Clan, you will have the right to occupy this position,” said the Nascent Soul Cultivator, his voice calm. “You can also receive financial support from the Dongluo Clan. Of course, you will need to consume the Clan’s medicinal supplements. When the appropriate time comes, we will of course dispel them.” He was convinced that Meng Hao would capitulate; there was really only one option available. Meng Hao wasn’t powerful enough to make any other choice.

Actually, considering the current crisis in the Black Lands, the Dongluo Clan had little other choice than to do things in this way. Because of the chaos everywhere, few people would willingly join them. The results of their recruiting efforts lately had been abysmal. Meng Hao and his thousand followers looked like meek lambs. Furthermore, Meng Hao’s Cultivation base was not high enough to cause them any concern. Even if his military might was strong at the moment, exterminating him wouldn’t be very difficult.

“I shall give you three breaths of time to consider,” said the old man with the flick of a sleeve. “You’re a smart fellow, you should be able to figure out what the right decision is. Even if you don’t want to concede, you will!”

“Who the hell are you again?” replied Meng Hao coolly, his expression

the same as ever. “Is the Dongluo Clan looking for a new boss?”

Chapter 347: The Magical Fog Becomes a Sea!

Meng Hao's words boomed out like thunder.

It wasn't just the Nascent Soul Cultivator who stared in shock after hearing them; all of the surrounding thousand Cultivators gaped.

When the words rang out, Big-head was off in the distance reveling in Meng Hao's misfortune. He gasped. In his opinion, Meng Hao's words were simply too pretentious.

Dongluo Ling's eyes went wide; she had never imagined someone could be so wildly arrogant. Dongluo Han also stared in shock, along with all of the other Dongluo Clan members, who looked on in disbelief.

The Nascent Soul Cultivator started to laugh. His laughter grew louder, and the look on his face became grimmer. His killing intent had long since begun to emanate out.

"You stripling, you really don't know the height of the Heavens and the depth of the Earth! Well, if you're looking to die, I can fulfill your wish!" Even as he spoke, he began to stride toward Meng Hao.

Simultaneously, the Dongluo Clan members on the ridges around the basin transformed into prismatic beams of light and shot downward.

However, even as they sprang into action, the parrot, who was currently soaring through mid-air, suddenly cried out in its shrill voice: "Get into formation!"

The screeching voice slammed into the ears of the thousand onlookers. Immediately, the more than one hundred Cultivators who had been with Meng Hao from the beginning began to run, almost out of instinct. Their action spurred on the other Cultivators. They had been training for many days with the parrot, essentially developing this skill out of nothing. It was difficult, but they had already started to become familiar with the spell formation; working in unison with others made things much simpler.

At the same time that the Cultivators began running, the Nascent Soul Cultivator was closing in on Meng Hao. His right hand lifted up, forming a palm which he then closed into a fist. The air around Meng Hao collapsed, shrinking rapidly, crushing down onto Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered sharply. As the old man neared him, the Lotus Sword Formation suddenly appeared and shot forward. A booming rang out, and as it did, Meng Hao struck out his right hand with incredible power.

The old man frowned. He suddenly stopped moving forward and then disappeared, completely evading Meng Hao's sword formation. Then, he reappeared behind Meng Hao, a snide look on his face. He reached out his left hand and closed it into a fist. "Shatter," he said.

Another boom filled the air as the air around Meng Hao shattered, along with him, slicing his body into infinite pieces.

"Now you know the gap between the Core Formation stage and the Nascent Soul stage," said the old man. "It doesn't matter if you have an amazing sword formation or some bizarre power in your right fist. In the... huh?" Even in the middle of his diatribe, then old man's face suddenly flickered and filled with shock.

This was because Meng Hao's body had been shattered, not into pieces of bone and flesh, but rather, Qi.

"A clone!?!? How could a Core Formation Cultivator have a clone!?" His face twisting, he spun around. Even as he did, he saw a vast fog, within which massive figures nearly thirty meters tall could be seen, running to and fro.

The dozens of Clan members who had accompanied him here were nowhere to be seen.

"This...." The man's face was unsightly. If he didn't understand that he had been trapped, then he didn't deserve to be a Nascent Soul Cultivator.

"This trifling spell formation can't hold me," he said with a cold harrumph. His body flickered, and he disappeared as he employed another

minor teleportation. When he reappeared, his face was filled with thorough shock. This was because he had discovered that he was still surrounded by endless fog.

“So minor teleportation doesn’t work...” The old man slapped his bag of holding to produce a strip of bamboo. He rubbed its surface, causing it to ignite. A howl rang out from within the flames and smoke; it transformed into the phantom image of a vicious beast, which charged toward the fog.

“Break!” cried the old man.

As the boom resonated out, Dongluo Ling and the others looked around with fear at the fog. They had all been separated, and occasionally, miserable shrieks could be heard.

The Dongluo Clan members who had been charging down from the ridges above all looked shocked. Any of them who entered the fog instantly became lost. As for the Cultivators who didn’t enter the mist, they took deep breaths as they looked down at the basin. As of this moment, it looked as if it had become a lake of fog!

Fog had filled the entirety of the basin!

The fog roiled and churned with amazing power; within could be seen tall phantom figures running back and forth. The figures seemed to be chanting something, although it wasn’t clear. Their running caused the earth to quake; up above, the sky turned pale and clouds began to amass.

The Dongluo Clan members who had not been drawn into the fog were just about to retreat, when they suddenly found that, unbeknownst to them, a fog had appeared behind them! They were trapped! A fatal blow was about to be delivered!

The only people who knew about this spell formation of Meng Hao’s were the hundreds of Cultivators who had tried to kill him. However, almost all of them were dead. Any of them who hadn’t died were now part of Meng Hao’s forces, and under the compulsion of poison. Of course, they wouldn’t spread any information about it.

Therefore, this spell formation was Meng Hao’s greatest trump card. No

one knew about it, and with one thousand people to power it, it gave Meng Hao a shocking advantage.

At the moment, he sat cross-legged in a secret underground chamber, his true secluded meditation zone. As he looked up, his vision passed through the ground to see everything that was happening up above.

He saw the deaths of the Dongluo Clan members and other Cultivators they had brought. He also saw the old Nascent Soul expert frantically trying to break through the spell formation. Unfortunately for him, the power of the spell formation had already been unleashed. When it was completely in play, even a Nascent Soul Cultivator would be unable to break it.

“The Dongluo Clan came with vicious intent,” thought Meng Hao. “You can’t blame me for responding in kind.” He pushed his right index finger down the ground. Immediately, Demonic Qi coalesced to form an illusory body. In the blink of an eye, it assumed the appearance of Meng Hao, then passed through all the dirt and soil to join the events in the outside world.

Meng Hao then stood up and left the secret chamber. When he appeared in the mist, a multicolored streak of light flew toward him; it was the parrot, who landed on his shoulder, its face filled with arrogance and complacency. It looked around with derision.

“Meng Hao, let’s sack the city! Plunder that random Clan, whatever it was called. What’s theirs shall be ours! With Lord Fifth’s spell formation, we can screw those no-good sons of bitches to death! Then I can go visit those cute birdies again. Hahaha! Lord Fifth is always the most badass! Birdies, just wait for Lord Fifth, alright? Lord Fifth has already decided that from now on, that Dongluo City is going to change its name to Peacock Screwing City!”

Meng Hao ignored the parrot. His body flickered as he shot forward. Because of the parrot’s help, the fog did absolutely nothing to Meng Hao. Traversing about within it was as easy as walking down a paved road.

Chapter 348: Assault on Dongluo City

“Are you sure your spell formation can hold a Nascent Soul Cultivator?” Meng Hao asked coolly as he walked through the fog.

“Of course, no problem,” replied the parrot. Slapping its chest with its wing, it said, “Lord Fifth’s human-powered Celestial spell formation is unique in all the Nine Mountains and Seas. It draws its power from people. Since we have more than a thousand, well, we might not be able to kill a Nascent Soul Cultivator, but we can definitely trap one inside. Child’s play.” Its tone was lofty, as if its actions were doubly efficient.

“Can the spell formation move?” asked Meng Hao, his eyes glittering. He stopped walking for a moment as he caught sight of a Dongluo Clan Cultivator of the early Core Formation stage off in the fog. The man was frantically attacking the mist around him, an expression of terror and despair on his face.

He couldn’t see Meng Hao, but Meng Hao could make him out quite clearly. Meng Hao shifted into motion again, and within a moment was at the man’s side. He waved his hand, and the fog coalesced, surrounding the Dongluo Clan Cultivator, enveloping him. When it dissipated, Meng Hao walked off. Behind him, the Dongluo Clan Cultivator had collapsed unconscious onto the ground.

“Of course it can move. As long as our men keep running, then Lord Fifth’s spell formation can go anywhere, and take the people inside along with it.” An expression of arrogant pride covered the parrot’s face.

Meng Hao nodded and continued to proceed forward. It wasn’t long before he found Dongluo Han. The man’s face was pale and filled with vigilance. He peered around at the fog; his Core Qi was in full play and he was on guard against any changes.

Meng Hao looked at him thoughtfully for the space of a few breaths, then shot over. The fog began to seethe, and Dongluo Han’s face flickered. Before he could react, though, a hand shot out from the fog next to him and pushed down onto his back.

A great power shot through him, sealing his Cultivation base. He didn't even have the strength to turn his head now. Instead, he fell to the ground, unconscious.

Meng Hao walked out from within the fog and looked down at Dongluo Han. He didn't kill him; knocking him out was good enough for now.

Meng Hao turned and continued to walk off into the distance. Whenever he ran into Dongluo Clan members, he disabled them and rendered them unconscious.

Some of them, however, ended up in the paths of the running figures. These ones could only perish with miserable shrieks under the power of the spell formation.

After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, Meng Hao found Dongluo Ling within the fog. Her hair was in disarray, and her beautiful features were filled with hopelessness and anxiety. She had used every method she had at her disposal, but was unable to escape. How could she not feel despair?

She couldn't see her fellow Clan members; it was as if the entire world had turned into fog, and she was the only person left. When the massive phantoms went running by, they emitted a great pressure which filled her heart with fear.

How could she ever have imagined that the person who pissed her off so much would have such a fearsome spell formation? She didn't dare to approach the running phantoms; she had already seen a few of her fellow Clan members run into them and instantly be trampled to death.

In fact, she could smell the odor of fresh blood rising up in the air.

Meng Hao looked at her, his eyes cold. He lifted up his right hand, causing the fog to roil and rush toward her. It immediately enveloped her, then slowly dissipated. She was now unconscious on the ground, completely still.

In addition to the Dongluo Clan Nascent Soul Cultivator, there were over seventy Clan Members left in the fog. By now, Meng Hao had already

incapacitated about half of them.

After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, Meng Hao slowly lifted his hand up from the middle of the back of yet another listless Dongluo Clan member. The man spit up a mouthful of blood and then collapsed unconscious.

“That’s the last one,” said Meng Hao. Turning, he looked off through the mist toward the stranded Nascent Soul expert. He was currently shooting divine abilities off constantly, as well as employing minor teleportation. In his mind, he was traveling forward slowly, but from Meng Hao’s perspective, he was merely going in circles.

Going in circles would not enable him to escape the fog.

“The Dongluo Clan came with malice,” said Meng Hao, “so let’s teach them a lesson. Move the spell formation.” Immediately, the parrot on his shoulder lifted its head up and let out a powerful squawking howl.

The fog around them immediately began to roil. The thousand running Cultivators within no longer ran in a circuitous path. Their eyes were closed, as if their wills were fused with that of the parrot. According to the parrot’s thoughts, the spell formation began to move toward Dongluo City.

Looking at the fog from outside, it was like a roiling sea within the basin. As it churned and seethed, it slowly began to move, climbing out of the basin, growing at the same time.

The fog sea was huge, tens of thousands of meters in diameter. As it passed along, it was as if an enormous beast made of fog consumed everything it touched.

The fog sea moved forward, and as it did, giant figures slowly became visible. Their roaring voices slowly became clearer.

“Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life....”

The sound of it rolled out, growing louder and clearer. Eventually, it shook Heaven and Earth, drawing the attention of the Rogue Cultivators who resided in the region surrounding Dongluo City. They stared fixedly

with wide eyes at the unbelievable sight of the roiling fog.

More and more people began to watch the mass of fog; it seemed to be moving slowly, but actually proceeded on with great speed. Some of the people flew along in mid-air to watch, panting, eyes wide.

Currently, the fog was about five hundred kilometers from Dongluo City, slowly moving forward. Onlookers had no idea what it was, but they could hear the indistinct voices emanating out from within. The sound of it left them shocked.

“What does it mean?”

“What a huge swathe of fog. It looks like there are people inside running around....”

“No, whatever things are inside are much bigger than people. It looks like they’re more than thirty meters tall! Just what is this fog?”

By now, there were several hundred Cultivators floating up in the air watching. These were all Rogue Cultivators who hadn’t joined any of the local power forces. They stared on with wide eyes, fearfully keeping their distance so that the fog wouldn’t envelop them.

The fog moved along, drawing closer and closer to Dongluo City. 500 kilometers, 400 kilometers, 250 kilometers, 150 kilometers....

The fog billowed up high into the sky, and as it moved along, it emitted a thunderous rumbling sound that shook the ground. Dust flew into the air, and an immense pressure emanated out. The Cultivators who were following along in mid-air retreated further away in fear.

Meanwhile, in Dongluo City everything was relatively desolate. Other than the Dongluo Clan members, the only other Cultivators in the city were a handful of Rogue Cultivators. As they all became aware of what was going on, their hearts began to fill with consternation.

They had no idea what the fog was; all they knew was that Dongluo City clearly lay directly in its path. Given the speed with which the fog was moving, it would arrive in the time it takes an incense stick to burn.

As it neared, the people inside Dongluo City began to shrink back in fear, as if they wanted to flee.

“What happened? Is it the Black Lands Palace?”

“Dammit, how come it’s moving so fast? Just what Black Lands Palace technique is this? This fog is so immense it’s frightening....”

Most of the Dongluo Clan members were gathered up in the second layer of the city. There were roughly five hundred of them, and all of their faces were filled with unsightly expressions. Standing in front of all of them were two old men with grim faces.

These two old men were the other of the three Nascent Soul Cultivators of the Dongluo Clan. Standing next to them was the current Dongluo Clan Chief. He was frowning, and his expression was one of anxiety.

Up above them, three Scarlet Peacocks circled about in the air looking uneasy. They emitted plaintive wails as they eyed the incoming fog.

An oppressive aura had come to rest over the entirety of Dongluo City.

One of the Nascent Soul Cultivators standing next to the Clan Chief, a middle-aged man, said, “According to my investigation, all of the forces that Third Elder took with him to the Church of the Golden Light have gone missing.... After that, the Church of the Golden Light was completely empty.... That’s when this bizarre fog appeared. Its target is clear: Dongluo City!” He paused for a moment, a look of bitterness, fear and reverence on his face. “I arranged for seven men to investigate the mist from various directions as it approached, but.... Regardless of the level of their Cultivation base, as soon as they touched the fog, they were sucked in. After that, we lost all contact.”

The Clan Chief sighed inwardly. He might be the Clan Chief, but even if his opinion differed from that of the Elders, he still had to comply with their wishes. His opinion regarding the Church of the Golden Light had been to cooperate with it and form an alliance.

However, the three Elders viewed the Church of the Golden Light as nothing more than a group of Rogue Cultivators. The Church’s founder,

Patriarch Golden Light, was only a Core Formation Cultivator, and therefore not qualified to enter an alliance with the Dongluo Clan. He could either capitulate or be enslaved, those were his only options.

It was under these suppositions that Third Elder had set out.

Now, the Church of the Golden Light was obviously striking back at them, in a way that far surpassed the predictions of the Dongluo Clan. The Black Lands Palace hadn't even come their way yet, but they were already facing a crisis.

The other Nascent Soul Elder coolly said, "Does a firefly dare to compete with the full moon? Employ the Clan's Grand Spell Formation. If the Church of the Golden Light wants to attack us with fog, then the Dongluo Clan will break them with our spell formation!"

At this point, the fog was now about 25 kilometers away from the city.

Green beams of light began to emanate out from Dongluo City, transforming into sheets of leaves which covered over the city.

Within the fog, Meng Hao looked out at Dongluo City. His eyes glowed with coldness. Above his head spun the Lotus Sword Formation. Surrounding him were more than seventy Dongluo Clan Cultivators who had previously been unconscious. They were awake now, although, their eyes were filled with blankness. They seemed to have lost their senses, as if their bodies weren't even under their own control.

Meng Hao had used the art of Righteous Bestowal to take control of them.

"Demon Sealers don't usually exchange blows with others," Meng Hao murmured. "The blows are delivered by means of Righteous Bestowal." He lifted up his right hand and waved it out in front of him.

Chapter 349: Killing With Poison of Time!

The hundreds of Rogue Cultivators floating in mid-air didn't leave; they wanted to stay and watch the battle.

Each and every one could tell that this fog was not the work of the Black Lands Palace. Many of these people had lived in the area for a long time. After making some inquiries, they came to find out that the fog belonged to none other than the burgeoning Church of the Golden Light.

They gazed with intense looks as the speed of the fog increased, drawing it ever closer to the defenses of Dongluo City.

15 kilometers, 10 kilometers, 5 kilometers, 2.5 kilometers....

All the way until a massive explosion shook the land and sent vibrations out through the air. When the fog slammed into Dongluo City, sky and earth turned pale. Dongluo City shook as the leaves surrounding it began to glow. The fog churned violently, and an intense rumbling emanated out from it.

Next, the onlookers stared raptly as the fog began to cover over the leaves, slowly enveloping the entirety of Dongluo City.

As of this moment, Dongluo City was no longer visible; the only thing that could be seen was an all-encompassing fog.

However, those who looked closely could see that even though the Dongluo City defensive spell formation was covered by the fog, it hadn't been broken yet, and wouldn't anytime soon. This was not a battle between Cultivators but a struggle between spell formations.

Booming sounds rang out one after another. Suddenly, a thousand enormous phantoms appeared within the fog, causing the hundreds of Cultivators watching on from mid-air to gasp. These phantoms were roughly thirty meters in height, and they ran with incredible speed, black smoke streaming off of their forms.

As they ran, the fog grew thicker, and rumbling booms filled the air.

Furthermore, the top of the fog layer began to churn, and a figure rose

up. He wore a long green robe, and his black hair whipped about in the wind. Golden light emanated out from his body; this was none other than Meng Hao.

“Patriarch Golden Light!!”

“So this fog is the work of Patriarch Golden Light! Is he crazy? He’s only at the Core Formation stage, but he dares to pick a fight with the Dongluo Clan!”

“That spell formation might be strong, and the Dongluo Clan doesn’t have a Spirit Severing Patriarch. However, they do have three Nascent Soul Elders. That’s more than enough to hold a solid position in the entire area. Nobody around here dares to provoke the Dongluo Clan!”

Meanwhile, the fog-covered Dongluo City showed no signs of weakening. The countless leaves surrounded the city, within which were about a hundred Rogue Cultivators who had chosen to side with the Dongluo Clan. They were nervous, but having seen the effectiveness of the Dongluo City defenses, they were confident in their decision.

In the second level of the city, the Dongluo Clan Cultivators were breathing sighs of relief. The two Nascent Soul Elders’ eyes shone with cold light, and they let out cold harrumphs.

The fact that the city’s spell formation could resist this bizarre mist put them in an unassailable position. Even the Dongluo Clan Chief was feeling a bit more at ease.

One of the Nascent Soul Elders pulled out a jade slip. “I’m interested to see how formidable this guy’s spell formation really is,” he said, smashing the jade slip between his fingers. A green Qi swirled up to form a light that shot out toward the city’s leaf defense.

In the blink of an eye, the leaf spell formation began to emit a buzzing sound as hundreds of toxic wasps flew out from within. Each toxic wasp emitted a dangerous aura as it flew out from within the spell formation. However, even as they charged forward, the more than seventy Dongluo Clan members in the fog who were under the control of Meng Hao’s Righteous Bestowal shot forward to meet them, their eyes glowing with a

mysterious light.

“Dammit!” said the Dongluo Clan Nascent Soul Elder, his face falling. Obviously, he was observing the scene outside through the eyes of the toxic wasps. His right hand flickered with an incantation, causing the toxic wasps outside to veer away from the Clan members and search for Cultivators of the Church of the Golden Light.

Within the fog, the parrot let out a sharp squawk; immediately the running phantoms around him changed directions. Instantly, the fog transformed into a vortex, within which danced countless lightning bolts. The parrot’s colorful feathers all stood on end and its eyes filled with a feverish look. It pushed the spell formation to the limits of its power in order to break the city’s defenses.

“Lord Fifth swore an oath to screw this city!” it screeched, controlling the movements of the spell formation as if it were bewitched. “You just wait, Lord Fifth is coming!” The phantoms ran back and forth, trampling above the city, causing booms to fill the air, and the leaves to tremble.

As the two spell formations fought back and forth, Meng Hao floated in mid-air, looking down through the fog at Dongluo City within.

He lifted his right hand, flashed an incantation, and then pointed down toward the ground.

“Righteous Bestowal!” he said coolly. As his voice rang out, Meng Hao saw ghost images spring up everywhere. At the same time, strands of Qi rose up from all directions to circulate around him. He made a gesture toward the fog, and the Demonic Qi instantly began to coalesce and shoot toward it. It passed directly through the fog and then into Dongluo City’s spell formation.

A boom rang out, causing everything to shake violently. Meng Hao continued to make incantation gestures with his right hand. More Demonic Qi surged forth, passing through the fog to slam into the other spell formation.

Everything that was happening caused the observing Rogue Cultivators to shake in their boots. They suddenly realized that Patriarch Golden Light

was not someone to be looked down upon in the slightest.

Suddenly, a cold snort rang out from beneath the fog, filled with pride and scorn. “Paltry Church of the Golden Light! Piddling Core Formation child! You dare to use some bizarre fog spell formation to trap my Dongluo Clan members!?” The voice caused the air to shudder, echoing out far beyond the region of the fog.

Another voice rang out, that of an old man. “You don’t know the height of the Heavens and the depth of the Earth, you little punk!” Suddenly, Dongluo City’s leaf defenses began to emanate a bright green glow, within which, the images of leaves could be seen. It swirled around, emanating a booming sound that caused the fog to vibrate. The running figures inside suddenly began to show signs of weakening.

The parrot let out a squawk, and the fog suddenly began to churn. Rumbling sounds emanated out as the attack on the Dongluo City defenses redoubled.

A proud voice rang out: “The Dongluo City spell formation has been at the top for years. It has never been broken! Even the Black Lands Palace would have to pay a heavy price to get through it, let alone some piddling Church of the Golden Light!

“Your spell formation might be incredible, but how long will it last? Once you can’t hold out any longer, I’ll personally rip the skin off your body and hang it in my bedroom!” The echoing voice rang out to be heard by the hundreds of observing Cultivators, causing their hearts and minds to tremble.

A coldness glittered in Meng Hao’s eyes. The reason he had chosen to use the spell formation to isolate Dongluo City and then use the Dongluo Clan members to attack, was because he knew that the general chaos in the Black Lands would prevent the Dongluo Clan from going all out.

He wanted to send a warning to the Dongluo Clan to not trifle with him. He and they were separate entities, and although blood had been spilled, not all issues needed to be solved with a massacre.

However, the arrogance of the Dongluo Clan showed no signs of

lessening. In fact, it seemed to be growing more intense. A cold smile touched the corners of Meng Hao's mouth.

"Well in that case, Meng Hao understands," he thought. Slapping his bag of holding, he produced a black-colored medicinal pill.

As soon as it appeared, it began to emanate a mysterious glow that seemed capable of sucking in one's consciousness.

This was a poison pill personally concocted by Meng Hao, one of the more powerful varieties. With the wave of a hand, crushing the pill into ashy powder. It flew down to be sucked into the spinning fog vortex. After a moment, it began to descend onto Dongluo City's leaf defenses.

As the powder descended, the leaves began to contract and show signs of decay. They even emitted squealing sounds.

At the same time, Meng Hao pulled out another medicinal pill. He crushed this one as well, and as he sprinkled the resulting powder down, a Flame Sea sprang into being. The flames were mysterious and bizarre as they passed through the fog and down toward Dongluo City.

Next, Meng Hao produced a third pill, then a fourth and a fifth. He crushed them all into powder and sent them floating down, three deadly poisons that merged with the Flame Sea to become a five-colored hyper toxic poison.

The hyper toxic poison was something specially designed by Meng Hao using his skill in the Dao of alchemy. Poison pills that he created were not necessarily things that Nascent Soul Cultivators would fear, but anyone under that stage who were infected by them would be incapable of dispelling the poison without Meng Hao's assistance.

This fog was now a poison fog!

Multitudinous hissing noises rose up, and the fog seethed. In the space of an instant, Dongluo City went completely quiet. Everyone inside was looking up at the leaf shield, their faces flickering with various emotions.

The Dongluo Clan Cultivators all looked on with unsightly expressions. Even the two Nascent Soul Elders had looks of shock on their faces.

“This guy’s also a poison expert!!”

“Dammit! How come no one uncovered such an important piece of information!?”

“Poison Cultivators are usually less powerful in direct combat, but in large-scale conflicts, their abilities can determine victory or defeat!”

The Dongluo Clan members were shocked, but the hundreds of observing Cultivators could do nothing more than gasp and looked at Meng Hao, their eyes filling with dread.

“Poison is only part one,” said Meng Hao, his eyes gleaming with a sharp light. He waved his right hand, and the Lotus Sword Formation flew out toward the fog. Within the fog, it began to spin rapidly, sending out vast ripples containing the power of Time.

As the ripples spread out, it carried fog with them, which in turn contained Time power. The combination of the ten swords was equal to the power of more than ten sixty-year cycles of time.

The poison alone could cause extreme damage. However, combined with the power of Time, it transformed into a sort of terrifying baptism. The ripples spread out, bolstered by the unimaginable power of the fog spell formation. Poison, the power of Time, the imprisoning power of the spell formation, all of these things caused the spell formation to surge with boundless power.

As the Time ripples spread out, a handful of observing Cultivators who were relatively close by could see the vegetation on the ground withering up. Even the soil itself seemed to fill with signs of decay; signs of it could even be seen in the air.

Before the Cultivators who saw this could flee, the ripples hit them, and their faces flickered. They then employed every method possible to get away as quickly as they could. Even still, they weren’t fast enough. All of them suddenly transformed from being middle-aged to being old. One of them even began to emanate a faint Death Qi.

All of the observers gasped when they saw this, their faces filled with

looks of unprecedented shock. Immediately, they began to fall back, fearful of coming into contact with the ripples.

“What magic is that?!?!”

“Time! That’s Time, the power of Time! It’s a divine ability that can cause you to age almost a whole lifetime in the blink of an eye!”

“Patriarch Golden Light is so powerful.... No wonder he dared to provoke the Dongluo Clan!”

Chapter 350: The Indomitability of Time

What is Time...?

Many years later, Dongluo Han would never be able to forget what he saw that day as he stood atop that bright green leaf. His eyes were blank, but his mind was awake. He saw his body beginning to grow old. He saw the green leaves around him growing decrepit and old. He saw the land around him becoming ancient.

As the Lotus Sword Formation spun, and its power emanated out, Meng Hao hovered above the fog looking down inside, observing the effects of the power of Time which he wielded.

On the one hand, it was something of ultimate flexibility within Heaven and Earth. On the other hand, it contained paramount indomitability.

No person, no living thing, no creature could stand up to that gentle onslaught which is Time. It didn't matter if you used spell formations or divine abilities, illusory or tangible items. All of it... would deteriorate under indomitable, smashing Time.

And this was a single Lotus Sword Formation formed with Time Swords. Only one of them contained three sixty-year cycles; the others were incomplete. If all the Time Swords contained three sixty-year cycles, then that combination would be a power of Time equal to one thousand eight hundred years. That was enough to shock the Heavens and rock the Earth.

This is Time!

In this moment, all of the surrounding Rogue Cultivators had lost the power to even breathe. They stared in shock at the land. It looked somewhat yellow, like an old painting which was slowly fading away into dust.

Within the fog, the Dongluo Clan members who were under Meng Hao's control were coming to their senses. However, even as they did, they wished they hadn't. This was because as they recovered, they found themselves on the verge of becoming ancient.

Dongluo Ling looked down at her hands; they were covered with wrinkles. Her body was withered. All she could do was stare out blankly.

The green shield of leaves surrounding Dongluo City was in the process of rotting. It started to show signs of breakage, and there were some areas where the shield couldn't even cover the city. Fog started to pour inside, along with the power of Time, and the hyper toxic poison.

This all gave birth to intense dread within the city; all of the Dongluo Clan Cultivators felt their hearts and minds trembling.

Before they could even take any countermeasures, the fog began to seethe violently. The parrot suddenly shot out from within, flying up into the air and giving out a piercing cry.

Beneath it, the fog began to transform into columns of black smoke. The boundless fog, which was nearly five thousand meters in diameter, congealed into hundreds of bands of black smoke, which shot up to circulate around the parrot. Within them were the more than one thousand Cultivators of the Church of the Golden Light. Their eyes were closed, and they were surrounded by black smoke, as if they were part of the spell formation itself.

The trembling onlookers watched as the black smoke congealed rapidly to form into the shape of an enormous black raven!

The raven's body emanated a black Qi. It let out a piercing cry which seemed capable of causing the living to close their eyes and the dead to open theirs. It echoed out throughout Heaven and Earth, then slammed down onto Dongluo City like a meteor falling from the Heavens.

This spectacle was a familiar sight to some of the audience. They had seen something very similar that night some time ago in Dongluo City. [1] Here it was again; however, the amount of power they could sense was far, far greater than that from before.

[tl: [1] = This is referring to when Lord Fifth fought the Dongluo Clan for the first time in chapter 329]

They watched on in awe as the black raven screamed through the air

directly toward the green leaf shield of Dongluo City.

An enormous, deafening boom filled the air. The defense shield had already been weakened. Now, it trembled, unable to stand up to the force which assailed it; it suddenly began to collapse.

As it exploded, vast quantities of trees within Dongluo City also began to fall apart. The leaves shattered. The shield... was completely gone!

At the same time, the black raven began to disperse; it transformed into vast quantities of fog, which once again dispersed out to cover Dongluo City.

Miserable shrieks filled the air, along with explosions. The hyper toxic poison, along with the power of Time, swept through the city. Outside the fog, everything was quiet. No one spoke. The hundreds of observing Cultivators watched on blankly, their minds spinning. Everything that was happening was being sealed onto their minds, never to be forgotten.

Within Dongluo City, the two Nascent Soul Elders stood pale-faced. The vast fog which surrounded them made it impossible to see their fellow Clan members. All they could hear were bloodcurdling screams echoing about.

They were Nascent Soul Cultivators. Compared to everyone else around them, they were at the pinnacle of power. However, within this spell formation, they weren't even able to move. No matter what divine abilities they utilized, they could not escape, nor break through the fog.

Rage sprang into being in their minds, but even their rage was useless against the spell formation.

On the first day, they were still able to come up with ideas about how to break out. On the second day, it was the same. In fact, they maintained this optimism until the fifth day. After that, though, they no longer heard any bloodcurdling cries from their fellow Clan members. Hopelessness filled them, and their expressions filled with complete frenzy.

Their features had been assaulted by the power of Time for over five days. They were Nascent Soul Cultivators, but they were unable to fight

the changes that resulted from such an onslaught.

On the sixth day, the fog covering Dongluo City suddenly began to lift. It left the city, no longer filling it, but surrounding it. Not a scrap of fog was left to be seen inside.

What was clearly visible inside of Dongluo city was decay. Trees, leaves, everything looked as if it had been rotting there for hundreds of years.

There were only three people left inside of the city. They were none other than the Dongluo Clan's Nascent Soul Elders. The one who had been trapped inside the fog for the longest looked around in surprise as soon as it lifted. Immediately, his breathing grew ragged, and astonishment filled his eyes.

From beginning to end, he had assumed he was still in the basin of the Church of the Golden Light. Only now did he find out where the battle had actually been fought.

At the same time, he caught sight of the other two Nascent Soul Elders. They all exchanged glances, then looked up silently as Meng Hao strode out from within the fog.

The instant they saw him, the three of them began to grow blurry, as they prepared to use minor teleportation if necessary. Now that Meng Hao had made an appearance, they were determined to be prepared for anything.

Meng Hao looked at the three old men, then lifted his right hand. Immediately, hundreds of figures began to emerge from the surrounding fog. They were none other than all the other members of the Dongluo Clan, unconscious, dragged out by the fog itself.

The appearance of these people caused the three old men to give up any notions of using minor teleportation. With all of their Clan members here, they wouldn't take the risk.

They stood there silently.

"Enough," said Meng Hao. "You know, the fault is yours. If I hadn't fought back, you would have assimilated me. Joining you wouldn't be that

bad, I guess, except you lack a bit in the sincerity department. I didn't kill very many of your Clan members. They're all here. I'll trade them back to you for this broken down city of yours." He looked at them, awaiting their answer.

The hearts of the three Nascent Soul Cultivators filled with bitterness. They exchanged glances, and then Second Elder gritted his teeth and nodded.

"Things being the way they are," he said, "we agree with everything you've said. Except...." Before he finished speaking, he locked gazes with Meng Hao. It seemed as if he were engaged in a respectful interchange, but suddenly, the bodies of the three Elders vanished. Using minor teleportation, they reappeared off to the side, looking as if they were going to make a run for it.

Even as Meng Hao looked over at them, First Elder, who hadn't spoken the entire time, suddenly grew blurry. As he did, killing intent filled his eyes. When he reappeared, he was standing behind Meng Hao. His hand shot out hatefully, slamming into Meng Hao.

A boom filled the air as the Meng Hao in front of First Elder exploded into pieces. However, what dissipated out was nothing more than vast quantities of Qi.

Next, Third Elder shot toward the mist. He wasn't fleeing; no, his right hand flickered an incantation. His body began to emit a buzzing sound, and an enormous hand appeared behind him. It shot into the mist, where it grabbed someone.

The person it grabbed was none other than Meng Hao!

"Die!!" cried Third Elder. A boom rang out as the man clenched his fist. However... even as the boom filled the air, the Meng Hao within the fist suddenly dissipated into Qi.

The three Elders' faces fell. First Elder, Second Elder, who had been speaking just now, and Third Elder, all felt their hearts begin to pound.

They had come up with their plan based on a few mutual glances.

However, their plan had been defeated in an instant. Suddenly, roughly a dozen people walked out from within the fog. All of them were Meng Hao!

Their appearances were completely identical, and all of them glared coldly at the three Elders.

“Patriarch of the Church of the Golden Light,” said Third Elder of the Dongluo Clan, shamed into rage, “will you only rely on your spell formation? Or do you dare to fight one on one with any of us?!” The frustration he had felt over the past days exploded out. The power of his Nascent Soul Cultivation base also emanated out; his entire body brimmed with power.

One among the dozen of Meng Haos cleared his throat and said. “No, I don’t.” He looked a bit embarrassed.

Even as the words came out of his mouth, Second Elder appeared in front of him and launched an attack. Meng Hao’s body dissipated into black mist. But then... ten more Meng Haos walked out from the fog.

The three old Cultivators were now starting to be inundated with a feeling of helplessness.

“Elders, don’t you think your acting this way is a bit improper?” said one of the Meng Haos, looking a bit bashful. “I’m sincerely trying to discuss a way to resolve the situation. The Dongluo Clan is quite well known in the Black Lands. Your position in the United Nine might be weakening as of late, but if your entire Clan dies overnight, that would be really embarrassing for you. I would once again like to request that you three Elders agree to hand over the city to me. What do you say?”

Even as he spoke, the hundreds of Dongluo Clan Cultivators wrapped up in the fog started quivering as the fog began to wrap tightly around their necks.

Chapter 351: Peacock Screwing City

Dongluo City's three Nascent Soul Elders stood there fuming, gnashing their teeth. The hundreds of Cultivators outside of the fog still hadn't left, and were able to clearly see what was happening. Strange expressions covered their faces. Without any sort of consultation, they had all come to think the same thing: Meng Hao was someone to be intensely feared.

After a long moment, First Elder let out a long sigh and said, "Let all of our Clan members free and you can have the city, okay?!"

The dozens of Meng Haos all smiled. None of them spoke or moved; they simply looked at the three Nascent Soul Elders.

Not an ounce of respect for the Nascent Soul Cultivators could be seen in their gazes. Meng Hao didn't need to respect them. During his battle outside the Rebirth Cave, he had fought against more than ten Nascent Soul experts. There was nothing about them that he found awe-inspiring.

Even more importantly, Meng Hao was supremely confident that if he put on the blood-colored mask, although he would still not match up to them completely, he would definitely be able to fight back.

The First Elder said nothing for a while, but then let out a bitter laugh. He lifted his hand up and then smacked it down hard onto his chest. His body trembled as he spit up three consecutive mouthfuls of blood. With each mouthful, his Qi grew weaker. By the end of the process, his Cultivation base was reduced by half.

Even though he was still of the Nascent Soul stage, his actual battle prowess was now at almost exactly the same level as the great circle of Core Formation. It would take him months to recover fully from such a state.

After a moment's silence, Second Elder sighed. He knew there was only one thing he could do; there were no other options available. He also delivered a palm strike to his own chest. After coughing up some blood, his face grew listless.

Third Elder glared venomously at Meng Hao for a moment, then took a deep breath. He also inflicted self-injuries. As he coughed up blood, his Cultivation base sank.

“Now do you trust us?” said First Elder coldly, wiping the blood from his mouth.

One of the dozens of Meng Haos gave a shy smile. Nodding, he tapped his bag of holding. Even as he did so, the First Elder’s eyes filled with a gleaming light; he suddenly opened his mouth and spit out a beam of light.

This was Nascent Soul Aura, similar to Core Qi. However, in terms of level, it was the Heavens and Core Qi was the Earth. This Nascent Soul Aura was red in color and was vastly more intense than any naturally occurring red glow in Heaven and Earth. It wasn’t very dense, but carried a brilliant luster. In an instant, it appeared in front of Meng Hao, then spread out to cover everything.

The glow disappeared in the blink of an eye. As it did, the Meng Hao who had been tapping his bag of holding, as well as all of the other Meng Haos in the area, were destroyed. However, what fell to the ground was not blood and flesh, but fog.

The sight caused the Nascent Soul Cultivators’ faces to grow even more unsightly. They had used every method at their disposal, but the prudence and deviousness of Patriarch Golden Light defeated them at every turn.

“Of course the one tapping the bag of holding wasn’t really me,” came a voice from the fog. The fog churned, and Meng Hao strode out. “Seniors, I know that my clones look transparent to your eyes. The fact that you mistook the clone for the real me is my fault, I guess. Oops.”

He waved his hand, causing hundreds of streams of medicinal elixir to fly out. They shot directly toward the bound Dongluo Clan members, fusing into their bodies through their foreheads.

“This poison is really harmless,” said Meng Hao with a smile. “It’s not fatal, nor will it affect the Cultivation base. Let’s just say it’s there as... insurance.” He stepped to the side, and a path opened up in the fog which

led to the outside. The fog unwrapped from the hundreds of Dongluo Clan Cultivators, releasing them.

The three Nascent Soul Elders stood there with angry expressions on their faces, glaring at the single Meng Hao, unable to tell whether he was a clone or not.

After a long moment's silence, they started walking. When they passed him, Meng Hao continued to smile just as before. Suddenly, they stopped and turned their heads to look at him.

"Don't worry. The city is yours," said the First Elder, his tone sincere. "The Dongluo Clan doesn't want it anymore. The chaos of war grips the land, and the Dongluo Clan is now too weak to put up a fight. We will go into hiding. However, if any of our Clan members are harmed by your poison, then the three of us will exterminate you, even if we die in the process!" Having finished speaking, he flicked his sleeve and walked off.

Meng Hao continued to smile the entire time. He watched everyone leave, then suddenly lifted up his right hand. There in his palm was the Li Clan Patriarch. Almost at the exact same time that the Li Clan Patriarch appeared, a lightning bolt suddenly appeared in the blue sky above. It shot down, slamming onto the Li Clan Patriarch's soul.

"Curse you, you goddamned...." Before the old man could continue with his cursing, Meng Hao put him back into the blood-colored mask.

Meng Hao's movements just now had been as smooth as floating clouds and flowing water; he was quite proficient now.

The three Nascent Soul Elders looked back. When they saw the lightning fall, and then Meng Hao's actions, their faces sank and they sighed inwardly.

It was now obvious that the Meng Hao they had just walked past was the real one.

The entire Dongluo Clan left, hundreds of people. They departed what had once been their Dongluo City, leaving it completely and thoroughly empty.

No one knew where they left to. It was only known that several days later, they issued a proclamation in the Black Lands announcing their secession from the United Nine.

The news spread through the Black Lands like storm winds. Furthermore, the name of Patriarch Golden Light rose to complete prominence thanks to their battle.

The Dongluo Clan having been replaced, Dongluo City was renamed Peacock Screwing City. This rocked the Black Lands, after which many parties made various investigations and inquiries. In the end, it didn't matter; the Church of the Golden Light was now firmly established as a power.

Local Cultivators rushed to live in Peacock Screwing City. Soon, the Church of the Golden Light was over 1,500 men strong. By now, they were more powerful than the Dongluo Clan had been, with the exception of the three Nascent Soul Cultivators.

The city itself was fully repaired. The style was different from what Dongluo City's had been, though. The renovated Peacock Screwing City radiated the style of the parrot; it was now bright and colorful!

Meng Hao handed everything over to the parrot as he prepared to go into secluded meditation. All aspects, the city walls, the protective spell formation, all began to resemble the gaudy colors of the parrot.

In regard to the burrowing vines, Meng Hao planted some here, whereupon they became one aspect of the city's defense system.

Anyone who joined the Church of the Golden Light was allowed to live in the city. Of course, the Church of the Golden Light was not a Sect, so as more people arrived, the city was no longer truly a city, but rather, a temple!

Meng Hao channeled a spring from a local river, which he then transformed into a cistern. After adding some medicinal pills, it turned into another medicinal elixir cistern. This became the root of the entire Church.

The green leaf spell formation had been defiled by the parrot. After becoming the master of the city, the parrot didn't get rid of it, though, but rather, came up with some methods to repair and upgrade it. Now the spell formation could emit crushing pressure.

Also, it was now... multicolored.

The interior of the city was arranged as before, into three levels. There was only one residence on the third level. That was where Meng Hao currently sat cross-legged in meditation. In front of him was the small black jar which he had acquired from Big-head, the legacy item from the League of Hellfire from the Fourth Mountain.

He had been studying the item for several days. He very much wanted to be able to use it with the same seemingly miraculous speed that Big-head had. The idea was very intriguing.

He rubbed the surface of the jar and then suddenly, information regarding a divine ability popped into his mind. "Bloodburst Flash...?" he said lightly. "Use the power of flowing blood to achieve dramatic speed increase."

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he lifted his hand to rub the roc scale on his forehead. No matter how he tried, he had been unable to employ its power a second time.

Several days later, just as Meng Hao had finished cultivating the art of the Bloodburst Flash, Big-head solemnly delivered a jade slip to him. He scanned it with Spiritual Sense, whereupon his eyes began to gleam.

Meng Hao had sent Big-head to make some inquiries throughout the Black Lands to find out where Frigid Snow Larvae existed. Such larvae were rare, but not mythical. Thankfully, it didn't take long for Big-head to acquire the necessary information.

"Holy Snow City..." said Meng Hao with a soft sigh, gazing at the jade slip. A slight smile spread across his face.

There was only one place in all of the Black Lands where Frigid Snow Larvae could be found. It was none other than one of the cities of the

United Nine, Holy Snow City!

The city belonged to the Frigid Snow Clan, a Clan that was much more powerful than the Dongluo Clan. Their Spirit Severing Patriarchs had ensured their continued existence for many years. In fact, in the past, they had even occupied the most prominent position within the United Nine, with three Spirit Severing Patriarchs!

Unfortunately, recent years had seen quite a decline in their power. They now only had one Spirit Severing Patriarch. According to rumor, this final Patriarch was reaching the end of his life, and rarely appeared. He was now the Dao Reserve of the Frigid Snow Clan.

Apparently, only direct blood descendants of the Clan could acquire a Frigid Snow Larva along with the method to raise it. Most importantly, the moment after coming to life, the Frigid Snow Larva would bond a master. That bond could never be altered. When the master died, the larva would also die.

Meng Hao put away the jade slip. The Frigid Snow Larva was related to his ability to transcend tribulation, and he definitely needed one. After some mental deliberation, he rose to his feet and left his residence. As he looked out at the riotously colorful city, he felt a bit dizzy.

The parrot soared excitedly through the air, followed by three listless Scarlet Peacocks. From below drifted up chanting regarding having faith in the Lord Fifth to gain eternal life.

As for the meat jelly, it was finally able to begin preaching to the thousands of members of the church. Currently, it was looking solemnly at a Foundation Establishment Cultivator, ignoring the trembling look of despair on his face as it enthusiastically described the beauty of a sunset from many years in the past.

Meng Hao watched on for a bit and then sighed. It looked to him like the Cultivators in the city were very different than they used to, thanks to the parrot and the meat jelly. After a moment's thought, he turned, transforming into a beam of light that shot off into the distance.

When the parrot saw him leaving, it suddenly got very excited.

“Taking off, eh? Hahaha! Lord Fifth will now enact a plan that has been a long time in the making. Come come, children. Lord Fifth will now teach you a second Celestial spell formation. This one is called the Immortal Execution Formation!” The parrot slapped its chest with its wing, its voice roaring out with excitement. “This formation can shake the Heavens and rock the Earth. Employing it isn’t dangerous at all, and won’t hurt you in the least bit. Lord Fifth was definitely not screwed over by my own spell formation nine times in the past! Therefore, you all have nothing to worry about!”

Chapter 352: Chaos in the Black Lands!

It was dusk in the Black Lands. Meng Hao whistled through the air at high speed, like a green shooting star that disappeared over the horizon.

This was his seventh day of travel after leaving the city. He had followed the course laid out on the map in the jade slip, flying without rest the entire time. It was uncommon to find long-range teleportation portals within the Black Lands. If you wanted to travel somewhere, you needed to make the journey with your own power.

Throughout the seven days, lightning would occasionally fall, to be accompanied by the miserable shrieks of the Li Clan Patriarch. Meng Hao wasn't harmed at all. At the moment, he was flying over the smoking ruins of what had once been a town home to a small-scale power. Amidst the smouldering wreckage, Meng hao could make out quite a few corpses.

This was the fifth such scene Meng Hao had encountered during the past seven days. He looked down at it for a moment, and was about to fly past when suddenly he gave out a cold snort. His eyes glittered with coldness and he waved his right hand. A flying sword had just shot out toward him; now it came to a halt about thirty meters away.

A sinister cry suddenly rang out from within the ruins. "Attack!"

Eight beams of light appeared, shooting up toward Meng Hao. Among the eight people was one late Core Formation Cultivator. Two were of the mid Core Formation stage, and the rest were of the early Core Formation stage. Eight men squads like this were nothing to take lightly in any location. As they flew out, they emanated shocking power.

However, other than the late Core Formation Cultivator, all of the men had listless expressions in their eyes. Their Cultivation bases were powerful, but their movements were rigid, like those of puppets.

They bore down on Meng Hao, employing blazingly colorful magical items and techniques. Flying swords and magical bottles filled the air, seemingly moments away from slamming into Meng Hao. Meng Hao frowned, then utilized the Bloodburst Flash. Instantly, his body flickered,

and he disappeared. When he reappeared, he was some distance away.

This was not minor teleportation. However, to move such a distance in such a short time was completely shocking.

Booms filled the air as the position he had just occupied exploded into a pillar of light, the result of the combined attack.

Meng Hao's expression grew dark. The attack just now had been filled with killing intent; however, he was certain that he had never met these people before.

"So, the chaos in the Black Lands has already reached this level," he thought with a frown. It was at this moment that the group of eight men realized that Meng Hao had disappeared. They turned around and caught sight of him. The late Core Formation Cultivator gave a cold snort, and a vicious look appeared in his eyes.

"Trifling early Core Formation Cultivator. It looks like you have some nice magical techniques. However, now that you've run into me, you have no choice but to be a good boy and become my puppet. The more puppets I have, the safer I'll be." The man lifted his right hand, and immediately, the seven other Cultivators charged toward Meng Hao, their faces wooden.

Meng Hao blinked several times in succession, focusing the power of his Cultivation base into his right eye. Instantly, his view of the world changed. Using the Celestial vision technique, Meng Hao was able to see vast quantities of gossamer threads attached to the bodies of the seven Cultivators. The threads stretched back into the fist of the late Core Formation Cultivator.

It seemed these people really were all puppets under his control.

As they sped toward him, Meng Hao lifted his hand. He sliced his fingertip, causing blood to flow out. His face grim, he pointed forward, and everything in his field of view turned the color of blood. A rumbling filled the air, along with a Blood Qi that transformed into an attack that shot out toward the incoming seven Cultivators.

The rumbling increased in intensity as the Blood Qi shook the air with power like that of a dragon. The seven Cultivators coughed up blood, and their bodies tottered backward. The face of the Late Core Formation Cultivator flickered. Meng Hao shot forward once again using the Bloodburst Flash. In the blink of an eye, he was directly in front of his opponent. Without hesitation or mercy, he lifted his blood-soaked finger and pressed down onto the man's forehead.

Blood Qi poured into the Cultivator's body, causing him to tremble. Veins bulged out on his skin, and lines of red appeared in his eyes. He twitched a few times, and then exploded.

Meng Hao flicked his sleeve, preventing any of the blood and gore from touching him. He had slaughtered the late Core Formation Cultivator smoothly and efficiently. After the death of the late Core Formation Cultivator, the other seven people began to tremble. Blood oozed from their eyes, nose and mouth as they slowly died.

Brow furrowed, Meng Hao collected their bags of holding. The entire battle had been a bit strange.

"It seems everyone in the Black Lands is living in fear. The weak wish to be strong, and will kill without compunction. Slaughtering opponents leads to increased strength." He turned, disappearing off into the distance as he continued on toward Holy Snow City.

"I hope nothing too drastic has occurred to the Frigid Snow Clan of Holy Snow City. They are the only people who can raise Frigid Snow larvae, so if anything has changed, my plan will be ruined." As of now, Meng Hao truly understood the level of chaos within the Black Lands. He continued forward at top speed.

Several days later, he was traveling through a chain of mountains when a boom suddenly echoed out. Meng Hao's eyes glowed with killing intent as a dozen or so Cultivators closed in on him. He continued on, and heads flew. After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, Meng Hao left, leaving only complete death in his wake.

The attack just now had stemmed from an incident a few days before

when Meng Hao had consumed a medicinal pill to bolster his Cultivation base. The scene had been witnessed by a Cultivator, which led to an explosion of greed among other locals. Now, they were all dead.

Time passed by slowly. Half a month later, Meng Hao was still traveling along alone. He had faced quite a bit of dangerous situations along the way, but in the end, his grisly tactics left anyone who messed with him dead. Afterwards, he used a magical technique to cause their severed heads to float along behind him as he traveled. It was a road of death and severed heads.

In the end, the floating severed heads grew more and more numerous. There were dozens of them, most of them dried and withered, although some still dripped with blood.

This sight shocked the hearts of many local scoundrels, and enabled Meng Hao to travel a bit more safely. Fewer and fewer people were willing to provoke him.

Any Cultivator with brains who saw the macabre floating heads would immediately dispel any notions they had of messing with Meng Hao.

A few more days passed. More than a month had gone by since Meng Hao left the former Dongluo City. He had nearly crossed the entire Black Lands, and had personally witnessed the anarchy which reigned. There was no order. The forces of the Black Lands Palace and the armies of the United Nine engaged in countless battles which left the land swathed in the flames of war.

The pandemonium was like an even more explicit version of the law of the jungle. There was no need to conceal one's actions, no need for misgivings. Only the strong survived. As for the weak, they were there to serve the strong.

Within a month's time, of the nine cities that made up the United Nine, only four remained. The Clans in the other cities were either exterminated, seized by the Black Lands Palace, or forced to flee into hiding. It was simply too difficult for the United Nine to stand up to the combined forces of the Western Desert and the Black Lands Palace.

It was only the day before that Meng Hao heard that Holy Snow City had been besieged, which caused his heart to sink.

“I’d hoped there would be no obstructions on my way there,” he said, shaking his head. He shot forward as fast as possible. According to his estimation, his current rate of travel would get him to the vicinity of Holy Snow City in about two days.

Currently, he shot across the land underneath the evening sky. The ground below was no longer pitch black, but rather somewhat pale. It was not white soil, but rather, snow.

The air temperature was so low that Meng Hao could see his own breath.

The wind was bone-piercingly cold, and it had begun to snow.

It had been a very long time since he had seen snowfall. In fact, to his best recollection, the last time had been that snowy night in the State of Zhao when he’d shared the horse cart with the scholar and engaged in a lively discussion. [1]

[tl: [1] = Meng Hao shared the horse cart with the scholar way back in chapter 58]

Snowflakes floated down from the sky, and Meng Hao’s eyes glittered as he saw the snow piling up on the ground. Down below was a forest, although there were no leaves on any of the trees. Instead, their withered branches were piled up with accumulations of snow.

Meng Hao looked off into the distance, and suddenly his expression flickered. He dropped down to the ground and ceased flying. His green robe whipped in the wind as he walked through the forest.

Deeper within the forest were two Cultivators, blood spattered and pale-faced, standing protectively in front of a young woman in her late teens. She wore a white gown and was spectacularly beautiful. However, she seemed to be in a very miserable situation. Her face was also pale, and filled with a miserable expression. In her right hand she held a larva that appeared to be made of crystal. It was currently spinning silk, which

transformed into a bright light that surrounded the group of three people. Unfortunately, the larva appeared to be somewhat listless, as if it were on the verge of death.

The group was currently surrounded by a pack of one hundred wolves, all of whom emanated black Qi, and had bright red eyes. Behind the wolves was a Western Desert Cultivator, his body festooned with totem tattoos, who was staring greedily at the white-robed young woman.

The Cultivators protecting the young woman consisted of a man and a woman. The man gruffly cried out, “You despicable Western Desert Cultivator! Don’t you fear the power of our Frigid Snow Clan’s Spirit Severing Patriarch?!”

“There’s no need to discuss whether your Spirit Severing Patriarch is alive or not,” replied the Western Desert Cultivator in a hoarse voice. “If he’s alive, he’ll be paying attention to the battle of Holy Snow City. Right now... you’re just a regular old Frigid Snow Clan member. Your life or death won’t mean anything to him.”

The man waved his right arm, and the hundred black wolves pounced, slamming into the shield weaved by the larva. Booms rang out, and the Western Desert Cultivator’s eyes brimmed with avarice.

“Your Frigid Snow Clan switched out the character ‘blood’ in your name with the character ‘snow.’ But did you really think that would make the Western Desert forget about you?” The man laughed as he stared at the girl. [2]

[tl: [2] = In Chinese, the character for “snow” and “blood” are pronounced the same. Well, the character for blood actually has a few pronunciation variations, and one of them is exactly the same as snow.]

Chapter 353: Grand Dragoner!

The Western Desert Cultivator gave the young woman a vicious, greedy smile. “When neo-demons began to be raised in the Western Desert, the Frigid Blood Clan brought forth generation after generation of Grand Dragoner. When I was small, I heard all of the legends about your clan.

“Grand Dragoners wield power far greater than that of totems. They are the true pinnacle of the Western Desert. As for me... I’m a mere rank 3 Dragoner. But, if I can seize the legacy of the Frigid Blood Clan... then I’ll have a chance to become a Grand Dragoner! Hanxue Shan, what do you think of the neo-demons I’ve raised?” The Western Desert Cultivator laughed heartily as the black wolves in the area all lifted their heads up and howled. They seemed to bristle with ferocity. [1]

[tl: [1] = Hanxue Shan’s name in Chinese is 寒雪珊 hán xuě shān – Hanxue is the name of their Clan, which I’m translating as “Frigid Snow” in all cases other than the surnames of the Clan members. Shan is a character that’s almost always combined with other words such as “leisurely” or “lithe”]

The glowing shield surrounding the white-robed young woman was showing signs of breaking apart. Her face was pale, and blood oozed from her mouth. There was despair in her eyes but also determination.

Turning to the two Cultivators protecting her, she said, “Don’t worry about me, leave while you can!”

The two Cultivators looked nervous. They were about to say something when the young woman glared, indicating that they shouldn’t speak.

It was at this moment that the bodies of the howling black wolves suddenly began to expand, and they charged forward. They slammed into the shield, which was now more than half destroyed. From the look of things, one more attack would thoroughly shatter it.

The wolves were on the verge of attacking again, and the Western Desert Cultivator’s eyes were glowing with a bright light. At this exact moment, the sound of footsteps crunching on snow suddenly echoed out from

within the forest.

The sound was extremely distinct. Mortals did not live in this area, so the instant the sound of the footsteps could be heard, it caused the white-robed young woman and her companion Cultivators to look toward where the sound was coming from. The Western Desert Cultivator also looked over with a frown.

What they saw was a young man wearing a long robe, with black hair flowing down past his shoulders. His features were refined, and he had a cultured air. This, of course, was Meng Hao; he walked out slowly, looking every bit like a scholar.

From his bearing, he seemed as if he were simply enjoying a midnight stroll in his own backyard, out to see the beautiful layers of snow that had fallen on his flower garden. He strolled out, carrying a scroll in one hand, which only lent further to his scholarly aura.

The Western Desert Cultivator's eyes narrowed, as if he disbelieved Meng Hao's profound aura were real. He waved his right hand, and immediately eight black wolves leaped toward Meng Hao, howling, their crimson eyes glowing brightly.

The white-robed young woman seemed to be upset at the sight of it, but all of her energy was focused on controlling the Frigid Snow Larva, leaving her powerless to provide any assistance. She could only watch silently.

"Excellent fur," said Meng Hao lightly, glancing at the wolves. "If the parrot were here, he would probably like them." These wolves were not illusory creations of magic, but flesh and blood creatures.

However, there was something different about them, as if totemic power also existed inside them. This was the first time Meng Hao had seen beasts like this. There were more than a hundred of them, and each one emanated a power similar to that of the late Foundation Establishment stage.

Back in the Southern Domain, this pack of black wolves would constitute quite a powerful force.

“Interesting,” said Meng Hao as he walked forward. He patted his bag of holding to produce a red medicinal pill. He quickly crushed it into powder, which he then dispersed into the air with the flick of a sleeve.

A wind picked up, spreading the powder toward the eight wolves that were charging toward him. As soon as they made contact with the powder, they began to howl miserably. A moment later, they exploded into a haze of blood and gore. The blood and gore instantly turned black, and then completely dissolved.

The powder continued to spread out, and more black wolves screamed and began to rot away, their bodies then exploding. The explosion of the bodies sent black blood flying about, staining the white snow and filling the air with the stench of decay. Any other wolves who touched the blood would immediately begin to squeal. Their bodies would shake, and it only took the space of a few breaths before they, too, collapsed.

It was a chain reaction. As Meng Hao walked forward, more and more wolves began to scream and collapse into death. Black blood sprayed about, floating through the air, spreading out like a dark mist, which rose up into the air to form a cloud.

It took only moments for half of the over one hundred wolves to be killed. The rest retreated, trembling, their tails between their legs. As they looked at Meng Hao, their eyes filled with unprecedented terror.

The white-robed young woman watched all of this with wide eyes. The two Cultivators next to her also gaped. Even the Western Desert Cultivator stared in shock.

“This.... You....” he stammered, his body trembling, his eyes looked like they might pop out of his head. “So, you’re looking to die, huh?!?!” He then let out a howl filled with ultimate fury. The veins on his face bulged out, and his eyes filled with savagery and blood.

He lifted his right hand, within which appeared a black stone. He crushed it, then waved his arm. A black smoke swirled out, which then transformed into a vortex.

“Rank 2 Reptodragon neo-demons, emerge!” Suddenly, roaring sounds

poured out from within the vortex, followed by a bright red reptilian creature approximately three meters long. It was followed by another. Soon there were ten, then thirty!

Thirty red reptilian creatures appeared, emanating shocking power. Their roars caused everything around to tremble.

A strange light shone in Meng Hao's eyes. He had long since noticed that there was something different about this particular Western Desert Cultivator. He had two totem tattoos on his body, one of a black wolf, the other, a reptilian creature. The totems didn't appear to be any different from the type seen on other Western Desert Cultivators. However, Meng Hao sensed that there was indeed something strange about them.

"Senior, he's a Western Desert Dragoneer!" said the white-robed young woman anxiously. She could tell that Meng Hao was unfamiliar with creatures such as these, and continued: "Dragoneers might not have high Cultivation bases, but they command neo-demons. Kill him, and the neo-demons will disperse!"

"After I exterminate this guy, I'm going after you, slut!" cried the Western Desert Cultivator viciously. He waved his hand toward Meng Hao, and the thirty crimson reptiles charged toward Meng Hao in a frenzy, their gaping red mouths emanating an odor of death.

Meng Hao took one more look at the crimson reptiles, then shook his head. He raised his right hand and extended a finger toward the black cloud which still hovered in mid-air. Immediately, vast quantities of black raindrops began to fall down. The rain sprayed over the crimson reptiles, and they began to howl miserably. Their bodies trembled and began to decay. Over the space of a few breaths, all of the reptiles underneath the three hundred meter wide black cloud had transformed into skeletons.

Meng Hao stood in the midst of the black rain. Not a single raindrop fell onto his green robe or his long black hair. The sight of it was shocking, causing the Western Desert Cultivator to gasp. His eyes filled with a look of disbelief.

"You're... you're a Grand Dragoneer!"

Chapter 354: Hanxue Shan

Being unfamiliar with the term, Meng Hao asked, “What’s a Grand Dragoner?” He walked up to the Western Desert Cultivator, who was currently trembling as he stared with reverence and fear at Meng Hao.

The person to respond to Meng Hao’s question was not the shivering Western Desert Cultivator, but rather the white-robed young woman, Hanxue Shan. “Grand Dragoner is the highest title achievable by Western Desert Dragoners, similar to Totem God. Both are titles which represent extreme levels of power. One breeds rare creatures that are even more powerful than Earthly neo-demons. The other controls five or more totems. The battle prowess of the former is similar to that of the Spirit Severing stage, the latter, almost the same.”

The glowing shield surrounding the young woman had already dissipated, and she had put away the listless larva.

Meng Hao turned to look at her, whereupon she clasped hands and bowed.

“I am Hanxue Shan of the Frigid Snow Clan. I offer many thanks for your kindness in saving me, Senior.” The exhausted Cultivators next to her gave Meng Hao looks of gratitude. However, vigilance could still be seen in their eyes.

After all, the power he had manifested just now had frightened even the Western Desert Cultivator, let alone them.

With the wave of a sleeve, Meng Hao had killed countless wolves, transformed their blood into a mist which caused a rain to fall that desolated everything within a three hundred meter radius. Nothing alive was left in the entire area.

Such methods left them in complete shock. Furthermore, they couldn’t see Meng Hao’s Cultivation base; he emanated a mysterious force which left all of them incapable of showing him anything but respect.

“I’m not a Grand Dragoner,” said Meng Hao, shaking his head.

“However, you do owe me some thanks.” He pointed a finger toward the ground and at the same time, pressed down on the forehead of the Western Desert Cultivator.

The man’s body instantly began to tremble, and his eyes filled with blankness, as if he had suddenly lost his thinking ability.

“His Cultivation base is only at the early Core Formation stage,” thought Meng Hao, “and yet he can control so many beasts. So this... is a Western Desert Dragoneer?” Meng Hao now understood the situation, but he was still very curious regarding Dragoneers, so he looked back at the white-robed young woman. “I didn’t save you for no reason,” he said.

The eyes of the two Cultivators standing at her side glittered with even more intense vigilance. This was especially so after they saw Meng Hao press down on the forehead of the Western Desert Cultivator. Whatever method he had used to make the man suddenly look so blank was clearly some frightening technique and caused them to become even more nervous.

“Please do not hesitate to state what you desire, Senior,” said Hanxue Shan, her voice light.

“I want a Frigid Snow Larva,” he replied immediately.

The two Cultivators standing next to her frowned. At the same time, they tried to conceal the irritation toward Meng Hao that appeared in their eyes.

Hanxue Shan hesitated for a moment.

“Senior, Frigid Snow Larvae bond with a master when they are very young. According to everything I’ve been told, the Frigid Snow Clan currently does not possess any such young larvae. Of course, I might not be privy to all the information. If you come back with me to Holy Snow City, I can check into the matter thoroughly, and do my best to repay your kindness.” She looked at Meng Hao with her exceedingly beautiful eyes. They didn’t seem to contain any duplicity. She was thankful to Meng Hao for saving her life, however, she also feared him. Everything she had witnessed just now left her with a feeling of profound dread.

Her words did not sound forced, but they were. She had the feeling that if she didn't provide the correct response, this man's kindness would very likely turn into enmity.

Furthermore, she couldn't be certain if his appearance here and now was coincidental, or if he had prepared for this situation all along. In any case, he had definitely saved her life. After returning to Holy Snow City, she would try to repay him.

Meng Hao thought for a moment as he looked at the young woman, his eyes filled with abstruseness. Then, he gave a slight smile and nodded.

The white-robed young woman gave an inward sigh of relief. With a forced smile, she backed up a few steps. The other two Cultivators continued to observe Meng Hao with even more vigilance as they left the woods.

The Western Desert Dragoneer followed Meng Hao with a blank look on his face. He seemed to have lost control of himself, which, of course, filled Hanxue Shan and the others with even more shock.

Holy Snow City was in the northern part of the Black Lands. Although it was some distance from the Western Desert, it couldn't be considered extremely far. The land in the area was blanketed with ice and snow year round, making everything look white.

It was quite a distance from the location Meng Hao had recently occupied, the former Dongluo City. Despite the fact that both had been members of the United Nine, they actually had few dealings. After all, both Clans' position in the United Nine had been waning in recent years. Despite the recent decline in power of the Frigid Snow Clan, which had once been the leader of the alliance, they still maintained their pride and dignity.

Furthermore, there were still rumors of their Spirit Severing Patriarch, who continued to remain in secluded meditation. He hadn't appeared for several hundred years, but no one was completely sure whether he was alive or dead.

Even the possibility of him being alive ensured that Holy Snow City

would not suffer any sort of disaster.

Therefore, although Holy Snow City did not possess the glory it once had, it still shone with splendor.

Right now, though, everyone in Holy Snow City was filled with a certain somberness. A pressure weighed down on them, as if dark clouds filled the sky and pushed down onto the land. The ice-like, crystalline city walls were covered with Holy Snow City Cultivators, all of whom stared out vigilantly into the outside world.

The region outside of the city trembled. Currently, the sky was filled with countless pitch-black, winged Flood Dragons. They twisted about in the air, their crimson eyes glowing with viciousness. They emitted fierce howls that caused the hearts of the observing Cultivators to tremble.

At first glance, the winged Flood Dragons seemed innumerable, but actually, there were only fifty of them circling around Holy Snow City. Down on the ground could be seen seventy or eighty gigantic blue lions, each one twenty meters or so long. Wherever they walked, the ground beneath their feet turned into blue ice.

In addition to these beasts, there were approximately one thousand Cultivators, who stood behind the creatures, staring at Holy Snow City. They wore black clothing, and their faces were covered with masks. Most of them had Cultivation bases at the Foundation Establishment stage and wore white masks. Among the thousand Cultivators, only about thirty wore azure masks.

In the lead position was an old man with flowing white hair and a silver mask. Based on the Qi emanations of his Cultivation base, he was at the Nascent Soul stage.

Further off was a snow-covered mountain where several hundred tall men stood. Their faces were expressionless, and totem tattoos could be seen on their bodies, some more than others. Their Qi was different from that of the other Cultivators, a bit more wild and bizarre.

These were Western Desert Cultivators.

Between the armies of Holy Snow City and the Black Lands Palace stretched a vast field filled with wind and snow, separating the two of them.

Even further back were tens of thousands of Black Lands Palace disciples, spread out to form a huge barrier around Holy Snow City, completely encircling it.

It seemed that a great battle was about to take place.

It was at this very moment that Meng Hao and the others appeared off in the distance and saw the scene spread out in front of them. Meng Hao's expression remained the same as ever, but the faces of Hanxue Shan and the two other Cultivators fell immediately.

They had been traveling for over a day, and during the entire time, Meng Hao had never asked her why she had left Holy Snow City. Nor had Hanxue Shan taken the initiative to provide any details.

However, based on some of the discussions he had heard between the other two Cultivators, he came to the realization that their party had set out with over thirty members. As of now, they were the only two guards left.

"It seems we won't be able to get into the city," said Meng Hao coolly. The forces of the Black Lands Palace were arrayed in such a fashion as to completely lock down Holy Snow City. At the moment, no military offensive had begun. Some people might not be able to tell, but considering that the strongest combatant present was of the Nascent Soul stage, it was clear that this was not intended to be a decisive battle, but rather an exploratory attack.

Hanxue Shan was about to say something when, suddenly, the sound of war bugles filled the air. The winged Flood Dragons shot toward Holy Snow City. The gigantic blue lions also sped forward, their bodies glowing with light such that they seemed like gigantic blue arrows.

As the bugles sounded out, the Black Lands Palace Cultivators flew up into the air in succession. Behind them, the ground shook as two giants appeared, each one roughly ninety meters tall. It wasn't clear exactly

where they had come from, but they strode forward accompanied by thunderous rumbling. Slung over the shoulder of each giant was a greatsword nearly three hundred meters long.

The swords seemed old, even ancient, but the power they emanated was astonishing.

If that was all there was to it, it would not be a big deal. But as the bugles sounded out, a black sea appeared. This black sea was comprised of several tens of thousands of black wolves which spread out across the land as they charged toward Holy Snow City.

The shield surrounding Holy Snow City sparkled as nearly a thousand Cultivators flew up from within the city. They employed a variety of magical techniques and magical items, the power of which shot through the shield to slice into the approaching beasts and Cultivators.

In addition, a massive beam of white, shining light shot up from within the city. Up above the city, five blinding, shining lights that looked like planets appeared, rotating about. With each rotation, they emanated a curving white light which swept out past the city walls.

Booming sounds shook Heaven and Earth, and everything trembled. Meng Hao had never witnessed a battle such as this between Cultivators.

As the battle began, Meng Hao also noticed a group of several dozen people fly out from within the city toward the glittering shield. The instant they passed through it, five flying planets appeared above them. They rotated, emanating an arcing white light which shot through the shrieking beasts in front of them, ripping them to pieces. Up above, the Flood Dragons dodged away, unable to get near them.

It wasn't one such squad that appeared. More than ten groups charged out from within the city to engage in the battle with the Black Lands Palace forces outside the city walls. Explosions filled the air, along with miserable shrieks, and the fighting continued.

It was not that Meng Hao had never witnessed a large scale combat between Cultivators. However, this type of battle was something he had never seen before. The sight of it caused his heart to start pounding. He

was no newcomer to the Cultivation world, though, so he quickly calmed himself down.

What drew his attention most were the two massive giants that strode across the battlefield. Their movements were slow, but every step they took caused the ground to shake. The enormous swords they wielded emanated thoroughly shocking swords auras.

Suddenly, one of the squads of Cultivators from the city changed directions to head toward Meng Hao and his group. He might have taken it to be coincidence, but when he saw the look of happiness glittering in the eyes of Hanxue Shan, he knew that these people were coming to take her back to the city.

Chapter 355: Flying Rain-Dragon Up Above!

It seemed like the approaching Cultivators were actually preparing to attack. Meng Hao blinked. "Looks like even though I saved her, no one will believe I did." In the lead was a handsome young man who looked extremely nervous. His Cultivation base was at the late Core Formation stage.

Following him were a dozen or so other Cultivators, the weakest of whom was at the early Core Formation stage. Three were of the same level as the young man, the late Core Formation Stage.

At the front of their group were five rotating planets; the spell formation shone brightly and caused them to speed forward like the wind as they attacked.

Suddenly, Hanxue Shan shot forward. Her speed was incredible, causing Meng Hao's eyes to flicker. Clearly, she had been concealing the true limits of her speed before. As she flew forward, a cloud of ice and snow appeared beneath her feet, propelling her forward. The other two Cultivators also shot forward, utilizing magical techniques and treasures to increase their speed.

They were obviously worried that Meng Hao would attack them, or do something else to hold them back. Apparently, their use of these techniques and items were a waste; Meng Hao did nothing more than watch them go, a faint, enigmatic smile on his face. He didn't even take half a step forward; he just let them speed away.

This caused the two Cultivators to stare in shock. However, they had no time to think much about it; as vigilant as ever, they escorted Hanxue Shan as she flew down toward the battlefield, ready to defend her with their lives. As Hanxue Shan flew along, a silvery glow flew out from her person. Wherever the silver light went, the surrounding beasts would stop moving and begin to tremble. This made it possible for them to quickly charge quite a distance.

When Hanxue Shan and her guards were several hundred meters away from Meng Hao, he saw them meet up with the other young Cultivator and his group. Both seemed quite excited, but obviously knew that this was not the time for any sort of discussion. The Cultivators from the young man's group fanned out to protect Hanxue Shan, and they headed back toward the city.

It was at this point that Hanxue Shan finally breathed a sigh of relief. She glanced back at Meng Hao off in the distance, a cunning, complacent gleam in her eyes.

However, just as the group set out, Flood Dragons, Black Lands Cultivators, as well as a huge group of black wolves, charged toward them in attack. Off in the distance were some Western Desert Cultivators who also approached, eight of them. The battlefield was in chaos, but Meng Hao was clearly able to see all of these developments.

"Don't think I'll forget so easily about the fact that I saved your life," murmured Meng Hao. By this time, even he could see that this was not any sort of decisive battle. Both sides had various misgivings and were holding back.

The most powerful combatant on the field was the Nascent Soul Cultivator from the Black Lands Palace, who hadn't even made an attack. The person who had been sent to escort Hanxue Shan was of the late Core Formation stage. Holy Snow City hadn't even deployed Nascent Soul Cultivators at all.

"They're holding back," thought Meng Hao, scanning the battlefield. "Neither side wants to reveal their true strength. This battle is just a way to feel each other out. I don't see much down there that could cause any problems for me." He began to stride forward, followed by the confused Western Desert Cultivator.

Suddenly, a flash of light appeared within Holy Snow City, a figure who shot out past the city walls. It was an old woman with gray hair. The silver-masked Nascent Soul Cultivator from the Black Lands Palace strode forward to meet her, his eyes gleaming. Neither spoke; instead, they

immediately attacked with divine abilities.

A boom echoed out, and the sky above the battlefield suddenly grew dim.

At the same time, the slaughtering on the battlefield grew more intense. More Cultivators poured out of Holy Snow City to join the fighting.

As for Hanxue Shan, she was getting more nervous. Despite being surrounded by guards from Holy Snow City, she was still quite some distance from the city itself. Furthermore, the surrounding wolves, lions, Flood Dragons and Cultivators from the Black Lands Palace and Western Desert, were making it difficult to move at all. Out of their group of a dozen or so Holy Snow City Cultivators, three had already died.

The magical Five Planets device rotated rapidly, but even the bright beams of white light that shot out from it were incapable of completely extricating them from the danger they were in. Even more importantly, one of the enormous giants was approaching, brandishing its gigantic sword. In addition, a group of more than a dozen Flood Dragons was currently charging toward the Five Planets, clearly intent on destroying them.

If the magical Five Planets device was destroyed, then they would be in even more danger.

A roaring sound filled the air as the dozen or so Flood Dragons began to howl. Their bodies glowed with flickering light as they shot toward the Five Planets device. Booming sounds filled the air as it began to break apart. Moments later, it completely collapsed.

When the Five Planets device broke apart, four more of the Cultivators surrounding Hanxue Shan died. When she heard their agonized, dying screams, her face went pale. She watched as one of the Cultivators chose to self-detonate before being killed. The powerful explosion spread out, slamming into their enemies, buying them a bit more time.

The young man of the late Core Formation stage anxiously grabbed Hanxue Shan, his eyes bloodshot as he dragged her onward toward the city. He seemed worried that the nearby beasts and Cultivators might also use self-detonation.

The complacency Hanxue Shan had previously shown toward Meng Hao was now completely gone, replaced instead by grief. She could only bite her lip as she followed the young man in front of her.

It was at this time that Meng Hao entered the battlefield. Before he had moved too far, nearby black wolves charged toward him, radiating frenzied savagery. Meng Hao's right hand shot out and grabbed one of them by the neck. Using his left hand, he forced a medicinal pill into its mouth, which caused it to begin to shake violently. Suddenly, the fur began to fall off of its body, which then began to swell. This entire process only took the space of a few breaths. As other wolves closed in, Meng Hao let go.

A boom filled the air as the hairless wolf let out a miserable shriek, and then exploded. There was no flesh and blood, but rather a black mist that spread out in all directions. As soon as the incoming wolves touched the mist, their bodies began to wither up, and they let out miserable shrieks as their bodies, too, transformed into mist. Very quickly, the area surrounding Meng Hao was filled with thick mist.

He proceeded forward, his expression as calm as usual. Of course, the scene which had just played out would cause any observer's eyes to fill with astonishment.

As he walked on, the mist roiled out, killing any of the beasts who touched it. It didn't take long before he was surrounded by mist for dozens of meters in each direction. By now, many people on the battlefield were looking over in his direction.

Hanxue Shan also saw what was happening. It was at this moment that a huge blue lion, over twenty meters long, pounced toward Meng Hao. Before it could get close, though, Meng Hao's right hand stretched out as fast as lightning, clamping onto the neck of the lion. Once again, he used his left hand to force a medicinal pill into its mouth.

Everyone watched on in astonishment as the gigantic lion's fur suddenly began to fall off. After that, it exploded, not into flesh and blood, but rather, a blue mist.

The blue mist spread out in the cold air, rapidly fusing with the black

mist. The new mist expanded, and now, Meng Hao had no need to personally attack any of the blue lions. As soon as they touched the mist, their bloodcurdling howls would echo across the battlefield.

Gasps could be heard from the nearby Black Lands Palace Cultivators.

“Who is that?!”

“That’s... poison? That guy’s a poison expert!”

“That’s no ordinary poison. Look what it does to the Western Desert neo-demons! This poison... it....”

The Black Lands Palace Cultivators backed up, the faces beneath their masks filled with shock. Considering that even the Western Desert Cultivators’ Demonic beasts had no way to avoid Meng Hao’s poison, how could they?

Even more shocked than them were the Western Desert Cultivators, who all looked at Meng Hao with gazes of astonishment and terror.

Among the Western Desert forces were three people who were clearly not as tall as the others but were still sported totem tattoos. These were Western Desert Dragoneers, men capable of controlling neo-demons.

All of the Flood Dragons, black wolves and lions in the area were under their control. However, they seemed more frightened than anyone else on the battlefield. Their breathing came in ragged pants as they stared at the mist surrounding Meng Hao; their hearts were filled with astonishment.

“Dragoneer! He’s a Dragoneer....”

“Only a Dragoneer could understand neo-demons so well to be able to kill them like that....”

Meng Hao proceeded onward. Up above, fierce shrieks rang out as three Flood Dragons sped toward him. Meng Hao looked up, a strange light glowing in his eyes. There was no need to use poison in this situation. All he did was open his mouth in the direction of the Flood Dragons and suck in a deep breath.

As he did, the Flying Rain-Dragon Core that existed inside of his Golden

Core suddenly trembled. Suddenly, the illusory image of a massive Flying Rain-Dragon appeared behind Meng Hao.

It was huge, several hundred meters in length, and it erupted with a domineering air of profound superiority. It was the sovereign of the sky! As Meng Hao breathed in, the Flying Rain-Dragon opened its mouth and charged toward the Flood Dragons. It seemed to be hungry, starving, as if it hadn't eaten for tens of thousands of years.

The three Flood Dragons let out miserable, desperate shrieks. Now that they faced up against a Flying Rain-Dragon, they trembled, and their expressions were those of dread. They wanted to flee, but it was too late.

The Flying Rain-Dragon swallowed them up, a scene which caused everyone on the battlefield to reel. The Western Desert Cultivators stared with wide eyes, panting, their faces covered with shock.

“He... he consumed those neo-demons!!”

“Grand Dragoneer! He's definitely a Grand Dragoneer!”

“That Flying Rain-Dragon phantom is his Heavenly neo-demon! It's definitely a Heavenly neo-demon! The Heavenly neo-demon of a Grand Dragoneer!!”

The Black Lands Palace Cultivators, the Holy Snow City Cultivators, everyone was staring at the scene, their minds reeling. The Flying Rain-Dragon behind Meng Hao lifted its head toward the sky in a soundless roar, then shot toward more Flood Dragons.

Chapter 356: How Unforeseen....

Flood Dragons are food for ancient Flying Rain-Dragons, who will chomp them down merrily!

Meng Hao's Flying Rain-Dragon phantom flew through the air, its massive illusory frame shaking everything.

Dozens of nearby Flood Dragons let out fierce shrieks that were filled with dread. Their bodies trembled, and they were about to flee in all directions when the illusory Flying Rain-Dragon let out another soundless roar. The wolves on the ground began to shake and then lie prone. The enormous blue lions also lowered their trembling heads and let out subservient grunts.

The Flood Dragons seemed to be filled with despair. However, they didn't dare to move. Meng Hao's Flying Rain-Dragon phantom swooped down and swallowed one of them up.

The battlefield was deathly quiet. Everyone gaped in shock at the scene which was playing out in the sky. The Flying Rain-Dragon swallowed one Flood Dragon after another.

Soon, each and every Flood Dragon had been swallowed up, after which, the Flying Rain-Dragon flew back to Meng Hao and then vanished.

Everything was as quiet as death.

Meng Hao cleared his throat, and then proceeded along toward Hanxue Shan. When he arrived in front of her, he saw her face covered with disbelief and dread, as was the face of the young man standing next to her.

"I saved your life," he said, looking a bit embarrassed. "You still haven't paid me back. Before you do, is it really appropriate to go running off?" He felt a little bit awkward saying words like this to a young woman.

Hanxue Shan quivered, her beautiful eyes brimming with terror. In her anxiety, she wasn't sure how to respond.

It was at this moment, however, that her eyes suddenly went wide. It wasn't just her. Everyone on the battlefield who had been paying attention

to Meng Hao were now panting.

A roar echoed out behind Meng Hao as a ninety meter tall giant charged toward him, waving its enormous sword in the air.

This sword seemed capable of slashing a hole through the air itself. A piercing sound filled the air as it slashed down toward Meng Hao. It didn't emanate ripples, but instead seemed to be sucking in the surrounding air. The mist surrounding Meng Hao began to churn.

All of this takes some time to describe, but actually happened in only a moment. By the time Meng Hao finished speaking, the enormous sword was only about thirty meters away from his head!

The sword in its entirety was around three hundred meters long. The giant was ninety meters tall, and bursting with immense power. Although it didn't have a Cultivation base, it was clearly powerful enough to cause anyone to shake in fear.

The sword descended toward Meng Hao's head, causing the mist surrounding him to roil out in all directions. This made Meng Hao even more conspicuous on the battlefield.

However, even as the sword was almost upon him, Meng Hao, without even lifting his head up, reached his right hand out and physically grabbed the sword. A huge boom echoed out.

A massive energy shot from the sword into Meng Hao, causing his bones to creak, and massive cracks to appear around him in the ground. The enormous amount of energy even caused his feet to sink about eight inches down into the soil.

Meng Hao's expression never changed. He turned to look at the enormous giant.

"Time!" he said coolly, and ten Wooden Time Swords flew out from his bag of holding to form the Lotus Sword Formation. It rotated in the air, circling around the giant.

The giant howled and tried to wrench back its sword, but it was astonished to find that no matter how much power it used, the sword

remained stuck in Meng Hao's grip. There was no way to take it back.

The giant's eyes glowed with a green light as it howled. It let go of the sword and then curled its hand into a fist which smashed down toward Meng Hao.

"Interesting," said Meng Hao with a laugh. "It would be a real pity to kill you." Tossing the greatsword to the side, he retrieved his Wooden Time Swords and then used the Bloodburst Flash to disappear right before the enormous fist slammed down. When he reappeared, he was on top of the giant's head. He pointed down with the finger of his left hand.

"Righteous Bestowal!"

Immediately, Meng Hao saw ghost images spring up everywhere on the battlefield. Visible only to him were strand after strand of Qi which rushed to pour into the head of the giant.

The giant howled, reaching toward Meng Hao with both of its hands. However, the Bloodburst Flash flickered, and he evaded completely. No matter how many times the giant tried to grab him, it couldn't, and he continued to use the art of Righteous Bestowal. This sight caused the eyes of all the onlookers to fill with shock.

"Receiving Righteous Bestowal is luck for you, if you keep resisting..." He pushed his hand down onto the top of the giant's head, his eyes shining with a strange glow. He could sense the resistance of the giant's will, but also, a desire for the Demonic Qi that he wielded. The twisting hesitation seemed to be causing it to hold back.

Meng Hao could also tell that this giant was not like a human, but more like a type of animal. It had an enormous physical body, but actually couldn't speak out with language. Its sentience was quite limited and it couldn't practice Cultivation.

However, when it attacked, its physical strength was as explosive as the great circle of the late Foundation Establishment stage. In some ways, such pure physical strength was actually much more frightening than Cultivation base power.

Therefore, Meng Hao had decided to test out his art of Righteous Bestowal. He wanted to see whether his speculations regarding its effects were correct.... As a Demon Sealer, he should be able to use Righteous Bestowal on any living creature in Heaven and Earth, give it his approval, and thusly, help it to become Demonic!

As the words came out of his mouth, the enormous giant began to shake. The glowing green light in its eyes was gone, as if suddenly, it could think. Its expression was no longer one of ferocity, but rather obedience. Now, it permitted the Demonic Qi to pour into its body.

The Black Lands Cultivators didn't understand exactly what was happening, but the scene was completely shocking nonetheless, although it didn't seem as incredible to them as what had happened moments ago with the Flying Rain-Dragon.

To the Western Desert Cultivators, though, what was happening caused their minds to reel uncontrollably.

This was especially true of the three Dragoneers. Their faces filled with unprecedented looks of disbelief, as if their minds had been completely overthrown. Their brains reeled to the point that they were complete blanks.

"A Wild Giant actually yielded.... That's impossible! Wild Giants never yield! Not even Grand Dragoneers can do that. Even our Heavenly Wilds Tribe is only able to use them because of the special arrangement we have with the Wild Giant faction. Other than us, no one in the entire Western Desert can get a Wild Giant to yield!"

"It doesn't have anything to do with Cultivation base. It's like a rule of the Wild Giants. Their honor and their very blood won't permit it. So... so, what's going on...?"

The Western Desert Dragoneers were shocked as they saw Meng Hao standing on the head of the giant. He wasn't paying attention at all to the chaos that his presence had given birth to on the battlefield, nor the shock with which people were looking at him. He didn't even notice how the mist he had created had risen up into the air and had transformed into a

rain of poison.

Instead, he was looking down toward the pale-faced Hanxue Shan.

“I’ve saved you twice now,” he said with a smile. “You need to think of a way to repay me. Come up here, I’ll take you home.” The giant suddenly reached down toward the ground, placing its hand down flat in front of Hanxue Shan.

Everyone around her watched on as she stood gaping up at Meng Hao. Not even sure why she was doing it, she suddenly lifted her foot and stepped up onto the giant’s palm. It lifted her up and placed her on top of its head, where she stood next to Meng Hao. Then, the giant howled and began to stride forward toward Holy Snow City.

Up above in the sky, the two Nascent Soul Cultivators who had been locked in battle were now staring at the strange scene which was playing out below. Meng Hao also noticed their attention.

The giant charged forward, kicking up a fierce wind and causing the ground to quake. Soon, it neared Holy Snow City’s protective shield. The Cultivators inside had seen everything that had happened, and were now at a complete loss, not sure whether to open the shield or keep it closed.

It was at this moment that war bugles suddenly sounded out. The Black Lands Palace and Western Desert Cultivators began to pull back. That included all of the forces surrounding the city, the neo-demons and wild beasts. After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, there were no enemy forces visible near Holy Snow City.

This initial probing battle had been intended to give both sides a taste of the other’s prowess. The fighting had been limited to below the Nascent Soul stage. However, Meng Hao’s appearance had thrown everything into chaos. The morale of the Black Lands Palace troops had been damaged, so it was without hesitation that they retreated.

A great clamor of joy rose up within Holy Snow City when the Black Lands Palace retreated, although many people understood that the battle had just begun.

As for the old Nascent Soul woman, she flew down to hover in front of Meng Hao. As she looked at him, silence reigned around them. The shield still had not opened. All eyes were on Meng Hao.

“What do you want?” asked the old woman.

“A Frigid Snow Larva,” Meng Hao replied with a smile.

“What are you good at?” retorted the woman in an unhurried tone.

“I saved her,” said Meng Hao, pointing at Hanxue Shan.

The old woman shook her head. “That’s not enough.”

“I saved her twice!” said Meng Hao, his voice serious.

“Still not enough.” The old woman looked at Meng Hao calmly.

Meng Hao hesitated for a moment. “I think I might need to save her again a third time,” he said.

“Even if you married her, it still wouldn’t be enough,” said the old woman coolly. “It takes a year to raise a Frigid Snow Larva all the way to the larva stage. Right now, we only have two pupae left in the Clan!”

Meng Hao thought for a moment. “I’m good with poison,” he said.

The old woman gave him a deep look. “If you concoct poisons for the Frigid Snow Clan for a year, then I will see to it that you get a Frigid Snow Larva. However, if I find out that you have some other motivations, then you’ll never leave the city alive.” With that, she gestured with her right hand, causing Hanxue Shan to fly over to her. Together, they flew back toward the shield.

Before passing through the shield, Hanxue Shan looked back at Meng Hao.

“Granny gave you her word!” she said. “If you have any evil designs, Heavenly lightning will exterminate your soul. You’d better watch out for yourself!”

Meng Hao smiled, and was about to say something when his face suddenly flickered. Without a moment’s pause, his hand lifted up into the

air, within which could be seen the Li Clan Patriarch's soul. A peal of thunder rang out, and a bolt of lightning shot down to slam into the soul embodiment. A miserable cry rang out, followed by vigorous cursing. Meng Hao quickly put the soul away.

He looked around to see everyone, even the old woman, staring at him in shock.

"Uh, that was weird," he said with a slight cough, looking embarrassed. "How unforeseen."

Chapter 357: Proud Sir Zhou

Holy Snow City was much larger than Dongluo City, and was divided into an inner city and an outer city. The inner city belonged to the Frigid Snow Clan, whereas the outer city was for other Cultivators.

The cold climate led to frequent snowstorms. Because of this, the white, snowy scenery was something that you never saw in the southern reaches.

In the eastern section of the outer city was a row of mansions, each of which contained a Spirit Spring. Although the spiritual energy they emitted was not vast, in the Black Lands, such residences could be considered luxurious.

Each residence was self-contained, and was protected with spells to ensure that no unwanted visitors would be able to enter. Even more importantly, the protective spells were actually linked to the primary defensive spell formation of the entire Holy Snow City, making them incredibly powerful.

The people who occupied these mansions were guests of utmost importance. Of course, this was also where Meng Hao's living quarters were arranged.

His mansion and its courtyard weren't huge, but neither were they small. The Wild Giant currently was sitting like a small mountain, snoring gently. It would occasionally wake up, whereupon it would grab some meat from the big pile off to the side, pop it into its mouth, and swallow it down. If it ever woke up and found no meat around, it would open its eyes wide and roar.

"Meat.... Meat...." it would then say.

Whenever that happened, Meng Hao would grudgingly run out and find some meat. It didn't take long for Meng Hao to start wondering which one of the two of them was the master....

In addition to the meat-loving Wild Giant, there was also a middle-aged man in the courtyard. A look of bitterness constantly covered his face, as if

he had a bitter melon stuck in his mouth. After feeding the Wild Giant only two times, Meng Hao decided to pass on that holy task to this man.

He was none other than the Western Desert Dragoneer that Meng Hao had captured. Meng Hao had unsealed him, but had then forced him to consume a poison pill, preventing him from doing anything other than sighing and accepting his fate.

One of Meng Hao's other requirements for the mansion had taken quite some time for Hanxue Shan to manage to comply with. Eventually, she had provided an assortment of lotus seeds, which Meng Hao catalyzed.

Now, the entire courtyard teemed with lotuses. Of course, ordinary lotuses could not grow here; these were snow lotuses.

Snow lotuses filled the courtyard with beauty. Oftentimes, Meng Hao would stare at the flowers for the entire day.

By observing their shape, he was able to sense their essence. By gaining enlightenment regarding the essence of the flower, he was able to improve his Lotus Sword Formation.

Such a life seemed strange to the Western Desert Dragoneer. However... Meng Hao eventually asked his name, as well as other information. He helped Meng Hao to understand what neo-demons were. And then, the heart of this middle-aged man named Gu La grew cold, and filled with despair.

That was because Meng Hao enjoyed studying. He liked to study blood, bones, flesh and totems. Each time he studied any of these things, it was like a nightmare for Gu La.

Meng Hao currently sat cross-legged in front of a lotus. As he studied it, information about Western Desert Dragoneers spun in his mind.

"Dragoneers are split into nine ranks, with rank 9 being referred to as Grand Dragoneers. Neo-demons are also split into ranks, and they are simply bizarre creatures that lived within the Western Desert, which eventually came to be called neo-demons.

"After the ranks of 1-9 for neo-demons, is rank 10. Those are referred to

as Earthly neo-demons. Rank 11 are Heavenly neo-demons, and rank 12 are... totems!" A strange light shone in Meng Hao's eyes. Now that he had learned more about neo-demons, his understanding of the totems of the Western Desert was more complete. He was no longer completely ignorant.

According to the legends in the Western Desert, the totems of every tribe originated from rank 12 neo-demons, which could also be considered Heavenly neo-demons. Only neo-demons of such a high rank could become totems. After they did, then blood from their descendants could be used to draw totem tattoos. It was in this manner that totems were passed down from generation to generation.

A large tribe would have many totems. A small, weak tribe might only have one.

That was the origin of totems. You could say that all of the variety of different totems existed because way back somewhere in time, a rank 12 neo-demon had appeared.

"Just how powerful is a rank 12 neo-demon?" thought Meng Hao. There was no way for him to know, nor could Gu La explain clearly. He could only say that they were extremely powerful; as for the details, few people actually knew.

In the Western Desert, many Cultivators practiced totem cultivation. But the only people who could actually control neo-demons were Dragoneers!

In addition to studying totems, Meng Hao also continued to accrue enlightenment regarding the magical symbols in the Celestial soil. He almost did it by second nature. If he wasn't engaged in some other research, he would spend his free time outside, trying to gain more enlightenment.

Soon, he had been in Holy Snow City for several days. However, the Frigid Snow Clan had not once mentioned the matter of the Frigid Snow Larva. In fact, they had also not mentioned anything about the concocting services he was supposed to perform. As the days passed, no one came to visit him. He was alone inside the mansion, almost as if they had forgotten

him.

He wasn't in a hurry. After his display of power in the battle several days ago, he was sure that the Frigid Snow Clan had plans to use him in some capacity. Someone would come to call on him eventually.

Furthermore, as the conflict escalated, especially when it reached the final stages, Meng Hao was sure that his poisons would only become more and more useful. He was the guest and they were the host, which would never change; however, as the guest became more powerful, the host would naturally be forced to yield some.

Therefore, Meng Hao enjoyed the flowers, studied totems, and gained enlightenment of Celestial soil.

Meanwhile, deep within the heart of the inner city of Holy Snow City, the old woman sat cross-legged with three others in the Frigid Snow Clan's main temple hall. In front of them burned an oil lamp, which danced about in the cold wind, casting flickering shadows about the temple hall.

Those four people were the four Grand Elders of the Frigid Snow Clan. All had Nascent Soul Cultivation bases, and wielded much power in their capacity as administrators of the city.

One of the four was a gray-haired old man with a moon-shaped mark on his forehead. The mark glittered as he spoke. "I still disagree with Third Elder's suggestion. Matters pertaining to Frigid Snow Larvae are very serious. Currently, there are only two that will be able to reach the larva stage. How could we possibly give one to an outsider!?"

These four had already been discussing the matter of Meng Hao for quite some time.

"I concur with Second Elder," said a middle-aged man coldly. He had a grim expression on his face. "First of all, we don't even know where that poison expert Cultivator is from. His Cultivation base is merely at the Core Formation stage, and yet he dares to boastingly demand a Frigid Snow Larva?! Most likely, he sees that Holy Snow City is teetering on the verge of collapse, so he figured he would come and try to extort things

from us. In my opinion, we should just go kill him as a warning to others!”

“Look, we’ve been discussing this matter for a while now,” said the old woman. “Whatever this man’s objectives, for him to arrive at this particular time is obviously suspicious. However, in the battle a few days ago, he displayed powers that drew even my attention. Can we really shut the door in the face of such an ally? If we do, who else would dare come to our aid? Fourth Elder, you say that we don’t know where he’s from. But isn’t everyone in the Black Lands a Rogue Cultivator? How could he even prove where he came from?”

“Furthermore, I already gave my word. I won’t go back on it. If his poisons aren’t effective, then it won’t matter. But if they help to assure victory, then the Frigid Snow Larva will be his!” Her voice was calm but powerful.

The main temple hall was silent for a while. The only Elder who hadn’t spoken so far was First Elder. He had white hair and ancient features. He was short and stooped, almost like a midget. Finally, he opened his eyes.

Immediately, they shone with a bright glow, causing the main temple hall to instantly grow brighter. It even seemed to suppress the light emanating from the oil lamp.

The instant he began to speak, all three of the other Elders, even the old woman, bowed their heads.

“Very well,” he said. “You three have been debating the subject for quite a while now. Before we make any decisions, let’s wait until Sir Zhou can identify the poison in that blood!”

Time passed by. Four hours later, footsteps could suddenly be heard in the temple hall. The four Elders lifted their heads to see an old man approaching. He wore a long black robe, and his face was filled with an expression of pride. As he walked toward them, he was followed cautiously by two young women. Their eyes glowed with fervent respect, as if a single word from this man could cause them to do anything.

As the old man entered the temple hall, Second, Third and Fourth Elders all rose to their feet, smiles filling their faces.

“Sir Zhou,” they said in greeting.

“Greetings, Fellow Daoists,” said Sir Zhou in a cool tone. His expression was haughty, as it usually was. His features were not ancient; instead, his face shone with a healthy glow. Arrogance seemed to radiate off of him. Obviously, he was used to occupying a lofty position, or at least, was used to people flattering him.

Were Meng Hao present, he would be incredibly shocked. He would recognize this old man. It was none other than East Pill Division Furnace Lord Zhou Dekun, who had been captured and taken to the Black Lands!

Despite their rocky start, Meng Hao had eventually developed a good relationship with old man Zhou, and the two of them eventually became good friends. He had taken Meng Hao to visit quite a few Cultivator Clans, where they had been waited upon hand and foot like royalty. The look on the man’s face right now was similar to how it had been back then.

His capture had worried Meng Hao, to the extent that after arriving in the Black Lands, he’d made some enquiries. However, no information had ever turned up. He had always assumed that Zhou Dekun was being tormented in some unknown location in the Black Lands....

However, it seemed that in all aspects, Zhou Dekun was even better off now than before. His aged appearance from before had been replaced by a ruddy glow. From the respectful, shy glances being given to him by the two young girls, it was clear that old man Zhou was like an old tree that had suddenly blossomed. Blossomed again and again....

“Sir Zhou, how goes the poison research?” said the First Elder with a smile. He remained seated cross-legged, but his expression was one of courtesy. He spoke to him as if he were an equal, despite the fact that Zhou Dekun was only of the late Foundation Establishment stage.

“Considering the level of my Dao of alchemy,” responded Zhou Dekun proudly, “there are only two people under Heaven who can exceed me. One is my Master, whom you all know of, Grandmaster Pill Demon! The other is my Junior Brother Fang Mu. Other than these two, I dare anyone to claim to be above me!” He waved his hand, wherein appeared a jade

bottle.

“This poisoned blood you gave me is definitely extraordinary. It took several days of thorough research before I was able to completely understand it. In any other location, this person could be considered a Chosen of Heaven. However, in my view, he’s little more than a master alchemist. I could disintegrate his poison with a single breath! This man should know that the Dao of poison is not so simple of a subject. When it comes to the elite of the Dao of alchemy, there is only one person in the world whom I admire. That is none other than my Junior Brother Fang Mu. When his Bedevilment Pill appeared, the name of Grandmaster Pill Cauldron rose up. He could be considered the Patriarch of all poisons in existence!” He ended his speech with his jaw set proudly. Clearly, Zhou Dekun was implying that if his Junior Brother was so incredible, then his own power could only be imagined.

Serious and courteous expressions covered the faces of Elders, with the exception of the First Elder. Behind him, the two young girls gazed at him with looks of adoration.

Chapter 358: The Renown of Pill Cauldron

“I am fascinated by the illustrious Dao of alchemy of Grandmaster Pill Cauldron,” said the old man with the moon-shaped seal on his forehead. “Unfortunately, I have never been fortunate enough to be able to travel to the Southern Domain to pay him my respects.” His expression was sincere; obviously he had heard of Grandmaster Pill Cauldron, but not the events which had occurred at the Rebirth Cave.

Fourth Elder smiled and politely said, “As a distinguished apprentice of Grandmaster Pill Demon, and Elder Brother of Grandmaster Pill Cauldron, your Dao of alchemy can shake the Heavens and rock the Earth. I truly admire you, sir, truly! With you here, Grandmaster, Holy Snow City will never fall!”

Zhou Dekun laughed. Inwardly, he felt a bit emotional. Back in the Southern Domain, he could never have been so openly arrogant. But this was the backwater Black Lands, a place where continued existence was predicated by respect. Modesty was completely out of the question. Zhou Dekun had learned this lesson the hard way. So right now, he nodded proudly, indicating that the praise of him just now was absolutely correct.

In his heart, he sighed as he thought back to the despair he had felt after having been taken to the Black Lands. He thought of his bitterness at realizing he would never be able to return to his Sect. There had been no one to serve him, and no Cultivator Clans to give him gifts and take care of him. At that time, his life had seemed as gray as ash.

How could he ever have imagined that after the suffering would come happiness? He had managed to turn things around; he had been taken here because the people here viewed him almost like a treasure. After randomly concocting some medicinal pills, the locals had been shocked. He was provided with food and drink, and anything else he desired. He was even given two young female companions. His life was suddenly very comfortable, perhaps even more than back in the East Pill Division.

As he thought back on everything, Zhou Dekun sighed. He might never

again be able to see his Sect, and yet, that wasn't such a horrible thing....

Thinking up to this point, he cleared his throat and then continued on with his lofty boasting.

"This crappy little poison is nothing," he said. "Just wait until I concoct some of my own poison. I guarantee that those Western Desert Cultivators will have no choice other than to give in." He spoke with an air of self-assured authority.

First Elder thought for a moment and then slowly said, "If Grandmaster Zhou is able to both dispel and concoct this same poison, then perhaps we should ask that other Cultivator to just leave."

Second and Fourth Elders nodded their heads at this, and were just about to voice their agreement when the old woman spoke.

"I disagree. Sir Zhou is clearly a Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy. However, it took several days of research for him to determine the nature of the poison. Besides, I've seen the results of that poison myself! If we make the other Cultivator leave, then we should really determine exactly how effective the poison is. Why not have a little competition between Sir Zhou and this other Cultivator? That way the man's true self can be clearly seen." She looked at First Elder.

First Elder hesitated for a moment, then made a gesture to Second and Fourth Elders indicating that they should hold their tongues. He gazed at Zhou Dekun. "Grandmaster Zhou, what do you think?"

Zhou Dekun laughed proudly. "That's fine. I'm curious to lay eyes on this young mischief-maker and teach him a lesson. I'll help him to understand that the Dao of alchemy of the Southern Domain is boundless, and that alchemists of the Southern Domain are unsurpassable."

As he listened, First Elder nodded and smiled. He happened to very much admire this Grandmaster Zhou. He had sampled the man's medicinal pills, and was confident that he was definitely number one in all of the Black Lands.

Laughing, he rose to his feet with clasped hands, as did the old woman

and the other Elders. Amidst all the smiles, the old woman sighed lightly. She had done everything she could and had put up a good fight. At least she had done her best to pay back Meng Hao's kindness in saving Hanxue Shan.

Naturally, people were sent to notify Meng Hao. The date for the "Dao of alchemy consultation" was set for three days later.

News of the matter spread through Holy Snow City like a whirlwind. Everyone heard about it, both Frigid Snow Clan members and outside Cultivators. Excitement grew. Everyone knew the name of Zhou Dekun. After all, during recent years in Holy Snow City, the reputation of Grandmaster Zhou was like the sun in the noon sky.

In fact, it was because of Grandmaster Zhou that so many Rogue Cultivators had been gathering in Holy Snow City. Regardless of the price they had to pay, they wanted to sample his medicinal pills.

Whether openly or in the heart, all of them took Zhou Dekun to be the number one alchemist in the Black Lands. Actually, many Cultivators who consumed his medicinal pills were so shocked that they claimed Zhou Dekun to be the ultimate Grandmaster even in the Southern Domain.

Therefore, Zhou Dekun's name only continued to grow more illustrious in Holy Snow City. Unfortunately, this place was so far from the former Dongluo City that Meng Hao had never received any information about it.

The news that Zhou Dekun planned to give a consultation regarding the Dao of alchemy caused quite a stir among the local Cultivators. All of them planned to personally go watch the event, not only to cheer on Grandmaster Zhou, but also to see how pill concocting worked.

This news was shocking enough. However, shortly thereafter word was issued from the temple in which Zhou Dekun resided. Based on recent battle achievements, he would choose ten individuals for whom he would personally concoct medicinal pills! This new bit of information immediately caused a huge sensation.

As the entire city simmered, Meng Hao sat cross-legged in his courtyard, surrounded by lotuses, looking at the invitation card in his hand. A strange

expression covered his face, like a smile, and yet not. Standing across from him was Hanxue Shan, who was completely unable to discern his thoughts.

“Hey, what kind of expression is that?” she said, trying to suppress her nervousness. She wasn’t sure why, but ever since the day Meng Hao had looked down at her from his position atop the giant’s head, smiled, and spoken those words, after which she had walked up in a trance to join him, well... for some reason she kept thinking about him.

Actually, as soon as she had heard of the matter of Grandmaster Zhou, she had immediately run over to tell Meng Hao.

“Nothing,” he said with a slight smile. “I just think this Zhou Dekun is kind of funny.”

“You!” she cried, stamping her foot and glaring angrily at Meng Hao. “Zhou Dekun is at the pinnacle of the Dao of alchemy, the number one alchemist in the Black Lands! He’s even famous in the Southern Domain, the personal disciple of Grandmaster Pill Demon! He’s also the Elder Brother of Grandmaster Pill Cauldron. Do you know who Grandmaster Pill Demon is? Have you even heard of him!?”

“People such as them are like Chosen of Heaven, and you don’t even pay them any attention? All you can do is concoct poison! Aren’t you nervous?”

She was a pretty girl to begin with, but when she acted like this, it revealed another side of her beauty, as if she were vying with the surrounding lotuses. Meng Hao shook his head and smiled, a virtually imperceptible glitter in his eyes as he considered her words.

A perplexed look on his face, he asked, “I’ve heard of Grandmaster Pill Demon, ma’am, and I very much respect him. But who is this Grandmaster Pill Cauldron of whom you speak?”

“You don’t know who Grandmaster Pill Cauldron is?” she replied, her eyes wide and filled with disbelief. “I guess I shouldn’t be surprised. You’re just a Rogue Cultivator, so you don’t know much about the Southern Domain. I bet you don’t even know anyone who’s been to the Southern

Domain! Your ignorance of Grandmaster Pill Cauldron is understandable.

“Well, let me tell you, Grandmaster Pill Cauldron is the number one Chosen in the Violet Fate Sect of the Southern Domain.” A look of adoration filled her eyes as she spoke. “His name is Fang Mu, and he’s Grandmaster Pill Demon’s Legacy Apprentice. His Dao of alchemy rocks everything under Heaven. He’s an amazing person who will be the stuff of legends in the future. He’s an expert in poisons, and has a unique understanding of the Dao of alchemy. There isn’t anyone in the United Nine of the Black Lands who doesn’t know about him. I have a dream that one day in the future, I’ll be able to go to the Southern Domain and pay him a visit. I’ll plead with him to concoct a medicinal pill for me.”

Meng Hao gave a dry cough. “You’re exaggerating,” he said without thinking. As soon as the words left his mouth, Hanxue Shan’s gaze turned dangerous.

“You don’t believe me? You’re not convinced?” She glared at him with wide eyes. After he had saved her twice, she suddenly found that she was less reserved in front of him, and more open. “You can disbelieve others, or remain unconvinced by their words. But, you are not allowed to disrespect Grandmaster Pill Cauldron! Fang Mu joined the Violet Fate Sect when he was seventeen years old. When he was just an apprentice alchemist, he utilized the Violet Fate Sect’s East Pill Division techniques to cause a shocking scene! He displayed unprecedented talent, and caused everyone to be shocked.

“In fact, one of the East Pill Division Elders personally endorsed him to participate in the trial by fire to become a master alchemist. He was the first person to ever do so after having joined the Sect for less than a year! The way he became number one in the Sect was something exceedingly rare from ancient times until now!

“Thanks to his absolute superiority, he was promoted to master alchemist, after which he created a Bedevilment Pill, which sent the entire Southern Domain into an uproar. Later, he competed with Grandmaster Eternal Mountain and produced a Myriad Strength Pill, which was impossible to crush. That’s when he became a Furnace Lord!” By this point

in her tirade, she really seemed to be upset. Her words came out in a rush.

“After that he took place in an alchemy duel in the Black Sieve Sect. His Dao was shocking. Later, he received enlightenment at the Ancient Dao Geyser. He cowed the Dao Child of the Black Lands Palace and slaughtered an azure-masked Core Formation Cultivator, causing his name to ring out under all the Heavens! Later, in the Violet Fate Sect trial by fire for Violet Furnace Lords, he took first place in unprecedented fashion, suppressing Chosen to become a Violet Furnace Lord and the Legacy Apprentice of the East Pill Division!

“He did all that in only a few years. Do you really think you’re better than someone like that? You really think you can measure up?”

Meng Hao stared at her in shock, his face a bit red. He felt somewhat embarrassed.

To be praised and commended in such a way was something he wasn’t used to. He almost couldn’t believe that Hanxue Shan knew so much about him.

“Could it be that she specifically investigated me?” he thought. He cleared his throat again, feeling a bit complacent. He couldn’t help but give a faint smile as he looked at Hanxue Shan. The look on her face said that she would fight to the death if he didn’t show respect to Grandmaster Pill Cauldron.

“If this Grandmaster Pill Cauldron knew he had a devotee like you here in the Black Lands, I think he would be very happy.” He laughed jokingly.

“Hmph! Don’t mock my love for Grandmaster Pill Cauldron. So what if I love him? He’s my dream beloved!”

Meng Hao laughed. Now he knew for sure that for some reason, the incident at the Rebirth Cave was not known among the Cultivators in the Black Lands. Perhaps the news hadn’t spread, or... perhaps the fact that he had left the Violet Fate Sect and fled for his life... had been suppressed!

Chapter 359: Zhou Dekun and Meng Hao

Seeing Meng Hao's expression, Hanxue Shan was about to open her mouth and say something, but then had a sudden thought. A look of pity appeared in her eyes.

Sighing to herself, she thought, "His smile seems normal, but he's obviously covering up his jealousy of Grandmaster Pill Cauldron. It's so obvious!" Then she thought about how he had saved her twice, and how he wasn't really very disagreeable in general. And of course there was the scene from the battlefield which kept playing out in her head.

Her heart suddenly softened.

She thought of Meng Hao's words and bearing from moments ago, and then realized she had actually embarrassed him a bit, which was why he had reacted in the way he did. "There's no need to feel frustrated," she said comfortingly. "Grandmaster Pill Cauldron is a rare talent in the world. Ai, don't let yourself feel discouraged."

Meng Hao wasn't sure whether to laugh or cry. There was no way he could tell this girl that the person sitting in front of her was the very one she adored to the extreme and wanted to marry, Grandmaster Pill Demon's true Legacy Apprentice, possessor of the Everburning Flame, wielder of the Alchemy Dao Transmutation Incantation, and superstar of the Southern Domain, Grandmaster Pill Cauldron.

Hanxue Shan quickly changed the subject. She had suddenly thought of a problem. Frowning, she said, "What are you going to do? If you lose to Grandmaster Zhou, then there's no way you'll be able to get a Frigid Snow Larva. Even granny won't be able to do anything about it. Besides, there are only two young larvae that can be raised, and it will take a year. Otherwise, I would help you to get one. Except, I don't know how to raise them...." She was about to continue when she saw the look on Meng Hao's face, as if something was unacceptable and he wasn't sure whether to laugh or cry.

The look immediately annoyed her. Looking flustered, she stamped her

foot. "Fine, forget it," she said. "If you aren't anxious then what's the point of me being anxious for you?"

Her attitude was something Meng Hao had never encountered before. Neither Xu Qing nor Chu Yuyan had been so impulsive. He couldn't help but size her up again.

"What are you looking at?" she said, glaring at him again, her young heart beginning to race. Without realizing it, she stood up a bit straighter and put on a menacing expression.

"I'm looking at you, beautiful," replied Meng Hao with a laugh, winking.

"You...." Her face suddenly flushed red, and her heart seized with panic. She backed up a few steps, holding her tongue for a long moment before bursting out, "You were just coming on to me!"

Meng Hao scratched his head, his smile growing wider. He suddenly realized that messing with this girl was quite amusing. He cleared his throat and was about to say something else when, suddenly, Hanxue Shan once again spoke, her tone earnest: "Granny told me that according to Clan rules, anyone who comes on to a member of the Frigid Snow Clan will be turned into an ice statue! The only other option is to commit yourself to me!"

Meng Hao gaped in astonishment. This was the first time he had ever heard of such a ridiculous rule.

"You remember that!" said Hanxue Shan obsequiously. "You owe me a commitment!" Her eyes flickered with craftiness as she stared at Meng Hao. Covering her smile with her hand, she spun around and walked off. Her slender legs, lithe waist, and perky rear end only served to accentuate her youthfulness, and gave her a profound charm as she stalked off.

Meng Hao watched her leave, laughing to himself. He then looked back down at the invitation card in his hand, and Zhou Dekun's name written on the top in flowing calligraphy. As he did, his smile grew even more brilliant.

"Very well. Three days from now I'll go see this Grandmaster Zhou.

We'll see whether or not his Dao of alchemy has made any progress during his years in the Black Lands." Smiling, he put away the invitation card, closed his eyes and sat cross-legged amidst the lotuses. He meditated on the shape of the lotus flowers and sought enlightenment regarding their essence.

The Wild Giant snored gently as it slept. Off to the side, poor Gu La was butchering some meat to feed it when it woke up.

A forlorn expression covered his face. He missed his life in the Western Desert, and yet, after hearing the conversation between Hanxue Shan and Meng Hao, he was suddenly filled with the desire to see this mysterious Grandmaster Pill Cauldron.

"If I have to be a slave," he thought to himself, "it should be to a Chosen of the Dao of alchemy from the Southern Domain. That would be fitting for the likes of me, Gu La. Oh well. Such a pity...."

Time passed, and soon it was three days later. Hanxue Shan came twice to visit during the three days, but every time she caught sight of Meng Hao's nonchalant attitude, she got mad. Her last visit came on the third day, the appointed day of the competition. Her face was dark as she stalked over, delivered a jade slip, and then left without another word.

The jade slip contained a pill formula, a simple one. Meng Hao could sense Zhou Dekun's Dao of alchemy within the pill formula. Meng Hao wasn't sure how Hanxue Shan had managed to get her hands on it, but obviously she wanted to give him a chance to study it so that he wouldn't lose too badly.

"She really is a warmhearted girl," he thought with a laugh. He studied the jade slip for a moment before transforming it into ash. Then he rose to his feet and flew up to stand on the head of the Wild Giant. "Alright, let's go. Who knows, maybe I'll end up giving some pointers to Zhou Dekun. It depends on how much his skill in the Dao of alchemy has regressed." He shook his head as the Wild Giant suddenly opened its eyes. Looking a bit disconcerted, it rose to its feet. Its ninety-meter height made it look like a small mountain. It gave out a loud roar as it reached down, grabbed a big

chunk of meat, and threw it into its mouth.

“Meat.... Meat....” it grumbled indistinctly. Then it strode forward, out of the courtyard.

Bells were sounding out within this region of Holy Snow City. As they heard the sound, nearby Cultivators suddenly remembered that today was the appointed day for Zhou Dekun to concoct medicinal pills. Immediately, excitement began to grow.

In recent days, Holy Snow City had produced large amounts of magical items and techniques, a variety of cultivation necessities, all for the purpose in bolstering the resistance against the Black Lands Palace invasion.

Such items were available based on achievements in battle. Because of their former status as one of the great Clans of the United Nine, the Frigid Snow Clan possessed deep reserves of such items.

Everyone knew that Zhou Dekun was going to concoct pills for ten people, based on their battle achievements. The news had caused quite a stir. Now that the bells were ringing out, large groups of Cultivators flocked toward Holy Snow Square, in the east of the city.

When Meng Hao appeared on the stomping Wild Giant, he was quite conspicuous. Even people some distance away could see the giant’s huge frame.

Murmuring filled the air as the Wild Giant strode forward at top speed. It didn’t need to fly, a single leap would propel it hundreds of meters forward.

Meng Hao sat cross-legged on top of the giant’s head, the wind whistling past his ears. Snowflakes danced about in the cold air. He paid no attention to all the onlookers; he simply transmitted some silent instructions to the Wild Giant, his eyes closed.

Within the space of about ten breaths, he opened his eyes to find the Wild Giant leaping over a frozen river that ran through the city. Then, they arrived at Holy Snow Square.

The square had long since filled with hundreds of Cultivators, packed densely in rings. The sight of the Wild Giant caused them to immediately clear a path. Anyone who saw a ninety meter tall giant running toward them like a charging mountain would fall back without even thinking about it.

The center of the square was empty. Considering his status in Holy Snow City, Zhou Dekun would obviously not sit around waiting for anyone.

As soon as the Wild Giant entered the square, Meng Hao's body flashed as he flew forward. The surrounding hundreds of Cultivators' eyes were fixed on him as he soared over them, his expression placid. It was amidst complete silence that he stepped foot into the middle of the square.

It was almost noon; however, snow drifted down from the sky like it always did, landing onto the bodies of the spectators and resting on their hair. Meng Hao looked out at them calmly as he waited.

“So that's the poison expert who will exchange poison concocting services for a Frigid Snow Larva from the Frigid Snow Clan.”

“If that guy was in some other city, he might be able to make a big impression. Unfortunately for him, this is Holy Snow City, and we have Grandmaster Zhou Dekun.”

“On the day of the battle, Grandmaster Zhou had reached a critical point in his pill concocting, and couldn't participate. That's why he didn't have a chance to show off the power of his poison like that other guy.”

The onlookers discussed matters for a short time before four prismatic beams of light appeared. Four people appeared in the square, followed by dozens of Frigid Snow Clan members.

One was Hanxue Shan, who looked over concernedly at Meng Hao.

As for the four people, they were none other than the four Grand Elders of the Frigid Snow Clan. First Elder stood there, as short as a midget, but emanating power from his Cultivation base that seemed to suppress the surrounding Cultivators. They instantly stared at him with intense looks

of veneration.

Second and Fourth Elders, as well as the old woman, Third Elder, were all Nascent Soul experts. Their appearance instantly caused everyone to cease speaking.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever. After the Elders arrived, about five breaths of time passed before Zhou Dekun appeared. He strode into the square, flanked by the beautiful young women, looking incredibly lofty.

All of the Cultivators in the audience looked at him with respectful expressions, smiled, and clasped hands in salute.

"Greetings, Grandmaster Zhou!"

"Many thanks for the medicinal elixir you provided, Grandmaster Zhou. I had somewhat of a breakthrough in my Cultivation base. Anything you need, I will provide as repayment!"

"Haha, it's been a few days since we last met, Grandmaster Zhou. You are even more elegant and graceful than before."

Words like these filled the air, causing Zhou Dekun to smile proudly. After entering the square, he greeted the four Grand Elders, and then looked superciliously over toward Meng Hao.

"What's your name?" he said coolly, looking every bit a senior member of the Dao of alchemy.

"Fang Mu," replied Meng Hao with a slight cough. Meng Hao looked at Zhou Dekun, and couldn't help but sigh inwardly. He had been worried about the man for such a long time, but from the looks of it, he was definitely doing quite well.

Hearing the name Fang Mu caused Zhou Dekun to stare in shock.

Chapter 360: Zhou Dekun's Treasured Pill

Zhou Dekun wasn't the only one to stare in shock. Hanxue Shan also glared at Meng Hao angrily with wide eyes.

The surrounding Cultivators were struck speechless for a moment. Then, however, they burst out laughing.

"Fang Mu? Don't tell me he's talking about the famous Grandmaster Pill Cauldron from the Southern Domain?"

"Hilarious. This guy sure is insulting Grandmaster Zhou."

"He really has some guts, and maybe some skills too. It's too bad for him that he ran into Grandmaster Zhou. He'll definitely be outdone."

As the laughter continued to ring out, Grandmaster Zhou frowned and then gave Meng Hao a cold harrumph.

"Ignorant rascal," said Zhou Dekun, flicking his sleeve. "It's hard to believe you dare to even speak the name of Fang Mu. He's my Junior brother, Grandmaster Pill Cauldron!" A proud look shone in his eyes; clearly he felt that his status as Grandmaster Pill Cauldron's Elder Brother was a very prestigious one. "Originally I merely planned to teach you a thing or two about the Dao of alchemy. However, considering your blathering, you rascal, I will now help you to understand that the grandeur of the Dao of alchemy is not something to be blithely chattered about." With that, he lifted up his hand to reveal a small bottle.

"Contained in this bottle is blood infected with the poison you used the other day," he continued, his voice arrogant. "I've long since analyzed it, and I have to say, it seems very potent, but is in fact quite simple." With that, he tossed the bottle over to Meng Hao.

"The first lesson I will teach you is regarding the liquified poison in that bottle. You...." Before he could finish speaking, his eyes went wide.

All of the surrounding Cultivators instantly went quiet, too, as their gazes locked onto Meng Hao. Even the four Grand Elders were watching him closely.

That was because the instant Meng Hao caught the bottle, it shattered. A putrid, black liquid emerged, along with a mist, which floated above Meng Hao's hand.

A moment later, a burning tongue of flame appeared in his palm, which instantly caused the black mist to dissipate. The liquid began to writhe, and after the space of about two breaths, had transformed into a medicinal pill! Everyone watching could clearly see the entire process!

The black medicinal pill suddenly began to emit strands of red Qi, after which, the pill turned violet in color. It was no longer putrid; instead, a fragrant aroma wafted up from it which lifted the spirits of anyone who smelled it.

"Liquid Congealment Concoction!" thought Zhou Dekun, his heart thumping. He was shocked, but quickly began to rationalize in his head. "It has to be some kind of trick. This guy is simply too young. Liquid Congealment Concoction is something that only Violet Furnace Lords can do."

Meng Hao coughed lightly, looking a bit embarrassed. He really didn't want to cause problems for Zhou Dekun. In fact, he was quite happy to be able to see him here. Liquid Congealment Concoction wasn't anything particularly astonishing to see. It was more of a method of extending greetings to another alchemist. Unfortunately, because of the situation with the Ji Clan, and Meng Hao's lack of certainty regarding all the circumstances involved, he didn't want to openly be involved with Zhou Dekun.

"As an alchemist, I won't denigrate your petty gimmick," said Zhou Dekun, sounding very much like a Grandmaster. In his best reprimanding tone, he continued, "However, in the process of researching that poison liquid, I imbued it with no small amount of medicinal plants. I never imagined you would dare to treacherously use them to make a medicinal pill! We'll ignore your Dao of alchemy for the moment. Such tricks are unacceptable!" The onlookers, including the four Grand Elders, suddenly weren't as shocked as they had been moments before. After all, they had very much faith in Zhou Dekun, from their outsider's view.

Zhou Dekun was actually somewhat alarmed inwardly. However, he knew that this was the Black Lands, and he was a Furnace Lord of the East Pill Division. Therefore, he was fully convinced that trickery had just been used just now to congeal the pill.

“Come,” he said, setting his jaw. “Concoct a pill for me. Use all the skill you have.” His tone was arrogant, but inwardly he had decided to use this opportunity to determine the true skill level of his opponent.

Meng Hao gave a slight smile. He glanced at Zhou Dekun, then shook his head and slapped his bag of holding to produce an ordinary pill furnace. Then, he produced some medicinal plants, which he tossed into the furnace. After a few moments, a green medicinal pill emerged. The fragrant medicinal aroma was thick. It was really just an ordinary medicinal pill, but it should have been enough to shock the audience.

However, upon the appearance of the medicinal pill, the observers didn't look surprised at all. In fact, some of them even laughed mockingly. The Four Grand Elders frowned, and the old woman sighed and shook her head.

Hanxue Shan also shook her head, then looked at him as if he had lost and she were trying to comfort him.

Meng Hao gaped at all of this. Something didn't seem right. The green medicinal pill seemed simple, but it emanated a strong medicinal aroma, and was actually an eighty percent medicinal strength pill for the Foundation Establishment stage.

“That's your medicinal pill? Fine, I won't go too hard on you. However, I will now be forced to convince you what a true medicinal pill is!” Zhou Dekun was actually heaving sighs of relief inwardly. Meng Hao's Dao of alchemy had long since surpassed his by a vast margin. Furthermore, the medicinal pills Meng Hao created were not flamboyant. In fact, without holding the pill in hand, Zhou Dekun would have no way to tell its level. His expression was tranquil and composed as he smacked his bag of holding to produce a pill furnace.

This particular pill furnace was made from jade, and as soon as it

appeared, it emanated spiritual energy. Meng Hao looked at it with surprise. Based on what he knew about pill furnaces, it only took a glance to tell that this one was beyond ordinary.

The surface of the jade pill furnace was carved with auspicious animals. These weren't ordinary depictions, they appeared to be totemic, and obviously served some special function.

Seeing Meng Hao's gaze caused a self-righteous look to appear on Zhou Dekun's face. This pill furnace had been gifted to him by the Frigid Snow Clan, and he was quite pleased with it. Despite the fact that his Dao of alchemy was only average, he was still confident in being able to achieve victory because of his consistency. With the addition of this pill furnace, his chances increased even more. As of now, his success rate would be at ninety percent.

The pill furnace appeared along with a glowing red stone. After placing the pill furnace in position, flames leaped up from the stone to emanate out. Next, Zhou Dekun produced some medicinal plants which he catalyzed to various degrees and then tossed into the pill furnace.

The pill furnace began to glow, and Zhou Dekun himself began to shine with a light that gave him a Celestial appearance. He looked lofty, even holy. Anyone who looked at him would instantly be convinced of his grandeur.

At this point, he definitely emanated the aura of a transcendent being.

"No wonder he's called Grandmaster Zhou. A single glance will tell you that he's Grandmaster material!"

"This is the second time I've seen Grandmaster Zhou concoct pills. Every single time, I'm shocked and filled with admiration."

The surrounding Cultivators discussed the sight, eyes filled with open veneration. The four Grand Elders looked on with slight smiles, nodding with respect toward Grandmaster Zhou.

A strange expression appeared on Meng Hao's face. No one else could tell, but it only took a glance for him to see that while the pill Zhou Dekun

was concocting was exceptional, what was even more exceptional was the technique the man was using to make his body glow brightly.

“No wonder he’s done so well for himself here,” thought Meng Hao. “That technique is really useful. If I remember correctly, he wasn’t able to do that back in the Southern Domain. He must have picked up this technique here in the Black Lands.”

A buzz of conversation filled the air as Zhou Dekun, his eyes shining brightly, slapped the pill furnace. Blinding rays of light shot out, along with a white medicinal pill.

Immediately, a dense medicinal aroma filled the air, spreading out for dozens of meters in all directions. All who smelled it were immediately energized, and felt their Cultivation bases leaping with power.

People continued to gush with conversation.

“Now that is a medicinal pill! You don’t even have to consume it to feel your Cultivation base jumping! That pill is incredible!”

“It’s definitely extraordinary. In fact it’s even more potent than the last set of pills Grandmaster Zhou concocted. Hahaha. It seems Grandmaster Zhou’s Dao of alchemy is even better than before.”

Even the Grand Elders were smiling and nodding, with the exception of the old woman.

Meng Hao gaped openly at the complacent Zhou Dekun. After a long moment passed, he smiled wryly, finally understanding why the audience had looked at him with such cynicism. Zhou Dekun’s medical pills had always been exceptional. After all, he was a Furnace Lord. However, his final movement in slapping the furnace had seemed to be filled with complacency, but in fact caused the medicinal essence of the pill to begin to emanate out.

After the pill appeared, it was inherently weak; less than half of its original medicinal strength remained. The other half was emanating out into the air.

The dense medicinal aroma caused everyone to feel energized, and even

experience tiny leaps in their Cultivation bases. To them, it indicated that this medicinal pill was high quality. However, that just went to show how little Black Lands Cultivators understood about the Dao of alchemy.

Suddenly, Meng Hao came to understand that when dealing with people who didn't understand the Dao of alchemy, you had to be adaptable.

Furthermore, he also realized that he himself had unwittingly made progress in his own Dao of alchemy. His medicinal pills were no longer as showy, but rather, subdued. This was a realm that exceeded that of ordinary alchemists, let alone ordinary Cultivators.

He put away the green medicinal pill, looked at the glorious Zhou Dekun and, hearing the excited conversations of the surrounding Cultivators, began to chuckle.

It was at this moment that the voice of the Frigid Snow Clan's Second Elder rang out.

"Grandmaster Zhou, there's no need to provide further instruction to this self-proclaimed Fang Mu," he said coolly. "Any agreements previously made with this callow Cultivator are now invalid." He looked at Meng Hao. "Because of the kindness you showed in saving Hanxue Shan, we will not look further into your trickery just now." Before the echo of his words could die out, the sound of piercing laughter suddenly filled the entire city.

"So this is your Frigid Snow Clan's alchemist? Wow, such an amazing Grandmaster. You've even outshone Pill Demon! Except, everyone's laughing at you."

Three colorful beams of light suddenly appeared in the sky, sending out ripples as they flew down.

Three people appeared, and just as they seemed about to smash into Holy Snow City's protective spell formation shield, it suddenly opened. When the four Grand Elders of the Frigid Snow Clan saw who these three people were, their expressions immediately changed.

Chapter 361: A Tiny Favor

As soon as the voice filled the air, Zhou Dekun put his pill furnace away. The three approaching figures never saw it clearly, nor the medicinal pills.

The approach of these three people caused the four Grand Elders' faces to fall.

One of them was a middle-aged man wearing a long white robe, with face like white jade. Though he was middle-aged, he stood tall and straight. His features were handsome and beyond ordinary, and a slight, amiable smile could be seen on his face. However, the more you looked at the smile the colder it seemed.

This man had no totemic Qi on him, but rather, a faint medicinal aroma.

The words he had spoken just now were still echoing around as he stepped foot into the square to stand between Zhou Dekun and Meng Hao.

He radiated loftiness, and his white robes were embroidered with glittering pill cauldrons. A condescending expression could now be seen on his face.

"Is this how the Southern Domain's Dao of alchemy works? What a great letdown! I'm afraid I, Yan, will have to return to the Eastern Lands disappointed." The man shook his head. He hadn't actually seen Zhou Dekun and Meng Hao concocting pills; he had merely smelled the lingering medicinal aroma in the air, and seen Zhou Dekun putting away the pill furnace. All of that left him disappointed.

Zhou Dekun's face was unsightly as he looked over the three new arrivals. In addition to the middle-aged man was an old man wearing an inky green robe, with eyes that flashed like lightning. His expression was cold and haughty. The emanations of his Cultivation base revealed him to be of the great circle of the late Nascent Soul stage.

Even the four Grand Elders of the Frigid Snow Clan couldn't compare to such a Cultivation base.

However, there was a Qi on the man that was very different from the other Cultivators. It was thick, and did not emanate out, but was clearly visible, like a signal beacon in the dead of night.

On the back of the old man's hand was a totem tattoo. As for any other tattoos, they were concealed by his voluminous robes, and were impossible to see.

The final person among the three was a young man. He didn't seem to be very old, and yet, there was an ancientness to him. He strode forward, occasionally glancing around, a reminiscent look on his face, even the touch of a sigh. His body emanated a fusion of the fluctuations of a normal Cultivator, as well as totemic Qi.

There were many Cultivators like this young man in the Black Lands, who combined normal cultivation techniques with totem cultivation. There was nothing particularly extraordinary about that; however, there seemed to be something special about him, although it was difficult to say what.

When the Frigid Snow Clan Grand Elders caught sight of the young man, their faces flickered, especially that of First Elder. An anxious, doubtful expression could be seen, along with disbelief.

Meng Hao looked the three over and then glanced away.

The middle-aged man from the Eastern Lands shook his head in disappointment and was about to leave when suddenly he stopped in mid-stride and said, "Eee?" Suddenly, a brilliant glow appeared in his eyes, a shocked expression covered his face. "That's... that's...." He started panting as he lifted his right hand into the air with a grasping motion. Immediately, strands of Qi began to drift into his hand and then congeal. Moments later, an illusory mass of Qi appeared above his palm.

The mass of Qi was green in color, and looked like a medicinal pill. However, it was merely illusory, the work of this man's magical technique.

When Meng Hao saw this, his eyes narrowed, and a faint glow flickered therein.

“Illusory Qi Distillation!” he thought, looking at the man. To be able to distill Qi into an illusory medicinal pill was an ability that not even all Violet Furnace Lords could employ.

It was a technique a level above the one used by Meng Hao just now to condense the liquid into a pill.

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered. “This guy’s Dao of alchemy is incredible.”

Zhou Dekun’s eyes went wide and radiated astonishment. However, he quickly concealed it. His bearing was still one of arrogance, but deep in his heart, great waves of astonishment crashed about.

“That was no gimmick,” thought Zhou Dekun, taking an unconscious step back. “That was real Illusory Qi Distillation. Dammit, this is the Black Lands. How could an alchemist like this suddenly appear. He’s... he’s at least at the same level as a Violet Furnace Lord, maybe even halfway to being a Grandmaster!” His heart pounded as he tried to figure out a way to get away. It was at this time when the man from the Eastern Lands suddenly looked up.

“This pill....” The man named Yan took a deep breath, and his eyes began to shine with an intense light. “So, such a pill does exist under Heaven. Furthermore, it appears to have been created somewhat frivolously. It seems to me that whoever concocted this pill did not do so in the spirit of an alchemy duel. It seems almost an afterthought, and yet, the result embodies the natural spirit of Heaven and Earth!

“This pill is designed for the mere Foundation Establishment stage. However, it contains a great Dao of alchemy. Even more shocking is that this glittering, translucent pill does not seep any medicinal aroma! Were it not for the special Sect technique I just used, it would have been impossible to distill the illusory pill.

“Even more inconceivable is that the medicinal strength of this pill is above eighty percent. It seems that this isn’t anything extraordinary for whoever concocted this pill, and yet, the pill was clearly concocted casually. However... to casually concoct a medicinal pill with eighty percent medicinal strength is... it’s....” Yan’s face was filled with

excitement as he allowed the illusory pill to dissipate. When it was gone, he let out a long sigh.

“Now that is a medicinal pill! Truly an amazing pill of Heaven and Earth! Whoever concocted that pill is a true Grandmaster! The medicinal aroma it emits seems exceptional, but in fact, to compare it to that other vulgar medicinal pill is pure blasphemy! Pills like that are dog crap! Who would even compare the two!?” The man gave Meng Hao a level look, then turned to Zhou Dekun. Obviously he took the green pill to have been concocted by Zhou Dekun.

This was surely because before coming to this place, he had heard inhabitants of the Black Lands speaking of Grandmaster Zhou.

Meng Hao gaped, then shook his head with a wry smile.

It wasn't just him who was gaping. The surrounding Cultivators stared wide-eyed. As for the four Grand Elders, they were completely shaken.

They didn't understand very much about the Dao of alchemy, but the medicinal pill the in the man's hand just now looked very much like the pill Meng Hao had just concocted.

Furthermore, the man's words regarding a medicinal pill that was vulgar dog crap seemed to have been referring to the medicinal pill concocted by Zhou Dekun.

“Um....”

“Something seems off. Could it be that Grandmaster Zhou concocted two medicinal pills?”

“Well, in any case, Grandmaster Zhou is of noble character, and stands at the pinnacle of the Dao of alchemy. Nothing could possibly go wrong.”

As strange expressions flitted across the faces of the audience, Yan turned to face Zhou Dekun, his expression serious, as well as embarrassed. He clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“I spoke disrespectfully just now, Grandmaster Zhou, I hope you don't take offense. I'm just obsessed with the Dao of alchemy and can't bear to

allow anyone to profane the Dao of alchemy. I was too impulsive now and allowed the trivial to overshadow my view. My eyes were covered by a single leaf, so to speak. Grandmaster Zhou, the East Pill Division commands my utmost admiration, and you truly deserve to be called the number one alchemist in the Black Lands. That single medicinal pill is enough to prove your skill in the Dao of alchemy. It has absolutely reached the pinnacle of perfection.” With that, he let out a long sigh, then once again clasped hands and bowed deeply, thoroughly convinced of his analysis.

Zhou Dekun wasn't sure what to do. He subconsciously cleared his throat as his mind reeled. This sudden turn of events was difficult for him to accept, and he was feeling a bit weak at the knees. He suddenly looked over at Meng Hao.

Seeing the enigmatic smile on Meng Hao's face made him feel even more apprehensive.

However, as the saying goes, when you ride a tiger, it's hard to get off. That is exactly the situation Zhou Dekun found himself in. He obviously could not declare the man's words to be untrue. Therefore, he cleared his throat and nodded, not daring to say a word.

After bowing once more, the man named Yan turned to look back at the young man with the ancient air. “Fellow Daoist Hanxue, there's no need for any more analysis. To be able to lay eyes on a true Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy like Grandmaster Zhou is enough. From the medicinal pill just now, I was able to confirm that Grandmaster Zhou's Dao of alchemy is incomparable. Of this I am certain.”

The young man smiled. “Grandmaster Yan, there's no need to underestimate yourself in such a fashion. Although I don't understand much about the great path that is the Dao of alchemy, I do know that victories can only be determined by means of fighting. Furthermore, I haven't been back to this place for many years, and would love to reminisce a bit. Grandmaster Yan, why not engage in an alchemy duel with this Grandmaster Zhou?” He made no attempt to conceal the ancientness which emanated out of him. As he spoke, he looked around

slowly, and by the time he finished, his gaze had come to rest in the direction of the four Grand Elders, whereupon he said, “Well, you’ve grown up.”

The words caused the faces of everyone in the square to flicker. The appearance of these three people had been far too sudden, especially considering that the old man was clearly a Western Desert Cultivator. Holy Snow City had long since adjusted their invisible protective spell formation so that totem Cultivators could not enter.

And yet, these three people had approached with the greatest ease, in front of the eyes of the hundreds of Cultivators present.

That, in addition to the words of the man named Yan, caused strange expressions to appear on everyone’s faces. These three people suddenly seemed to be veiled in even more mystery.

And then came the words of the young man. The Frigid Snow Clan Elders suddenly looked very serious, especially First Elder. The instant the young man had appeared, his expression had been strange, even anxious. His eyes shone with disbelief.

As for the other three Elders, they looked suspiciously at the young man. This was because they were able to sense some of the Qi of their Clan on him.

“You....” said First Elder, panting.

Meanwhile, the man named Yan shook his head. Obviously he didn’t agree with the young man’s suggestion. Ignoring the shock on the faces of the surrounding Cultivators regarding the young man, he once again clasped hands and bowed deeply to Zhou Dekun.

“Grandmaster Zhou, I believe that there is no reason for us to compete in alchemy. However, I do have a tiny favor to ask.” He clasped hands and bowed reverently. “Would you please produce that pill you just concocted and allow me to bask in its glory? What do you say?!”

Zhou Dekun’s heart was pounding. He kept a smile plastered on his face, but inside, he was on the verge of tears. “Uh... which pill are you

talking about?”

Meng Hao coughed lightly, but didn't say anything.

Chapter 362: Still Won't Believe

Yan waited for a long time, but seeing Zhou Dekun's lack of even a nod, he finally clasped hands and bowed once again. His voice filled with sincerity, he said, "Grandmaster Zhou, I'm aware that such a request is a bit boorish. However, considering our mutual affection for the great Dao of alchemy, I am willing to trade one of the pills I personally concocted, just to be able to gaze upon that pill of yours."

His Cultivation base was at the Nascent Soul stage, so for him to bow to Zhou Dekun in such a way showed the depth of his sincerity, as well as his devotion to the Dao of alchemy.

Everyone watching was of the opinion that for Zhou Dekun to not produce the pill for the man to look at would be extremely egotistical. After all, the man had made a polite request, and only wished to look at the pill. He was even willing to offer up payment to be able to do so.

Zhou Dekun's face was turning pale, and he was about to speak when Yan frowned.

"Grandmaster Zhou," he said earnestly, "I merely wish to look at the pill. Will you really refuse such a simple request? Grandmaster Zhou, please, fear not. I would never go back on my word! I only wish to look at it!"

Meng Hao blinked, but didn't say anything. A faint smile twitched at the corners of his mouth, and he looked a bit embarrassed.

Anyone else who was bowed to so many times would feel honored. However, with each bow, Zhou Dekun's heart filled with more trepidation.

Gnashing his teeth, he decided to throw caution to the wind. Things had already proceeded to the point where he couldn't control the matter any more. He smacked his bag of holding to produce the pill he had just concocted, which he then threw over to Yan.

Yan's eyes flashed with excitement as he caught the pill with both hands. He looked down excitedly, filled with his love of the Dao of alchemy. He took a deep breath, closing his eyes to settle himself and

place himself in the optimal state of mind. He looked as earnest as someone about to go on a holy pilgrimage.

At the same moment as he had gazed earnestly at the pill, the young man from their group of three, the one who had provoked such a nervous reaction from the Frigid Snow Clan's four Grand Elders, glanced around musingly.

"I can still sense father's Qi," he said with a smile. "It seems he's not dead after all. Although, his Qi couldn't possibly be any weaker. It seems that my father is still asleep."

These words didn't provoke any reaction from First Elder, but the faces of the other three immediately changed. They suddenly remembered an event which had occurred a very long time ago, a subject which was taboo within the Clan.

"Hanxue Zong!" said First Elder gratingly, staring angrily at the young man. 1

His words echoed out, booming in the ears of the three other Elders and stabbing into the hearts of the other Clan members. They gaped in astonishment and disbelief, apparently all recalling some particular matter.

Suddenly a great commotion arose among the Frigid Snow Clan Cultivators.

"Hanxue Zong? That guy.... I remember! In the Clan histories there is a record of a Chosen of the Frigid Snow Clan from one thousand years ago. His name was Hanxue Zong!"

"There was such a person! According to the Clan histories, he was incomparably evil, even cannibalistic! He reached the Nascent Soul stage in less than one hundred years, and then began to absorb the life force and Cultivation base of his own father Hanxue Bao, who was one of the two Spirit Severing Patriarchs in the Clan at the time!"

"I remember that too. However, the Clan histories didn't say what happened to Hanxue Zong after he was defeated. Didn't Patriarch Hanxue

Bao kill him?”

All the other Cultivators who were present heard and were shocked. Meng Hao's eyes glittered. If what the Frigid Snow Clan members said was true, then the young man with the ancient voice was someone truly to be feared.

The young man laughed. “I've been away for so long, I never imagined the Clan would remember me.” His eyes glittered brightly as his gaze fell upon Zhou Dekun.

Zhou Dekun's face was unsightly. He actually didn't care a bit about the gaze of the young man; his heart was like a pile of ashes as he continuously sighed. The reason for this, of course, was because of the strange look on the face of the Yan Cultivator.

It started out as one of incredulity, then perplexity, and finally disbelief. His body began to tremble.

“I'm finished, finished....” thought Zhou Dekun bitterly. His heart was trembling.

The man name Yan suddenly took a deep breath and slowly looked back up at Zhou Dekun.

“That Pill....” began Zhou Dekun. Before he could continue, however, Yan once again clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Grandmaster Zhou, sir, my Dao of alchemy does not compare to yours. However, there is really no need to produce some other medicinal pill with the intention of shaming me.” His tone was cool, but deep in his heart he was furious. “I know that you didn't concoct this medicinal pill, Grandmaster Zhou. Why would you embarrass me with something so shoddy!?”

“I...” said Grandmaster Zhou, feeling even more anxious. He was about to try to explain, but was cut off.

“Grandmaster Zhou, I only want to take a look at that one medicinal pill. If you're not willing to show it to me, then would you at least concoct a new pill for me to take a look at? Grandmaster Zhou, I plead with you to

fulfill my wish!” He continued to suppress the anger he felt at heart. His desire to personally see such a medicinal pill caused him to once again clasp hands and bow.

In his heart, Zhou Dekun was cursing. He was filled with despair, and wanted to yell out, ‘that is the pill I concocted!’

However, everyone was looking at him, including the four Grand Elders. Even more importantly, the two young women behind him were also watching on.

In addition, the surrounding Cultivators were now starting to throw out words of encouragement.

“Grandmaster Zhou, why not let this outsider look at your medicinal pill? Let him know how awesome our Black Lands alchemists are!”

“Yeah, that’s right, Grandmaster Zhou! Teach this guy a lesson, show him that you’re a true Grandmaster!”

“Grandmaster Zhou, make this Eastern Lands Cultivator’s wish come true! Show him what it really means to be a Grandmaster!”

Once voice after another rang out. Normally, such words would cause Zhou Dekun to feel quite smug. Right now, however, they made him want to weep.

“I... I....” In his heart, Zhou Dekun was letting loose a torrent of curses, but on the outside, he was smiling. However, his smiling face looked much more unsightly than a crying one. When he looked over and saw Meng Hao gazing at him with a bashful smile, he felt like he couldn’t take it any more. It was then that he suddenly realized that Meng Hao’s embarrassed grin looked very familiar. However, because of his nervousness, he didn’t have time to consider the matter.

Gritting his teeth, Zhou Dekun slapped his bag of holding and retrieved the best pill he had ever concocted in the Southern Domain. He threw it over to the man named Yan.

Yan immediately caught it. After studying it for a moment he frowned. He was losing control of his rage, and it was now seeping onto his face.

His body was also starting to tremble.

“Grandmaster Zhou, there’s no need to repeatedly insult me! Your Dao of alchemy may be incredible, but these second-rate pills you keep producing are nothing compared to the pill from earlier. Have you reached such a level that you refuse to produce pills that you yourself have concocted?! Do I, Yan, really not qualify to even look at your medicinal pills? Grandmaster Zhou, to be so overbearing is really going overboard!! I... I just want to look at that medicinal pill. Why can’t you just do me this one little favor!?”

Yan was extremely frustrated. The favor he had asked was not a very big one was it...? Finally, he suppressed his anger, and once again clasped hands and bowed. “Grandmaster Zhou, again, I plead with you to grant my wish. This is the last time I will ask.”

This last bow was the straw that broke the camel’s back. Zhou Dekun was on the verge of collapse. Panting, he suddenly exploded in a fury: “Favor! Favor!? All you want is a favor!? I’ve given you my medicinal pills. You can see that I concocted them myself! My Dao of alchemy is only average. What’s it to you?! That’s how I am. The pill you were looking at before wasn’t concocted by me! That guy concocted it!!” He pointed at Meng Hao. “That was his pill!! You think you’re pissed off? I’m even more pissed off than you!! You’re the one who made the mistake! If you want to look at that pill from before, then ask that guy!”

Zhou Dekun flicked his sleeve. His face was ashen and filled with rage as he turned to leave. His heart was pounding as he scrambled to come up with a way to salvage the situation.

The man named Yan stared in shock, then spun to look at Meng Hao.

It wasn’t just him. Everyone, including the four Grand Elders, and the hundreds of surrounding Cultivators, all slowly turned to look at Meng Hao. All eyes were now glued on him and him alone.

Most of the gazes were filled with shock and incredulity.

“Whether or not you concocted that pill doesn’t matter,” said Yan to Zhou Dekun. “Events today have reached the point that an alchemy duel is

required in order to prove who is the alchemist that I so revere!" His glare shifted from Meng Hao to Zhou Dekun.

"Grandmaster Zhou," he continued earnestly. "After I defeat this guy, I hope that you will no longer humiliate me, but will allow me to look at that pill." Without looking at Meng Hao, he lifted his right hand up, and a pill furnace appeared.

Zhou Dekun was on the verge of tears. Even after everything that had happened, he didn't understand why this man just wouldn't believe him. Perhaps the act he had put on before had simply been too convincing. The man apparently really did believe that he was looking down on him.

Meng Hao cleared his throat and then hesitantly said, "Oh, I'm sorry, I'm not a local alchemist. I just lost a match to Grandmaster Zhou, and was told to leave the city. I'm afraid I can't compete with you in alchemy." He sighed, looking apologetic.

Hearing this, Zhou Dekun's face immediately fell, and he began to howl inwardly with anguish. "You're my ancestor, alright? My ancestor! Can you just not do this to me...."

Second Elder, the one who had previously demanded that Meng Hao leave the city, now looked angrily over toward Zhou Dekun. 'Why can't you just take out the medicinal pill, Grandmaster Zhou,' he thought. 'Why cause all this trouble?'

*

1. Hanxue Zong's name in Chinese is 寒雪纵 hán xuě zòng – Hanxue is the name of the Clan, which means Frigid Snow. Zong means "vertical".

Chapter 363: A First Glimpse at the Five Elements

Inwardly, Zhou Dekun was constantly cursing, although he wasn't sure exactly who he should be cursing. He was filled with consternation and regret.

The man named Yan frowned. He was starting to think that this Holy Snow City was really annoying. All he wanted to do was take a look at that medicinal pill. And yet after all this time, he hadn't been able to lay eyes on it for even a second.

Face grim, he turned slowly to look at the young man.

Hanxue Zong had been watching everything that was happening. He gave a slight smile, and then his body flickered; a moment later, he was standing directly in front of Zhou Dekun.

First Elder suddenly said, "Hanxue Zong, I don't know why you're not dead yet, but...."

"But what?" he said with a laugh, cutting off First Elder. "The reason I'm not dead is because the old man was soft-hearted. However, his soft-heartedness hasn't influenced my cultivation. I have nothing to do with the Frigid Snow Clan now. I'm a vassal of the Five Moons Tribe of the Western Desert, and I'm responsible for eradicating Holy Snow City! Furthermore, I've heard of this Grandmaster Zhou, and I'm interested in seeing for myself what his Dao of alchemy is like."

The surrounding Cultivators immediately broke out into an uproar. The four Grand Elders' faces were unsightly. After all, the old man among the group of three was at the great circle of the late Nascent Soul stage. His Qi was threatening to the extreme, causing great pressure to bear down on everyone.

"Oh, don't worry," said Hanxue Zong with a slight smile. "Nobody understands Holy Snow City and its resources better than me. But I'm not here today to fight. I just want to see this Grandmaster Zhou in an

alchemy duel! The stakes are a grand bit of luck! Or maybe you could say the difference between life and death. Whoever wins, I promise that the Western Desert Cultivators won't attack the city for three months. That should give you plenty of time to prepare. Although, if you refuse, well...." It was at this point that shouts suddenly rang out from beyond the city walls. Prismatic beams of light shone in the air as a sea of wild animals appeared.

Spell formations glittered in the sky, surrounding everything with an intense pressure.

The Cultivators in the square were all shocked by the sight. Everyone in all of Holy Snow City looked up, minds reeling. The four Grand Elders' faces were extremely unsightly.

Hanxue Zong's appearance meant that all their previous preparations were now flawed. They would definitely need time to make adjustments. They weren't sure why he was giving them three months' time, but even if it was a trap, the Frigid Snow Clan had no choice but to leap into it. They needed those three months.

Hanxue Zong laughed as he looked at the Frigid Snow Clan Grand Elders. "However, it seems circumstances are a bit different now. Grandmaster Zhou isn't willing to produce his medicinal pill. If Mr. Yan is willing, then why not first have a little competition with this youngster. That way, Grandmaster Zhou will be able to see if Mr. Yan's Dao of alchemy can be taken seriously."

First Elder looked a bit embarrassed, and was already quite irritated at Zhou Dekun. Second Elder was thinking the same thing. They had taken Zhou Dekun at face value, and determined that he was truly a Grandmaster. But now, it seemed he wasn't willing to show off any of his skill, and was instead pushing someone else to do so.

They weren't sure how to handle the situation.

First Elder frowned as he considered the situation. Finally, he sighed and looked over at Meng Hao. "Young friend, we would like to request that you concoct a pill. Regarding the matter of the Frigid Snow Larva, we can

renegotiate after the current matter is settled. What do you say?”

Meng Hao smiled. He really didn't want to cause Zhou Dekun to lose face. But as far as anyone else was concerned, he wouldn't hesitate to humiliate anyone when it came to the Dao of alchemy, especially some self-proclaimed Eastern Lands alchemist.

So, he responded to First Elder with a nod.

Before he could even finish nodding, a flash of irritation could be seen on Yan's face. Obviously, he thought Grandmaster Zhou suspected his Dao of alchemy and wanted to use this method to probe him out.

With a cold harrumph, Yan glanced over Meng Hao and then looked back toward Zhou Dekun. With clasped hands, he said, “I am Yan Song, of Mount Alchemy in the Eastern Lands.” This, of course, was the formal introduction before an alchemy duel. However, despite competing with Meng Hao, Yan Song obviously took it as a duel with Zhou Dekun. 1

Zhou Dekun gave a bitter laugh in his heart. He was even more nervous and perturbed now. As far as he was concerned, everything on this day was a huge misunderstanding. However, there was no way to resolve the issue now.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as usual. Seeing that this was an official alchemy duel, he took a deep breath and was about to introduce himself in the formal way when Yan Song flicked his wide sleeve.

“There's no need for you to speak,” he said. “I'm not interested in your name or where you're from. Just make the best medicinal pill you can make, alright?”

The disregard made Meng Hao frown.

Yan Song lifted up his hand, hovering above which was a pill furnace. Suddenly a flame emerged from his palm. This was no ordinary flame, but rather Nascent Soul fire. Only Nascent Soul Cultivators with a Fire-type Nascent Soul can produce such a flame.

The flame was reddish-orange and sent ripples out through the air. It took only a moment for the pill furnace hovering above his palm to turn

bright red. Yan Song slapped his bag of holding to produce several small white bags, each of which was filled with various powders.

He measured out various portions of powder and then fed them into the pill furnace. Meng Hao narrowed his eyes at the sight of this, and Zhou Dekun took a deep breath.

“He’s not concocting pills with plants....”

“In Mount Alchemy in the Eastern Lands, we don’t concoct pills with plants,” said Yan Song coolly. “We use the five elements as the foundation. By procuring objects which conform to the five elements, then reducing them to powder, we can use the power of the five elements to concoct pills. This is the true great path of the Dao of alchemy!” His pill furnace began to emit intense rumbling sounds. Suddenly, dark clouds began to gather in the sky above and peals of thunder rang out.

Zhou Dekun’s heart began to race with alarm. It was obvious that the clouds up above were Pill Tribulation!

The surrounding Cultivators were shocked, and the four Grand Elders were breathing raggedly. They didn’t understand much about the Dao of alchemy, but they had heard of Pill Tribulation. To see it with their own eyes caused their hearts to tremble.

Yan Song glanced up proudly at the Tribulation. “In the Eastern Lands, we don’t worry about Pill Tribulation. In fact, inducing Pill Tribulation lets us harness the power of lightning, allowing the full power of the five elements to be unleashed!” As he spoke, booming sounds filled the air as multiple bolts of lightning shot down toward the pill furnace. In the blink of an eye, the lightning bolts merged together into a massive sheet of lightning

Yan Song lifted his head up and howled. He slapped the pill furnace with his left hand, causing the lid to open. A six-colored medicinal pill flew out, which Yan Song grabbed. Immediately, the clouds up above dissipated. However, the lightning continued to fall downward, slamming into the ground around Yan Song, making him look completely shocking.

“Unfortunately, the process was a bit rushed,” said Yan Song, glancing

over at Meng Hao. “The end result is not the best it could be.” He then looked at Zhou Dekun, his eyes flashing, as if he were throwing down the proverbial gauntlet.

Zhou Dekun maintained his noble visage, but his heart was trembling violently.

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered in thought for a moment. Then, he waved his right hand to produce a pill furnace.

Yan Song glanced at Meng Hao’s pill furnace, and his previous tranquil expression began to fill with a proud aura. This was a look he hadn’t displayed when interacting with Zhou Dekun. Now that he was dealing with Meng Hao, however, he naturally acted differently.

However, after looking at the pill furnace for a moment, a look of surprise flitted across Yan Song’s face momentarily. This was the pill furnace Meng Hao had acquired in the Black Sieve Sect, the Ten Thousand Refinements furnace. 2

The instant Zhou Dekun saw the pill furnace, his mind began to spin. He had seen a Ten Thousand Refinements furnace before that looked almost exactly like the one Meng Hao currently held in his hand. When it came to pill furnaces, to find two that looked exactly the same, especially a Ten Thousand Refinements furnace, might not be a common occurrence, but wasn’t impossible.

Zhou Dekun hesitated for a moment and then suppressed his suspicions.

As for Meng Hao, his eyes glittered as he hefted the pill furnace in his right hand. Inside of him, the East Pill Everburning Flame kindled to life and then emerged to fill his palm. The flame itself was invisible, but the air around Meng Hao’s hand twisted and distorted.

The sight of it caused Yan Song’s eyes to narrow. For the first time, a look of doubt appeared on his face.

Based on an alchemist’s concocting technique, it was possible to get a vague impression of his Dao of alchemy. Yan Song could instantly see that

Meng Hao's techniques were beyond ordinary. That was especially true of the intangible flame which Meng Hao wielded. His heart filled with shock.

"That flame...." he thought. His heart filled with hesitation.

It was not the first time that Zhou Dekun saw Meng Hao's invisible flame, but this time, he examined it more closely than the before. After detailed examination, his heart began to flutter. However, his face was still plastered with the same enigmatic expression. He sported a slight, along with a look of commendation, as if watching someone of the junior generation concoct pills made him very happy.

The look on his face made everyone in the audience feel reassured that everything that was happening was all part of Zhou Dekun's plan, and that he really felt it beneath his dignity to let Yan Song look at his medicinal pill.

Inwardly, Zhou Dekun sighed. He felt bitter and nervous, and yet, also a bit proud. What he didn't notice was that Hanxue Zong was looking at him with an expression of intense interest.

Meanwhile, after a moment's thought, Meng Hao slapped his bag of holding to produce a medicinal plant. As soon as it appeared, he crushed it into a powder and fed it into the pill furnace.

For him to do so with only one medicinal plant was nothing special. However, Meng Hao subsequently pulled out one medicinal plant after another. Each one he crushed up into a powder before placing it into the pill furnace. This caused Yan Song to frown, and then smile coldly.

"So you want to imitate my five elements method of pill concoction," said Yan Song coolly. "Well, I think you really overestimate your capabilities. You might be good at concocting pills, but when it comes to my five elements concoction method, unless your skill in the Dao of alchemy exceeds mine, then you will never succeed!" However, as soon as he looked at Zhou Dekun, his heart began to pound. Zhou Dekun's expression was one of complete calm. His profoundly mysterious aura made Yan Song suddenly feel a bit uncertain.

Chapter 364: The Last Main Ingredient!

Meng Hao's expression was calm as he began to use the Alchemy Dao Transmutation Incantation 1. In the blink of an eye, the flame in his palm split into two sections. Deep inside of him, a vast array of various medicinal pill variations flitted about. He began to make adjustments, and as he did, the pill furnace slowly began to turn bright red.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he repeatedly performed various incantation gestures with his hand and then pushed onto the pill furnace. Every time he touched it, the pill furnace would rumble, and loud cracking sounds could be heard from within. Soon, a medicinal aroma began to emanate out. Strangest of all, almost as soon as the aroma emanated out, people tried to smell it, but couldn't!

The aroma was right there in front of them, but they couldn't smell it! This bizarre phenomenon caused all of the surrounding Cultivators' expressions to change. The four Grand Elders stared with wide eyes.

"What's going on? What pill is this guy concocting? You can sense that there's a medicinal aroma, but it's like it doesn't exist at all!"

"What a bizarre pill. This alchemist may be young, but obviously can't be looked down upon."

"Ah, it's not a big deal. It's probably some kind of illusion magic. Just look at Grandmaster Zhou, he obviously knows what's going on."

Zhou Dekun was inwardly dumbstruck, but without even thinking about it, he smiled, as if all of this was part of his strategy. He seemed to be offering his praise to a member of the junior generation.

He had practiced this expression to the point where the proverbial furnace flame had grown green. It had reached the pinnacle of perfection. At this point, it was as if Mt. Tai was crumbling in front of his very eyes, but even as it did, he calmly let everyone know that it was his doing.

This was one of the reasons he had been able to rise to prominence in the Black Lands. By being able to display an expression like this without

even thinking about it, he left all onlookers scared stiff.

Yan Song's expression was one of extreme concentration as he gazed at Meng Hao's pill furnace. Slowly, his eyes began to fill with disbelief.

"That's... Self-Contained Pill Aroma! The pill is not yet complete, so the aroma of the pill is illusory. It emanates out for the purpose of absorbing the spiritual energy of Heaven and Earth! Everyone can sense it, but are unable to actually smell it! This is a realm of pill concocting that exists in legend! This guy..." The more Yan Song thought about it, the more shocked he became. He glanced over at Zhou Dekun. Seeing the man's deep, unfathomable expression caused his heart to pound.

"Just how profound is this Zhou Dekun's Dao of alchemy?" he thought.

As the onlookers continued to be overwhelmed with shock, Meng Hao waved his left hand to produce some more medicinal plants. This time, he did not crush them into powder, but rather, collected sap, twigs, and the like, which he then fed into the pill furnace. The red glow of the pill furnace grew even more intense. Soon, an hour had passed, whereupon Meng Hao finally slapped the pill furnace.

A booming sound filled the air, causing everyone to assume that the pill was finally fully concocted. It was at this time that the ground began to tremble, and suddenly, something like a screaming wind kicked up. However, it only took a moment for everyone to realize that this was no wind!

It was spiritual energy!

All of the spiritual energy in Holy Snow City began to rush in, forming something like a massive vortex.

The nucleus of this raging vortex of spiritual energy was none other than the pill furnace in Meng Hao's hand.

"This...." First Elder strode forward slowly, panting. He had never before heard of such an upheaval of spiritual energy occurring because of pill concoction.

The other Grand Elders watched on dumbstruck, filled with shock. The

other Frigid Snow Clan members, including Hanxue Shan, all watched on with expressions of disbelief.

Everyone was equally shocked, including the hundreds of other Cultivators that made up the audience. Their breaths came in ragged pants, and soon, a buzz of conversation filled the air.

“Can pill concocting really cause such an influx in spiritual energy? What... what pill is this?”

“Just what pill is he concocting, exactly? This is almost completely unbelievable!”

As the conversations filled the air, Zhou Dekun continued to watch on proudly. He even lifted up his hand to slowly stroke his beard, exuding a look of admiration. It seemed as if the incredible goings-on were all meticulously planned by he himself.

Of course, inside, Zhou Dekun’s heart wouldn’t stop racing, and he was on the verge of screaming.

“Inhuman,” he thought. “Bizarre! I never imagined that there could be someone besides Fang Mu who is such a freak when it comes to the Dao of alchemy. Just what exactly is he doing? What pill is he concocting...?” As his nervousness grew, his look of pride and complacency continued to emanate out.

When people saw his expression, Yan Song included, it only served to increase his standing in their eyes.

“There’s no Pill Tribulation,” thought Yan Song, looking up into the sky. “This medicinal pill seems shocking, but actually isn’t that amazing.” He felt a little bit better because of this.

It was at this point that Meng Hao casually said, “Ladies and Gentleman, I’m afraid you’ll have to wait just a little bit longer. This pill is still lacking the final important ingredient.” The pill furnace was bright crimson, and the air around it twisted and distorted. Vast amounts of spiritual energy continued to pour in from all directions, sucked into the pill furnace. It was so bright now that it looked like Meng Hao was holding a small sun in

his hand.

As of this moment, Meng Hao looked wildly impressive.

The audience was instantly astonished.

“It’s missing the final main ingredient? What’s that supposed to mean? Why doesn’t he just put the final ingredient in right now?”

“Something seems off. Could it be that he’s waiting for someone to come deliver the final ingredient?”

The four Grand Elders frowned in confusion and then looked over at Zhou Dekun.

It wasn’t just them. Yan Song looked over at him with complete perplexity.

In addition, Hanxue Zong, as well as the late Nascent Soul stage Cultivator, who hadn’t spoken a single word so far, were both looking at Zhou Dekun.

Zhou Dekun gave an indifferent smile as he continued to stroke his beard. He looked calm and enigmatic, as if he were enjoying watching his plans play out. His ability to project this air of superiority really had been perfected to the limit.

Inside, though, he was nervously cursing everything including Heaven, Earth, and even the audience. Two alchemists had appeared, each one seemingly more inhuman than the other; and yet, everyone who was watching assumed that he was the strongest of all.

Only someone with quite a strong will would be able to prevent themselves from collapsing. Zhou Dekun cleared his throat. Everyone was looking at him, awaiting his explanation.

“Grandmaster Zhou, please clear things up for us.”

“Yeah! Grandmaster Zhou, what’s the final main ingredient that this guy needs for his concoction? Will it be here soon?”

Even Yan Song clasped hands toward Zhou Dekun and earnestly said, “Grandmaster Zhou, please clear up this confusion.”

“I’ll clear up your sister’s confusion! How the hell would I know what the final ingredient is!” Of course, this was merely what Zhou Dekun said in his heart. His face remained as proud as ever. He smiled slightly and looked up toward the sky.

“In my estimation,” he said, “the final ingredient is incredibly extraordinary in nature. It is simple, and yet mysterious. It is extraordinary in its ordinariness. The Dao of alchemy which requires such an ingredient is not something that the likes of you could understand. Since you can’t understand, why do you request an explanation?” Zhou Dekun maintained his air of superiority as he made this vague explanation. If everyone hadn’t already decided that he was an amazing Grandmaster, they would definitely take such an explanation to be poppycock.

However, because of their preconceptions, it actually seemed profound and enigmatic.

In fact, the reason Zhou Dekun looked up into the sky as he made his explanation was because he had the feeling whatever this final main ingredient was, if it was missing, that meant someone would have to deliver it. And if someone were to deliver it, they would definitely do so by flying over with it.

Even if it wasn’t delivered by someone via flight, he had another reason for looking up into the sky. Medicinal plants were a product of Heaven and Earth. Therefore, looking up toward the Heavens could not possibly be an incorrect strategy.

Meng Hao noticed what Zhou Dekun was doing, and suddenly got a strange feeling. All of a sudden he realized that Zhou Dekun was far more amusing in the Black Lands than he had been in the Violet Fate Sect.

Meng Hao also glanced up at the sky and then thought, “I’ve been here for about seven or eight days. According to my calculations, the time should be close. I shouldn’t have to wait much longer.” Even as he was thinking this, his expression suddenly changed. It was without hesitation that he slapped his bag of holding. The Li Clan Patriarch suddenly appeared, flung up high into the air.

A boom rang out as a lightning bolt shockingly appeared in the middle of the boundless blue sky. The deafening sound it made far exceeded that of the Pill Tribulation. It slammed down onto the Li Clan Patriarch, who instantly let out a miserable shriek. The lightning bolt immediately began to weaken, and before the Li Clan Patriarch could even begin to curse, Meng Hao put him back into his bag of holding. Then, he redirected the weakened lightning bolt directly into the pill furnace.

The final main ingredient Meng Hao had been waiting for was none other than Tribulation Lightning!

A boom echoed out of the pill furnace. The lightning danced, sending out shocking peals of deafening thunder. The pill furnace began to tremble, and then the lid flew off of it. A medicinal pill shot out, which was surrounded by lightning.

The instant the pill appeared, the sky filled with dense black clouds. These were not Tribulation clouds, but rather naturally occurring ones. It seemed as if this medicinal pill could attract natural thunder and lightning. Up above, the clouds roiled, causing the very earth to quake.

The medicinal aroma which had been emanating out suddenly roiled and was sucked into the medicinal pill, congealing therein. The pill instantly turned translucent and began to emanate blinding light. It was clearly far beyond ordinary.

At the same time, all of the spiritual energy in the area surged like tidewaters. The pill seemed to suddenly give birth to a huge vortex that sucked in all of the spiritual energy. The thunder from up above grew even louder.

Just as it seemed that the lightning was about to begin falling, Meng Hao reached out and grabbed the lightning-covered medicinal pill. He gave it a close look and then nodded.

This was the first time he had attempted to concoct something like this. After seeing Yan Song use his five elements concocting technique, he had been inspired to fuse that method with his own. Although he hadn't completely succeeded, it had opened up a new branch of thought within

his mind.

“Using this method to concoct pills actually leads to better results,” he thought. “Furthermore, the variations within the five elements make it possible to concoct pills according to the theory of creating something from nothing....” With a final glance at the pill, he looked calmly over at Yan Song.

Everyone in the audience was panting, including the four Grand Elders. They stared at the pill surrounded by lightning, as did all of the hundreds of Cultivators in the square.

Yan Song was watching on, stupefied. When Meng Hao had started his concocting, Yan Song had looked down on him. But as the process continued, his attitude gradually changed. When the illusory pill aroma appeared, astonishment took root in his heart. By the time the spiritual energy of Heaven and Earth began to surge toward it, he was thoroughly shaken. When the lightning appeared, he was positively, absolutely stunned.

His breathing was ragged and his eyes wide as he stared at the medicinal pill and realized that the technique used to create it was above and beyond his own five elements concocting technique. This new technique was a true fusion.

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1. Meng Hao learned the Alchemy Dao Transmutation Incantation in chapter 242 , after he became a Furnace Lord.

Chapter 365: A Grand Scam

“That’s impossible! How could it be...? This guy....” Yan Song glanced subconsciously over at Zhou Dekun. If he hadn’t already come to the conclusion that the man was truly a Grandmaster, then at the moment, he would definitely be thinking that the true Grandmaster was actually Meng Hao.

Despite his certainty, he was still shaken. After hearing Zhou Dekun’s words just now, it was hard to tell... whether he had planned all of this or whether it just happened because he had been embarrassed by Yan Song.

Yan Song wasn’t the only person looking at him in this light. The Cultivators in the audience, the four Grand Elders, and the former Frigid Snow Clan member Hanxue Zong were all inwardly moved by Zhou Dekun.

As they all looked over at him, what they saw was his cool, indifferent smile, and his expression of praise. He was clearly concerned about the member of the junior generation, which caused everyone to gape in astonishment.

His proud bearing, which exuded the air of a Grandmaster, caused everyone to muse about how Zhou Dekun truly was at the peak of the Dao of alchemy.

Even Yan Song was hesitating now. Zhou Dekun’s performance was really too perfect. In fact, it even caused Meng Hao to feel surprised. If he didn’t personally know Zhou Dekun, then even he would have been fooled.

Zhou Dekun’s tranquil smile actually covered up the quavering of his heart. Inwardly, he was filled with shock and astonishment. How could he ever have possibly imagined that what Meng Hao was waiting for was a bolt of lightning?

“He used lightning as his final main ingredient for the pill?” he thought. “He’s inhuman! A freak! He’s even more of an aberration than Fang Mu!” However, the more his heart trembled, the calmer his face was. This skill

which he had been working on over the years in the Black Lands really had reached the acme. In fact, it was at such a level that sometimes he even convinced himself of his own marvelousness.

Most of the time, he was clearheaded about the matter, but right now, he was moaning inwardly. Because of his well-honed skill, he had gazed proudly up into the sky just now, an action which now caused the onlookers' eyes to suddenly realize what had happened.

"So, Grandmaster Zhou was looking up into the sky just now because he knew all along that lightning was the main ingredient!"

"That's right! I was wondering about that. Now it's really obvious that Grandmaster Zhou is a true Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy!"

Yan Song took a deep breath, and his face filled with a look of admiration. This was not to mention even the four Grand Elders, and Hanxue Zong of the Frigid Snow bloodline, who didn't really know much about the Dao of alchemy, but made their judgment of Zhou Dekun based on Yan Song's reaction.

"What pill is that?" asked Yan Song, a serious expression on his face. As of now, there was no look of contempt on his face. Meng Hao's medicinal pill had thoroughly proven the level of his Dao of alchemy. Yan Song was now very much interested in him, and even placed him on a similar level as Zhou Dekun.

Meng Hao smiled. "Just a simple pill that should be able to release a Lightning Sea." This was not the type of pill that you could consume, but rather more like a magic pill. Meng Hao had come to the realization that using the five elements concocting method was more effective when used to concoct magic pills.

Yan Song stood there thoughtfully for a moment. There was no need for him to examine the pill closely. Considering he had observed the concoction process as well as the final result, he was now able to tell without a doubt that Meng Hao's words were true.

This pill was something he himself couldn't concoct unless he got incredibly lucky and had lightning fall during the concoction process to

provide as the main ingredient!

In the past, he had seen lightning used to make pills, but it was usually just a shortcut used to improve the effectiveness of the five elements. It was nothing like what Meng Hao had done, in which he actually used lightning as the main ingredient.

The difference between the two made the superior and inferior completely obvious.

Zhou Dekun cleared his throat and then somberly said, "Excellent. That pill concocting technique of yours is very interesting. Going forward, you should put more thought into it. Perhaps you can open up a new path on the Dao of alchemy. When traversing the great road of the Dao of alchemy, one can never be complacent. Alchemy is boundless, and the Dao is infinite. We must maintain an inquisitive heart in order validate the great Dao of alchemy of Heaven and Earth!" His face was filled with the arrogance of seniority, as if he were a great master giving some pointers.

A strange expression was written on Meng Hao's face, like a smile, but not. Yan Song took a deep breath and then clasped hands and bowed to Zhou Dekun.

"Grandmaster Zhou, your words are the pinnacle of truth. I, Yan Song, am now thoroughly convinced. There is no need for me to look at that medicinal pill from before. I also understand why you are not willing to let me look at it. You feel that my Dao of alchemy is insufficient, and that looking at the pill would disturb my heart and mind. Grandmaster Zhou, I will remember your kindness for the rest of my life." Once again, he bowed with utmost sincerity.

Zhou Dekun's expression was as proud as ever as he smiled indifferently. This, in turn, caused the other onlookers to view him with even more admiration. The four Grand Elders now looked at Zhou Dekun with even more veneration.

All of this caused Meng Hao to stare in shock. He looked down at the pill in his hand, and then over at Zhou Dekun. He wasn't sure whether to

laugh or cry. The pill he had laboriously concocted was casually commented on by Zhou Dekun, and then everyone took his words at face value.

“Zhou Dekun really has mastered some new skills here in the Black Lands,” thought Meng Hao. As he gazed at the man, Zhou Dekun looked at him, and suddenly began to tremble inwardly. Then, he opened his mouth with the intention of offering some true praise toward Meng Hao.

However, it was at this moment that the late Nascent Soul Cultivator who stood next to Hanxue Zong suddenly shot toward Zhou Dekun.

The four Frigid Snow Grand Elders had been watching this man for some time now, so as soon as he made his move, they flew to intercept him.

They all slammed into each other, and a huge boom echoed out. Blood sprayed from the mouths of the four Grand Elders. The old man from the Western Desert trembled. Suddenly, he changed direction and shot toward Meng Hao.

The four Grand Elders fell back, flashing incantation gestures, after which they pointed toward Zhou Dekun. A glittering shield immediately surrounded him.

Zhou Dekun’s heart was quivering, and yet without even thinking about it consciously, he caused utter calm to remain on his face. He looked as supercilious as ever. Seeing this caused Hanxue Zong to feel even more excited. He also shot forward.

He moved with incredible speed, appearing instantaneously next to the shield protecting Zhou Dekun. He lifted his hand up and pressed gently down onto the shield; it instantly shattered into pieces. The four Grand Elders howled, and were about to charge forward when Hanxue Zong waved his right hand and swept them away. At the same time, his left hand snaked out to grab ahold of Zhou Dekun.

Zhou Dekun’s body suddenly trembled in fear, and he was about to scream.

“There’s no need to be alarmed, Grandmaster Zhou,” said Hanxue Zong. “I won’t hurt you, sir. I just feel that leaving a Grandmaster as talented as you in a place like this is a true waste. Come with me to the Western Desert. The tasks you will face won’t measure up to the requirements laid forth in this place. However, if you refuse, then I’ll be forced to help you understand what it means to live a life worse than death!”

Having been grabbed in this fashion, Zhou Dekun was no longer able to keep up the charade. His face was pale white, his body shivered, and intense fear filled his heart.

“This is a mistake!” he blurted. “It’s all a misunderstanding. My... my... my Dao of alchemy can’t even compare to his!” He raised a trembling hand to point at Meng Hao. “If you want to take someone, take him! If you take me, you’ll be losing out big time!”

A cold light appeared in Hanxue Zong’s eyes. “Grandmaster Zhou, you could see the lack of lightning as the main ingredient in that pill. Don’t think you can fool me with such words!”

“I’m... I’m really not that good!” shrieked Zhou Dekun, his heart sinking. “I swear! Look, everything I said was just empty talk, not some sort of absolute truth! Take him! He’s the actual Grandmaster! He can compare with my Junior Brother Fang Mu.... He’s exponentially more amazing than me!”

When Meng Hao saw the Nascent Soul Cultivator approaching, he used the Bloodburst Flash without hesitation, disappearing and then reappearing several dozen meters away.

“Eee?” said the Western Desert Cultivator. He was about to continue in pursuit when Hanxue Zong flew up into the air, clutching the trembling Zhou Dekun in hand.

“There’s no need to cause trouble for him,” said Hanxue Zong coolly. “We came here to invite only the most outstanding Cultivator to join us. Now that we have Grandmaster Zhou, that other guy is unessential.”

“I’m not the most outstanding!” cried Zhou Dekun, his scalp going numb. “Dammit, I’m really not, okay!? This is a mistake! A

misunderstanding! I was putting on an act just now. Really, it was an act! I'm not a Grandmaster, I'm just a regular old Furnace Lord from the East Pill division. That guy is the real Grandmaster. It's true, he's the Grandmaster. Take him, okay!?!?" He wished to weep, but no tears would come out. His deception had been too good and he had completely lost control of it.

He began to tremble and wail mournfully.

"There's no need to act this way, Grandmaster Zhou," said Hanxue Zong, laughing disapprovingly. "I was watching you this entire time, and couldn't possibly be mistaken. Whatever method you used, you were able to spot the clues and identify the final main ingredient. That, is true skill! I, Hanxue Zong, could not possibly be mistaken. You are the true Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy. The act you are putting on right now, unfortunately, is simply too fake!"

"Correct," said Yan Song. "From the moment I arrived until now, Grandmaster Zhou has been tuned in to all of the fine details, and has grasped each key moment. Whether it be the pill aroma or the lightning as the main ingredient, Grandmaster Zhou consistently had an expression of praise for the junior generation. Enlightenment regarding the Dao of alchemy is something that cannot be faked. I do not possess such skill, nor do other alchemists. Only Grandmaster Zhou has this skill. There are few people I truly admire, but as of today, there is one more on my list: Grandmaster Zhou!" With that, he clasped hands politely and bowed.

By this point, Zhou Dekun was actually wailing. He felt as if he were the one who had been scammed, not by others, but by himself.... The tears were welling up in his eyes. He looked down at the beautiful girls, and he already missed them. He thought about the barrenness of the Western Desert, and how frightening of a place it was, and he began to tremble and blabber more explanations.

"I'm really not a Grandmaster. I was in the wrong. Truly, in the wrong! I won't pretend to be a Grandmaster anymore. Take him, okay! You should take him! Dammit! He's the real Grandmaster...." Zhou Dekun's heart grew dark and filled with regret. It didn't matter what he said now, no one

would believe him.

“Quit the act, Grandmaster Zhou,” said Hanxue Zong, laughing. “Even if he is a Grandmaster, you, Grandmaster Zhou, are the very person I have been waiting for!” Holding Zhou Dekun in hand, he flew up into the air.

The Western Desert Nascent Soul Cultivator gave Meng Hao a final cold glance, then turned and flew up into the sky. It was at this point that suddenly, a voice filled all of Holy Snow City.

“Screw off!” The words caused Heaven and Earth to shake. The protective spell formations outside of the city fell to pieces as if a massive wind had blown across them. Up in the sky, ripples could clearly be seen that were emanating out from the ground beneath Holy Snow City. As they passed the city walls, they turned into a cyclone that instantly shredded into pieces all of the beasts and Cultivators who were waiting there. In the blink of an eye, everything in the area thousands of kilometers around Holy Snow City was gone.

As the ground quaked, the minds of all of the Cultivators in the city reeled, and their faces filled with shock.

Hanxue Zong’s face fell. The Nascent Soul Cultivator’s body trembled as he coughed up a mouthful of blood. His face filled with astonishment. Yan Song also coughed up some blood before he hastily shot up into the air.

“Let’s get out of here!” said Hanxue Zong, his eyes flickering grimly and keeping a firm grip on Zhou Dekun, whose face was stained with tears. Then, glowing light surrounded the four of them, and their bodies began to grow blurry as a teleportation spell activated.

“This is really a mistake, okay? I was really faking, I’m really not a Grandmaster! He is! He....” Zhou Dekun’s plaintive cries echoed out in the air. Down below, the hundreds of Cultivators watched on with looks of fury and helplessness.

“Grandmaster Zhou!!”

“Dammit, they came for Grandmaster Zhou!”

The faces of the four Elders were unsightly, but they could do nothing

but watch as Hanxue Zong and the others disappeared.

Zhou Dekun's cries fell upon the ears of all the onlookers, causing their hearts to fill with sorrow.

"Who would ever have thought that at the critical Moment, Grandmaster Zhou would try to put on such an act," they thought. "If we didn't know him, we might have thought his words to be true."

As for Meng Hao, he stared with wide eyes. Everything that had happened was completely beyond his powers of prediction.

"This time, I wasn't trying to scam anyone," he thought reflectively. "How could things have worked out this way? Maybe I've just scammed so many people, that I ended up scamming myself?"

Chapter 366: The Path of Five Colors

Gradually the land stopped shaking. The voice which had emanated from down below faded away, and silence fell upon Holy Snow City.

The crowds of people were gazing up into the sky at the spot where Zhou Dekun had disappeared. Everyone was taciturn, their moods low.

Grandmaster Zhou, the number one alchemist in the Black Lands, had been taken away as simply as that.

He would never return to the Holy Snow City that he loved so much. Perhaps he would end up in a new location, and would continue to build on his reputation as a Grandmaster....

This sudden event was something that no one present could ever have predicted.

Meng Hao looked thoughtfully up into the sky, contemplating what would have happened if he had prevailed in the alchemy duel with Zhou Dekun, or if Zhou Dekun had not acted so superior just now. Perhaps it wouldn't have been Zhou Dekun who was taken away but...

Meng Hao himself.

He stood there thoughtfully.

Around him, the hundreds of other Cultivators were similarly thoughtful. Too much had occurred here today, and everyone seemed incapable of absorbing it all.

Surrounded by quietness, Meng Hao slowly shook his head and glanced at Hanxue Shan, who had a blank expression on her face, and then the old woman, Third Elder. He clasped hands and bowed to her, then turned and slowly made to leave this world of silence.

As he was about to walk off, the surrounding Cultivators seemed to come to their senses. One by one, they turned to look at him.

The four Grand Elders also turned to look at him. Second Elder held his tongue, but Fourth Elder took a hesitant step forward. The old woman said

nothing.

First Elder, the midget, put a smile onto his face and strode forward. In a loud voice, he addressed Meng Hao: "Grandmaster, where are you going?"

Meng Hao stopped and looked back. "I'm surnamed Meng," he said. "Earlier, someone said that I wasn't welcome in Holy Snow City. Naturally, that means I need to leave." He sighed, shook his head, and turned to leave.

The words immediately caused the surrounding hundreds of Cultivators to feel shock in their hearts. How could they not react to such words? Before, when Zhou Dekun was present, they all looked down on Meng Hao. But Zhou Dekun was nothing but history now. Suddenly, Meng Hao's position was infinitely higher than before.

Without Zhou Dekun, there was no Grandmaster here. To Holy Snow City, such a loss was too vast!

First Elder glared angrily at Second Elder, then strode forward laughing to block Meng Hao's way.

Immediately, the surrounding Cultivators began to cry out to Meng Hao.

"Grandmaster Meng, what happened earlier was a misunderstanding. The Frigid Snow Clan was inconsiderate in its treatments of you as a guest. There's no need to bring it up again. Grandmaster, please in no way allow the misunderstanding to remain upon your heart."

"Yeah! Grandmaster Meng, you are at the pinnacle of the Dao of alchemy. There's no need for you to lower yourself to our level. This place is your home, Grandmaster Meng!"

"Grandmaster Meng, why not just stay? If you leave, your talent will never be noticed in the outside world. If you stay here, you can become even more famous!"

"Grandmaster Meng, we beg of you to stay!"

The voices of hundreds of Cultivators rose into the air, filled with sincerity and cordiality. Meng Hao immediately appeared moved. He

stopped walking, looked around at the surrounding Cultivators, and then clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“I am indebted to your kindness, Fellow Daoists. Generally, I, Meng, could never refuse. However... there are people here who don't like little old me. I'm afraid I have no choice but to leave.” His words caused Second Elder's face to immediately fall; he looked around to find quite a few people staring at him. Gritting his teeth, he strode forward a few paces and then clasped hands and bowed deeply to Meng Hao.

“Grandmaster Meng, please forgive me. I was wrong earlier, and I beg for you to not take offense. In my heart, you are truly at the pinnacle of the Dao of alchemy, Grandmaster. When the Frigid Snow Clan was in dire straits, you thought nothing of the hardships and ignored the danger, immediately coming to our aid. I will never forget your kindness, even when my teeth fall out from old age!

“First Elder,” he continued solemnly. “I suggest that we give Grandmaster Meng a Frigid Snow Larva. That is the only way to properly express the depth of the gratitude of the Frigid Snow Clan.”

“One is not enough!” said Fourth Elder. He was a grim-faced man, but he wore a smile now as he took a few steps forward and bowed deeply to Meng Hao with clasped hands. “One is definitely not enough. We currently have two on the verge of completion. We should give both of them to Grandmaster Meng, that would be the best. First Elder, I hope that you can agree. This is the only way to express the gratitude of the Clan. As for the larvae, as long as the Clan exists, and time is sufficient, we can always raise more.”

First Elder felt a bit anxious as he looked at Meng Hao. With Zhou Dekun gone, the only person they had left was this Grandmaster Meng. He gritted his teeth and said, “You are absolutely correct! Grandmaster Meng, please, fear not. The Frigid Snow Larva will be delivered into your hands within a year's time!”

Meng Hao was inwardly rejoicing, but on the outside he appeared to hesitate. This was something he had just learned to do from Zhou Dekun.

His hesitation caused the surrounding Cultivators to all call out, urging him to stay. Meng Hao continued to hesitate, and then started to shake his head. A second round of crying out then began, and finally he appeared to be vacillating.

“It’s not that I don’t want to stay,” he said with a sigh. “But this place is very dangerous. My Cultivation base is low, and I’m afraid I won’t be powerful enough to protect myself.... Furthermore, I can only stay here for about half a year. There’s simply no way I can stay an entire year.”

First Elder and the others exchanged glances. Finally, the old woman spoke up, looking at Meng Hao with a strange expression. “If the four of us work together, we can reduce the time by more than half. We can produce the Frigid Snow Larva in less than half a year.”

“After you have the Frigid Snow Larva, Grandmaster Meng, you can simply leave,” said First Elder. “We won’t do anything to stop you.”

Many of the Cultivators in the audience were continuing to call out to Meng Hao, urging him to stay. Considering that there were so many solemn requests, Meng Hao finally reluctantly agreed. This caused vast amounts of respectful words of thanks to ring out.

It was in this manner that Meng Hao ended up staying in Holy Snow City. It was also how he became famous there. Regardless of outside Cultivators or Frigid Snow Clan members, the name of Grandmaster Meng resounded in their ears like thunder.

Were it not for Zhou Dekun’s presence in the city earlier, it would not have been so easy for them to accept him, nor to view him with such importance.

Thankfully, Zhou Dekun had laid a strong foundation, and had caused everyone in the city to develop a healthy respect for the Dao of alchemy. The fanaticism with which the locals viewed alchemists made the Frigid Snow Clan members accept Meng Hao with complete courtesy.

It was only logical under such circumstances for Meng Hao to take the foundation Zhou Dekun had built up and make it completely his own.

If poor Zhou Dekun knew what was happening, he would surely cough up several mouthfuls of blood and be filled with endless regret. He would certainly sigh and think about how it's impossible to constantly put on an act. Sadly, what he had worked so painstakingly to create, now belonged to Meng Hao.

However, Meng Hao also felt somewhat wronged. After all, he hadn't set out to achieve this situation; it was the result of a series of lucky coincidences. Everything had landed directly in front of him, and there had been no way to avoid it. It had just smacked right into him.

In the following days, almost all the Cultivators in the city were talking about Grandmaster Zhou. Meng Hao's residence was under special guard by Frigid Snow Clan members.

During this time, quite a few powerful Cultivators came to pay him a formal visit. They were all extremely polite. The way that Meng Hao dealt with them was very different than the mysterious vagueness that had been the hallmark of Zhou Dekun. Meng Hao would smile and give them actual pointers regarding the Dao of alchemy. With only a few words, he was able to cause the local Cultivators to instantly be lost in thought.

Half a month later, Meng Hao had thoroughly cemented his place within Holy Snow City. His name was even beginning to spread throughout the world outside the city walls.

As for the ninety meter tall Wild Giant, people already viewed it as Meng Hao's personal mount. The Western Desert Dragoneer was viewed as Meng Hao's footman.

Many of the Cultivators who planned to request pill concoction services from Meng Hao found out that he liked lotus flowers. As such, they spared no cost in searching a variety of locations to find lotuses for him. Soon, Meng Hao's courtyard was thoroughly festooned with snow lotuses, the aroma of which covered everything.

Regarding the Black Lands Palace invasion, as Hanxue Zong had promised, they truly would not make any military incursions for three months. This gave the Frigid Snow Clan a bit of a buffer period. As the

time slipped by, more protective spell formations were erected. All of the Cultivators in the city were mobilized by the Frigid Snow Clan as they strengthened the various districts of the city.

Only Meng Hao was relatively idle. Most of the time, he sat in meditation by the lotus plants. Occasionally he would take out some Celestial soil, and the magical symbols within, to study. Other times he would call Gu La over to examine his totem tattoos.

As far as the lightning which would occasionally fall down from the sky, Meng Hao was completely used to it. He now had a fearsome instinct when it came to sensing its approach. Of course, the Li Clan Patriarch was constantly shrieking and cursing. However, as time passed, his soul embodiment was gradually becoming more resistant to the lightning.

According to Meng Hao's analysis, the Li Clan Patriarch was already transforming into a Soul of Lightning.

In terms of everything, Meng Hao's greatest gain had to do with the Celestial soil symbols. He had been studying them from the moment he arrived in the Black Lands. It was finally at this point that he started to pick out some of the clues.

"These Celestial soil symbols are very similar to totems. I can determine with eighty percent certainty, that the so-called Celestial talisman... was actually a primordial totem!" Breathing heavily, he stared down at the Celestial talismanic paper in his hand, and his eyes began to glow.

"All of my research down to this moment points toward totems!" he thought, his eyes flickering. He closed his eyes for a long moment and then opened them. "The reason I'm so incredibly interested in totems is because after the Heavenly Tribulation, the main conundrum I will face is how to achieve the Perfect Nascent Soul!

"Nascent Souls are divided into the five elements and colors. Four equates to Flawless, five is Perfect... If I could acquire the Gold Core manual of the Sublime Spirit Scripture, then I would be able to see how to successfully step from a Four Color Nascent Soul into a Perfect Nascent Soul. Unfortunately, the Gold Core manual has long since been lost...."

The glow in his eyes grew stronger.

“Other stages can’t even compare to the Nascent Soul stage. If you want to get Four Colors... it’s very difficult. Even I don’t know how to do so. However, the totems of the Western Desert, as well as the five elements pill concocting technique of Yan Song from the Eastern lands, have given me a new direction to explore.

“Whether or not I can succeed will be determined by further study and research. I need more Western Desert Cultivators so that I can study their totem tattoos. That’s the only way to reach a certain conclusion!” Meng Hao took a deep breath, and his eyes glittered with a cold aura.

Chapter 367: Meng, You Twerp, Do You Dare To Fight Me Or Not?!

Three months passed in a flash. During that time, Holy Snow City was a buzz of activity as everyone was mobilized in various preparations. Meanwhile, various momentous events occurred in the Black Lands. The name of the United Nine remained, but in reality, it no longer existed. Other than Holy Snow City, only one other remained: the City of Nets.

The City of Nets still survived because of its Spirit Severing Patriarch, as well as the favorable position they occupied. Furthermore, the city contained nearly ten thousand Cultivators. Because of its significant size, the Black Lands Palace focused most of its efforts there, leaving Holy Snow City alone for the time being.

Of course, Holy Snow City's geographical position had a lot to do with that as well, considering its remoteness, and the snow that covered the area year-round.

The once illustrious United Nine now consisted only of Holy Snow City and the City of Nets. All others had either been destroyed or evacuated. The greater part of the Black Lands now belonged to the Black Lands Palace.

There was actually a third area in the Black Lands that offered hindrance to the Black Lands Palace. That was the location formerly known as Dongluo City, but was now the Church of the Golden Light.

The Church of the Golden Light had risen to fame in all of the Black Lands during these three months. It had five thousand members, along with a shocking spell formation. For the moment, the Black Lands Palace had no choice but to retreat and allow the Church of the Golden Light to stay there.

As for the mysterious, enigmatic Patriarch Golden Light, he was even more famous in the Black Lands, and the legends about him multiplied.

By the end of the three months, the situation in the Black Lands was

volatile. It was at this time that the Black Lands Palace's army of Cultivators once again appeared outside of Holy Snow City, along with Western Desert Cultivators. The whole force consisted of several thousand Cultivators and over thirty thousand beasts.

This was no mere probe; it was full-scale war. The land was dotted with utilitarian war chariots which rumbled across the earth, propelled by the power of magic. The chariots bristled with sharp spikes, and emanated a bizarre light, seeming to indicate that they could burst out with shocking magical powers.

As for the more than thirty thousand ferocious beasts, they covered the land and sky in all directions.

Among the Cultivators, the weakest Cultivation base to be seen was Foundation Establishment. As for Core Formation, there were roughly five hundred in the force.

Such an enormous power was enough to shock the entire Black Lands. However, even more shocking was the fact that there wasn't one Nascent Soul Cultivator in the army, but four!

Obviously, the four Nascent Soul Cultivators were there to deal with the four Grand Elders of the Frigid Snow Clan. Two were from the Black Lands Palace, and wore silver masks, whereas two were from the Western Desert.

Spell shields surrounded Holy Snow City, formations that looked like screaming sheets of snow. There were also ten enormous star-shaped objects rotating in the sky high above the city, emanating countless strands of power.

Within the city, there were slightly more than a thousand Cultivators, including the members of the Frigid Snow Clan, a vast difference when compared to the outside forces. The Holy Snow City forces were split into four battle groups, tasked with guarding the city walls.

The faces of the Cultivators in the city were taut with anxiety. They felt nervous, but none of them fled. The four Grand Elders took charge of different areas of the cities. Their faces were also filled with anxiety.

Meng Hao left his courtyard and made his way to one of the city walls. He looked out at the dark mass that was the enemy force. He had observed large scale battles before, but this would be his first time seeing one from this position.

When it came to a grand war of Cultivators such as this, Meng Hao's power, though it might be great, was not enough to assure victory or defeat. Only someone of the Spirit Severing stage could do so.

The battle was set to erupt at any moment!

Suddenly, the wails of war bugles could be heard echoing out in the air. As soon as they did, the mass of beasts flying in the air, as well as the neo-demons on the ground, howled and charged.

They were joined by the thousands of Cultivators and their war chariots as they launched their assault on Holy Snow City.

"Lightning Sea Pill!" cried Frigid Snow Clan's First Elder. A booming sound filled the air, and everything went dim. The defensive tempest which surrounded Holy Snow City seemed as if it were splitting apart.

As soon as his words echoed out, four medicinal pills were tossed out from the city. One of them was instantly snapped up by a flying Flood Dragon; suddenly, its body began to tremble, and a boom filled the air as it exploded into pieces. From within the blood and gore, multiple lightning bolts shot out.

They spread out in all directions to form an enormous Lightning Sea, roughly three hundred meters wide.

Any flying beasts who were caught up in the Lightning Sea immediately began to let out shrill shrieks as they were torn into pieces!

The three Lightning Sea Pills which landed onto the ground caused the earth to tremble. Suddenly, three hundred meter wide Lightning Seas erupted up. Beasts and Cultivators alike let out miserable screams as they were shredded apart by the lightning.

At the same time, black clouds appeared in the sky overhead. Even more blazing lightning crackled down, slamming into the ground.

The shocking effects of these four Lightning Sea Pills were actually beyond what Meng Hao had anticipated. He had concocted them three months before and given them to the Frigid Snow Clan.

In his estimation, the pills should have produced Lightning Seas only several dozen meters wide, not hundreds. It only took him a moment to understand what had happened, though. This area was constantly swathed with snowstorms and tempests. The frozen ground and the howling wind were actually special spell formations of Holy Snow City. They amplified the effects of the Lightning Sea Pills, causing their power to increase exponentially.

“The amplification has limits,” thought Meng Hao. “Using it too much in this capacity will cause the spell formations to break on their own.”

Sounds of rejoicing could be heard throughout the city.

“Grandmaster Meng is amazing!!”

“That was a magic pill concocted by Grandmaster Meng. Such power is unprecedented! It shook Heaven and Earth!”

“Grandmaster Meng!!”

The cries drifted outside of the city walls, followed by groups of Cultivators. As they flew out, one of the star shapes above the city also flew out, slashing into the Black Lands Palace Cultivators and shredding them into pieces.

The ground quaked as death filled the battlefield. Explosions reverberated out, along with bloodcurdling shrieks. Blood showered down like rain. From his position on the city wall, Meng Hao watched all of this happening, his heart trembling.

Magical light emanated out from the war chariots, slamming into the city defenses. The ice on the ground began to crack, and the sky itself seemed about to be ripped apart.

It was at this time that a Western Desert Cultivator flew up into the air. He was in the late Core Formation stage and had three totem tattoos on his body. One was a Flood Dragon, another was a Mountain Spirit, and the

third was a mighty river. As he flew up to hover in the air, he held a severed head in his hand, dripping blood. He looked up toward the city and laughed heartily.

“Grandmaster Meng, you dogfart, do you dare to come out and fight me!?!?” Behind the man, a Flood Dragon appeared, roaring as it flew up into the sky. Next to the Flood Dragon was an enormous Mountain Spirit, grinning viciously toward the city. Beneath the feet of the strapping Cultivator, an enormous, world-shaking river appeared.

“I am Ta Luo, three-totem Cultivator of the Thorn Tribe of the Western Desert. I challenge Grandmaster Meng of Holy Snow City to a duel! Do you dare to fight me? Don’t tell me the only thing you can do is concoct pills!? Meng, you twerp, do you dare to fight me or not?! You numbskull alchemist! All you can do is concoct pills in some dark room somewhere. Do you dare to come fight me in the open!?”

As his words echoed out, Meng Hao stood on the city wall, his expression the same as ever as he looked out at the hollering Cultivator and his totems.

“A Mountain Spirit totem,” thought Meng Hao. “It looks like both a mountain and a spirit. I definitely need to study it.” Suddenly, his eyes flickered as he looked up into the sky.

Next to him was Third Elder, the old woman. She frowned.

“He’s just trying to provoke you,” she said. “It’s obviously a trick, Grandmaster Meng, you....” Before she could finish speaking, Meng Hao’s body flickered and he shot off the city wall.

The old woman’s face flickered, and she shot into the air to follow him. Even as she did, however, one of the silver-masked Nascent Soul Cultivators from the Black Lands Palace laughed viciously, and then disappeared. When he reappeared, he was directly in front of the old woman, blocking her path.

The Western Desert Cultivator with the severed head hovered there watching Meng Hao approach. Laughing uproariously, he clenched his right hand, causing the severed head to explode and splatter his body with

blood and gore. With a vicious smile, he shot toward Meng Hao.

They closed in on each other at top speed, which of course drew the attention of Cultivators from both sides of the battle. Those from Holy Snow City were all very nervous, and the other three Grand Elders tried to fly over to help, but were obstructed by the other Black Lands Palace and Western Desert Nascent Soul Cultivators.

“Meng, you twerp, I’m gonna help you understand how Western Desert Cultivators kill people!” The power of the huge man’s late Core Formation Cultivation base exploded out to shocking effect. The Flood Dragon behind him roared, the Mountain Spirit radiated ferocity, and the mighty river screamed through the air. All of it was very imposing.

This man had complete confidence that he would be able to kill this opponent. Once this Grandmaster Meng tangled with him, it would only take a moment or two to ensure that he died.

“Once he emerged from the city walls, his fate was sealed!” thought the Western Desert Cultivator, grinning viciously. In the blink of an eye, they were roughly thirty meters from each other. Meng Hao’s expression was the same as always; however, a bloody glow suddenly emanated out from his body. Suddenly, he disappeared. It was a Bloodburst Flash which suddenly placed him directly in front of the grinning Western Desert Cultivator.

The man’s eyes went wide, and without even thinking about it, he moved to retreat backward. However, Meng Hao’s hand shot out like lightning, grabbed his clothing and then lifted him up above his head. He pulled off this move smoothly, as if he had practiced it many times.

It was a bizarre move, and everyone who saw it gaped.

The moment in which Meng Hao grabbed the shocked Western Desert Cultivator and lifted him up, a lightning bolt suddenly appeared in the sky. This particular lightning bolt looked different from normal lightning.

That was because it was not ordinary lightning; this was Tribulation Lightning!

None of the onlookers even had an opportunity to react. The Heavenly Tribulation descended onto the body of the Western Desert Cultivator. The Flood Dragon shrieked as it shattered into pieces. The Mountain Spirit collapsed, and the river exploded. The Western Desert Cultivator didn't even have time to shriek. The Heavenly Tribulation smashed into his body, turning it... completely black.

He was absolutely dead!!

He wasn't Meng Hao, who was able to resist such lightning for various reasons. Obviously, this man was not equipped with any of those methods, and was killed.

"Too bad about that Mountain Spirit totem," said Meng Hao, shaking his head. He loosened his grip, dropping the corpse. Everyone looked on, stunned, as Meng Hao Bloodburst Flashed away, returning to the city wall at incredible speed.

Chapter 368: Secret Dragoneer Technique

The battlefield was suddenly filled with silence....

There couldn't be anything but silence. This was the first time that these people had ever seen a Cultivator exterminated by lightning. Lightning was powerful, but Cultivators were not weak. Being killed by lightning was something that was usually mentioned when insulting others, but something that few people actually saw happen....

In fact, few people were ever actually killed by lightning, much less legendary Heavenly Tribulation.

Not many people had ever even seen Heavenly Tribulation. The only time anyone did was because of the appearance of certain medicinal pills, or other Heavenly materials or Earthly treasures, and that was a Heavenly Tribulation that didn't target people....

“Exterminated by lightning....”

“How could that be possible? What lightning was that?! It was terrifying!”

“What was terrifying wasn't the lightning, but that Grandmaster Meng. Dammit, even lightning from the Heavens helps him? Or, was it some magical technique?”

The Black Lands Palace Cultivators were shocked. This extermination by lightning was incredibly terrifying to them.

Cultivators existed beneath the Heavens, whereas lightning was something of the Heavens. Therefore, it seemed to them that lightning was something that... could not be evaded!

Even the Nascent Soul Cultivators stared with shining eyes. Meng Hao's actions just now were completely beyond their powers of prediction. If it was a magical technique he had used, well that was shocking in and of itself. However... the way Meng Hao had lifted the man up into the air with seemingly practiced ease made it seem like it was something he frequently did.

In contrast with the Cultivators from the Black Lands Palace and the Western Desert, those in Holy Snow City had long since become accustomed to the fact that lightning would descend upon their Grandmaster Meng every few days.

Everybody knew about it. In fact, occasionally, when people went to request pill concocting services, they would even see the lighting.

Seeing the Western Desert Cultivator exterminated by the lightning caused complex thoughts to fill the minds of the people in Holy Snow City.... Their reverence for Meng Hao grew even stronger.

“Just what shocking things has Grandmaster Meng done to anger the Heavens? Over the past months, that lightning has constantly been trying to exterminate him.”

“That Western Desert Cultivator was really unlucky. Of all the people to piss off, he pissed off Grandmaster Meng... You know, over the past couple months, I happened on a few occasions to see a miserable soul embodiment lifted up by Grandmaster Meng....”

Meng Hao cleared his throat as he stood there on the city wall. He ignored the gazes that were all fixed upon him. He had long since become accustomed to the lightning, and by now had reached the point where he could predict it.

After a long moment passed, the fighting on the battlefield resumed. The slaughtering continued, but as it did, the Cultivators would occasionally look up into the sky. The booms were usually the result of magical techniques, but many of the Cultivators would dodge to the side nonetheless, clearly fearful that lightning would fall to exterminate them.

It took about three days before such behavior died out. During those three days, the Black Lands Palace Cultivators launched continuous assaults, which caused booms to fill the air, and shook the very ground. On the night of the third day, a huge explosion shook everything as one of Holy Snow City's tempest spell formations collapsed.

As the formation collapsed, vast quantities of Black Lands Palace Cultivators charged in, along with countless ferocious beasts. Western

Desert Cultivators also joined them.

A rumbling filled the air as glowing strands shot out from the star-shaped objects in the sky. Although the night was dark, the battlefield was as brightly lit as if it were daytime.

Finally, a critical moment in the battle arrived. The four Grand Elders were there, battling fiercely in mid-air with the Black Lands Palace and Western Desert Cultivators.

Meng Hao's face was unsightly as he stood atop the city wall. Suddenly, he raised up his right hand. A flash of blood could be seen as a flying creature that had been charging toward him fell to the ground, dead.

"Three months," he thought. "If the city falls, then they will never finish with the Frigid Snow Larva." Whether or not Holy Snow City fell in the end had little to do with him. However, before the six month time period was up, it must not.

It was at this moment that the ground began to tremble as two Wild Giants appeared off in the distance. Following them were several thousand Cultivators from the Black Lands Palace and the Western Desert. Of course, a black mass of howling, beastly neo-demons accompanied them.

"Why hasn't the Spirit Severing Patriarch made an appearance?" thought Meng Hao. The day Zhou Dekun had been taken, Meng Hao heard the howl echoing up from underground. That simple howl had caused the deaths of countless beasts and Cultivators outside the city wall.

Now, even when the tempest spell formation had been broken, the Frigid Snow Clan's Spirit Severing Patriarch still hadn't come out.

"It seems Hanxue Zong was right, as were the rumors floating about outside. The Spirit Severing Patriarch is obviously dying. However, the Black Lands Palace is still scared of him. They seem ferocious in their attacks, but they are still probing to get information about the Spirit Severing Patriarch." Meng Hao's gaze flickered as he looked off into the distance at two Western Desert Cultivators who were shooting toward Hanxue Shan, their totems shining. The guards who surrounded Hanxue

Shan coughed up blood, incapable of fighting back.

Meng Hao let out a cold snort as he shot forward with a Bloodburst Flash. In the blink of an eye, he was next to Hanxue Shan. He waved a finger, and the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex appeared, instantly suppressing the Cultivation base and life force of the Western Desert Cultivators. A sword aura appeared as a flying sword shot out from Meng Hao's bag of holding. It instantly decapitated the two men, then came back to circulate around Meng Hao.

Hanxue Shan's face was pale as she looked over at Meng Hao and smiled.

"You saved me again," she said.

Snow began to fall, and a whimpering sound filled the air as the snowflakes danced about in the wind. It sounded like a funeral song. Booms could be heard, along with the sound of intense fighting. The city shook as, one after another, the star-shaped objects up in the sky collapsed. The Western Desert and Black Lands Cultivators fought fiercely. The sky was filled with snow, but the ground was covered in blood.

Meng Hao didn't respond to Hanxue Shan. He stamped his foot onto the ground, causing countless strands of Demonic Qi to rise up, visible only to him. They congealed together behind him to form into an obscure mass that blocked a glowing beam of light that had just shot out from a nearby war chariot.

Rumbling filled the air. The Demonic Qi had blocked the incoming beam, but the power of the attack was still there, spreading out into the area. Meng Hao wrapped his arm around Hanxue Shan's waist, then shot away toward the city wall to avoid the attack.

Hanxue Shan looked up at the star-shaped objects collapsing, the Western Desert Cultivators who were appearing on various sections of the city wall, and the glow of magical techniques that filled the sky. Her voice bitter, she said, "You should leave. They want to kill the Frigid Snow Clan, not you. With your Cultivation base, it would be easy for you to get out of

here right now.”

Off in the distance, the old woman, Third Elder, coughed up a mouthful of blood, then gritted her teeth and continued to fight.

“It’s useless,” said Hanxue Shan, despair filling her eyes. “Even if I went all out and used the Frigid Snow Thorn Rampart, the Patriarch is withering away and barely conscious. There’s no way to use the secret Dragoneer technique to catalyze the thorns....” A rumbling sound filled the air as an entire section of the city wall collapsed, and a fierce-looking Western Desert Cultivator shot into the city.

“What Thorn Rampart?” asked Meng Hao, frowning.

“The Frigid Snow Thorn Rampart is indestructible, and could protect the city for an entire month,” she said softly, her voice filled with bitterness. “It’s a sacred relic that the Frigid Snow Clan brought with us many years ago when we moved here from the Western Desert. After all the years, it’s mostly withered. Only a special secret technique can be used to revive it.

“That technique is only known to Elders and certain others with the right bloodline to master it. Right now, no one can catalyze the thorns. Only the Patriarch has a Cultivation base sufficient enough to do so.” She slapped her bag of holding to produce a dried up seed.

“This is one of eight seeds. The Elders all have one, and the rest are with the Patriarch. None of us were ever able to succeed.”

“Catalyze?” said Meng Hao, his eyes glittering. He was about to continue when suddenly a boom filled the air, and the city wall shook. Meng Hao’s face flickered. He grabbed Hanxue Shan, retreating again. Off in the distance, a huge group of Black Lands Cultivators was approaching.

As the city wall crumbled, miserable screams filled the air. Meng Hao continued to retreat with Hanxue Shan in tow. His voice urgent, he said, “Tell me that catalysis technique. I’m an alchemist, and I already have my own catalysis techniques; perhaps because of that, I will be able to understand yours.”

Hanxue Shan gaped at him for a moment. Under normal circumstances,

she would never reveal a secret Clan technique. Even Spirit Searching would be useless; the technique was a legacy magic that was branded into her very blood. However, after thinking for the space of a few breaths, she made her decision. When the Frigid Snow Clan had existed in the Western Desert, at the height of their power, this was the secret technique used by generations of their Grand Dragoners! Her voice soft, she began to explain it to Meng Hao.

The secret technique was not very long, only about a thousand characters in length. As the words entered Meng Hao's ears, his heart began to shake. It was as if all of the sights and sounds of the battle around him vanished. The only thing left were the thousand characters that made up the secret technique!

"...cause Time to sink, the ebb and flow of the moon, grasp the will of the shining sun, all living things contain the will of eternal life...." Hanxue Shan softly spoke the words that could cause a frenzied commotion if they were revealed in the Western Desert. In fact, when the rebel clan member Hanxue Zong was spared by his father, all memories of this secret technique were erased from his mind. That was one of his reasons for coming back to settle his old score and eradicate the Frigid Snow Clan. There was no way for him to reacquire the technique other than to have a Clan member personally tell him!

Meng Hao's mind reeled. He closed his eyes, allowing the various passages of the technique to resonate in his head. He suddenly thought of the Violet Fate Sect's catalysis arts, as well as the Time refining jade page from which he had been able to figure out the Time magic.

Of those two different mnemonics, the catalysis technique was the first layer. The secret Time magic was the second layer. And now... Meng Hao's mind spun. After hearing the secret technique of the Frigid Snow Clan, he realized that it was the third layer!

Secret Dragoner technique!

Any of the techniques alone could provide moderate success. But if anyone was able to acquire all three, then the knowledge could be used to

mutually increase the effectiveness and power of the others by a vast amount.

Because he knew the secret catalysis method and also understood the secret Time magic, when he heard the Dragoneer technique, he understood it instantly, and it was branded onto his mind.

Chapter 369: Thorn Rampart

Meng Hao's eyes snapped open. "Give me the Thorn Rampart seed!"

A strange light gleamed in his eyes, as if Time itself were buried within. Gradually, it turned into an indescribable power, like some sort of magical technique that made it so a single glance from him could cause a person to never be able to forget him.

Hanxue Shan's heart shook. She had seen a gaze like this before, back when the Spirit Severing Patriarch had awoken once. His eyes had contained deep abstruseness, as if they contained Time. A single glance from him was something she wouldn't be able to forget for countless years.

As her mind reeled, she seemed to lose any ability to resist him. Without thinking about it, she reached her hand out and handed over her Clan's sacred relic, the Thorn Rampart seed.

The instant the seed touched his hand, Meng Hao gasped. His Cultivation base rotated rapidly, and a golden light instantly spread out. His secret catalysis art, the magic of Time, and the newly acquired secret Dragoneer technique were all unleashed inside of him.

The ability to catalyze all plants. The magic to unleash the power of Time. The Dragoneer ability to control all the beasts under Heaven. These three mysterious arts melded together inside Meng Hao, and as his Cultivation base rotated, the Thorn Rampart seed in his hand suddenly began to expand. It was no longer withered, and in fact, within moments, a sprout appeared, which turned into vegetation. Within the blink of an eye, it had grown to cover Meng Hao's entire arm.

Meng Hao's body was no longer shining with a golden light. Shockingly, a thick plant-like Qi emanated out from him. This Qi instantly caught the attention of the attacking Western Desert Cultivators. When they laid eyes on Meng Hao, they weren't sure why, but their hearts began to tremble. Immediately, they shot toward him.

The only person near Meng Hao was Hanxue Shan. Everyone else had

long since fled. The city wall was falling, and up above, the four Grand Elders had looks of despair written on their faces.

How could they have imagined that after the three month period, the Black Lands Palace and the Western Desert would launch a full-scale assault? There was no way that Holy Snow City could stand up to it.

Hanxue Shan smiled sadly as she watched the eight Western Desert Cultivators closing in on Meng Hao. There was nothing she could do to fight back against them. In a moment, they were thirty meters away from Meng Hao.

Meng Hao sat there cross-legged, clutching the Thorn Rampart seed. Green vegetation and leaves covered his right arm, and continued to grow, covering the rest of his body.

Thirty meters. Twenty-five meters. Fifteen meters!

When they were fifteen meters away, Meng Hao's closed eyes suddenly snapped open. They glowed brightly as he reached his right hand out and pushed it down onto the ground.

As he did, the plant material on his body burrowed down into the soil. Suddenly, shocking rumbling sounds could be heard as a three meter long thorn stabbed out from the ground next to the city wall. The speed with which it moved was hard to describe, and made it impossible for anyone to evade it. In the blink of an eye, it stabbed through one of the Western Desert Cultivators.

Next, more thorns burst up around Meng Hao. Miserable screams filled the air as the rest of the seven Western Desert Cultivators were stabbed through with long thorns and lifted up into the air.

Even more shocking was that after stabbing through the Cultivators, the thorns twitched and trembled, as if they were absorbing the Cultivators' blood and Cultivation base. The eight men rapidly began to wither. Bloodcurdling shrieks filled the air that didn't even sound human, echoing out, causing all of the other surrounding Cultivators to feel extreme shock.

"What is that?" they thought, panting.

Before they had time to react, masses of small thorns exploded out from the shriveled bodies of the eight Cultivators to shoot out in all directions.

Some stabbed into the ground and disappeared. They reappeared moments later, in locations not too distant, where they stabbed into the bodies of more Cultivators.

Others directly shot into nearby Cultivators. Even as they screamed out, their bodies withered, whereupon more thorns would explode out.

Meng Hao was the center of it all as thorns began to stab out from the city walls themselves. This, of course, caused a great commotion. The thorns actually didn't distinguish between Holy Snow City Cultivators or those from the Black Lands Palace. They stabbed through all of them, absorbing their flesh, blood and life force, and then expanding. Within the space of a few breaths, the area surrounding Meng Hao for three thousand meters was a world filled with thorns.

This, of course, instantly affected the course of the battle. Vast numbers of Black Lands Palace Cultivators retreated backward in shock. Unfortunately, they were too slow and were still stabbed through by the thorns. Soon, the entire city was bristling with thorns, sharp, fierce and bright red. By this time, the thorns were already expanding outside the city as well.

Back inside the city, all of the Holy Snow City Cultivators stood with pale faces, not daring to move. Everything around them was surrounded by countless thorns. They looked out at the Black Lands Palace Cultivators and their beasts outside of the city. Howling in anguish, they retreated at top speed as thorns burst out from the ground around them.

The sky wasn't safe either. The thorns shot up into the air, stabbing into any living thing that flew about up above.

By now, everything seemed to be covered with thorns. Outside the city, only a few hundred of the Black Lands Palace and Western Desert Cultivators managed to flee without being affected. They stared back at the scene behind them with shock and astonishment.

Up above, the four Grand Elders and the Nascent Soul Cultivators from

the Black Lands Palace and the Western Desert were no longer capable of fighting. They had split apart, and were constantly blocking the shooting thorns.

As of now, all eyes on the battlefield were fixed on Meng Hao. In front of him was a ferocious, gigantic thorn, rising straight up into the sky. It emanated a Blood Qi, and was covered by countless smaller thorns. It was thoroughly sinister.

Meng Hao seemed to be the very center of it all, and the only place that didn't have any thorns. He seemed to be the source of all the thorns, and as he slowly rose to his feet, countless gasps filled the air.

Around his right hand swirled innumerable leaves, each one of which was covered with thorns. Not a single person would disbelieve that Meng Hao was the source of all the thorns everywhere.

He took a deep breath. He'd never imagined that the Thorn Rampart seed would be so astonishing. The fact that it couldn't tell the difference between friend and foe was something he couldn't do anything about. It required his power of catalysis to grow, but when it came to sucking the life and blood out of Cultivators, Meng Hao could do nothing to control it, although he could sense it.

"Grandmaster Meng...." said a nearby Holy Snow City Cultivator. His left leg had been stabbed by a thorn. As soon as the word left his mouth, a thorn suddenly flew over, and he closed his mouth. The thorn stopped only an inch from his forehead, where it hovered like a snake for a moment before moving away.

Everything was quiet. All of the Cultivators in the area who had been stabbed by thorns, be they from the Western Desert or the Black Lands, stood stock still, not daring to utter a peep.

Up in mid-air, the faces of the Nascent Soul Cultivators flickered, and they also stopped moving, not daring to fly or speak. The reason for this was that they were surrounded by tens of thousands of thorns. From the looks of things, if they made even the slightest move, the thorns would instantly stab through them and kill them.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, and his eyes shone brightly.

On the city wall, and outside the city, were countless Cultivators and beasts who had been stabbed by thorns. Their faces were pale and filled with dread as they gazed over at Meng Hao.

The few hundred people who had managed to escape the danger looked at Meng Hao, as quiet as cicadas during the winter. At the moment, everyone on the battlefield suddenly realized that the outcome of the entire battle now lay in one person's hand.

That person was none other than Meng Hao.

Meng Hao was the only person among them who knew that the decision actually wasn't his to make. This Thorn Rampart was actually not responding to any of his commands....

He thought silently as he looked around. The thorns were still stabbed through the surrounding Cultivators, who could only stand there with looks of despair on their faces.

It was at this moment that suddenly, a voice entered Meng Hao's ears that no one else could hear. It was an ancient voice, as weak as if it came from the mouth of someone about to die.

"The destructive Thorn Rampart can exterminate anything under the Spirit Severing stage. Once it takes root, it can't be moved, and will live for one month.... It doesn't matter how you woke it. Right now, you need to still your mind and extract a drop of blood from yourself that contains some of your will. Place it onto the Thorn Rampart trunk in front of you. Remember.... The drop of blood must contain your will. That will allow you to issue an order to the thorns." The voice seemed to have come out from nowhere, but as soon as Meng Hao heard it, he suddenly recalled the voice he had heard three months ago when Zhou Dekun was taken.

The voice was one and the same.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he thought. According to the method just described to him, he sliced a cut onto his forehead. A drop of blood appeared, which contained some of Meng Hao's Cultivation base and will.

As it flew forward, Meng Hao felt a wave of weakness flow through him. He knew that in his entire life, he could produce no more than five such drops of blood!

Anything more than five would be far too much of a loss.

Surrounded by silence, Meng Hao clenched his jaw. The blood was extremely precious, but, for the sake of the Frigid Snow Larva... he caused the drop to fly forward and enter into the Thorn Rampart trunk. His eyes flashed.

Nothing obstructed its way; it merged into the Thorn Rampart trunk, which then began to tremble.

Instantly, the thorns stabbed into the Holy Snow City Cultivators faded from sight, and their wounds closed up. The thorns actually remained in their bodies, fuel with which to heal their wounds.

As the thorns disappeared, the Black Lands Palace and Western Desert Cultivators outside of the city let out bloodcurdling screams. Their bodies instantly began to wither completely. The sounds of explosions filled the air as some of the dying Cultivators chose to self-detonate.

The explosions caused Meng Hao's mind to feel as if it were shattering. It seemed as if he had become one with the Thorn Rampart trunk, and that all of the thorns spread about were extensions of his will.

With a mere thought, he could kill everyone.

At the same time, his Spiritual Sense felt as if it were wasting away. Meng Hao's Spiritual Sense was second only to that of a Nascent Soul Cultivator, far above that of anyone in the same stage as him. Were it not, then the strain would have completely dried it up.

Suddenly, Meng Hao's will sensed something new. Outside of the city, in a location stabbed through with a handful of thorns, someone spoke in a low voice.

"Grandmaster Meng, is that you?"

Chapter 370: Spirit Severing Pill

A voice transmitted into Meng Hao's will. "Grandmaster Meng, this is Yan Song.... Fellow Daoist Meng, after we parted that day, I continued to think about everything that happened, and couldn't help but feel that something was fishy about Zhou Dekun.... He's already been sent to the Western Desert, though, so there's nothing I can do to corroborate my theory. Fellow Daoist Meng, I actually came here today to look for you. This isn't my actual body, it's just a sliver of my will.

"Fellow Daoist, I very much admire your Dao of alchemy and, well... this is not the time for a long discussion. I'll just say two more things. With your skill in the Dao of alchemy, we can talk about the Spirit Severing Pill! If you're interested, then meet with me three days from now in the east of the city, and we can discuss it at length."

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as the voice suddenly disappeared. Outside the city, the miserable cries slowly began to fade away. Only a few Cultivators had managed to escape from the effects of the secret technique; most had been transformed into withered corpses.

Meng Hao slowly removed his will from the Thorn Rampart trunk, leaving behind only a tiny connection. He caused the rest of the thorns that filled the city to gradually shrink back. Now, the main trunk was even more prominently visible.

The wail of war bugles could be heard in the air; this particular Western Desert and Black Lands Palace attack group had no choice but to retreat. The war was not over. The forces of the Black Lands Palace and the Western Desert were reduced, however, off in the distance, the sky was filled with prismatic beams of light.

It was no longer night; morning was approaching. Everyone in the city was exhausted. Amidst the rare silence, Meng Hao rose to his feet as the four Grand Elders approached.

They looked haggard, and Third and Fourth Elders were injured. They stood in front of Meng Hao, looking him over with complex expressions.

After a long moment, First Elder slowly said, "The Thorn Rampart will live for one month. We should be safe during that time. The four of us will do the best we can to finish the Frigid Snow Larva." He gave Meng Hao a deep look, then turned and left.

The other Elders looked at him without speaking and then walked off. The old woman looked back at Meng Hao as she departed, but held her tongue.

The surviving members of the Frigid Snow Clan dispersed to make repairs to the city and spell formations. They had a month of time in which there would be relative safety, but there were many things that needed to be repaired.

Everyone was exhausted. After injuries were tended to, there were still mental scars. Most of the Cultivators sat cross-legged in meditation, making the city very quiet.

The newly arrived force from the Western Desert bolstered the enemy forces into the thousands. However, they did not attack, but rather spread out, forming a complete blockade around Holy Snow City.

Meng Hao was also exhausted. As he walked through the city, the Cultivators he encountered all looked at him with expressions of awe. They would bow to him with lowered eyes, not even daring to meet his gaze.

The appearance of the Thorn Rampart caused everyone to view Meng Hao as a representation of terror. Despite his status as a Grandmaster, this fear was incapable of being dispelled.

The Frigid Snow Clan members also looked at him with looks of intense veneration. Essentially, Meng Hao had single-handedly secured victory in the battle. Without him there, Holy Snow City would be nothing but smoldering wreckage now.

Based on the various battle achievements secured in the fight against the Black Lands Palace, the Frigid Snow Clan distributed magical treasures to the forces within the city. Large amounts of Cultivators converged on a palace near the city center, where the records of battle achievements were

kept and rewards distributed.

Meng Hao was tired, but seeing the palace on his way back to his courtyard, he changed course and headed over.

The area was quite bustling, with Cultivators coming in and out. The hundred or so people that Meng Hao saw made this place seem a lot more packed than the empty areas in the rest of the city.

As soon as Meng Hao entered, people spotted him, and soon everyone was looking at him, hearts trembling. Without even thinking about it, they bowed their heads and clasped hands, unable to cover up the awe on their faces.

“Grandmaster Meng....”

“Greetings, Grandmaster Meng!”

Meng Hao nodded, walking past the groups of people until he stood before a pillar of light in the middle of the main hall. The pillar was illusory, and inside could be seen lists of names. Next to each name was a number.

These were the battle achievements accrued during the defense of the city. The rewards one could receive depended on how many enemies they had slain.

Next to the pillar of light sat two members of the Frigid Snow Clan. When they saw Meng Hao, they immediately rose to their feet, clasped hands, and bowed deeply.

Everyone in the area grew very quiet.

Meng Hao said nothing. He simply examined the pillar of light and the list of names.

“Grandmaster Meng. Battle achievement of 97,542!”

The battle achievement of the person in second place didn’t even exceed two thousand. Muttering to himself, Meng Hao glanced over the reward list.

There were technique manuals, magical items, medicinal elixirs and

special materials for concocting medicinal pills and forging weapons. There were some items which caused Meng Hao's heart to begin to thump after he saw them.

Most importantly, the battle achievements required to acquire these items were almost nothing compared to what Meng Hao had accrued.

Just when Meng Hao was trying to decide whether or not take them all, four new items suddenly popped up on the rewards list.

These four items caused the surrounding Cultivators to break into an uproar.

"Thorn Rampart seed. 100,000 battle achievements!"

"Frigid Snow Clan Secret Dragoneer technique. 20,000 battle achievements!"

"Five Planets Snow Formation. 50,000 battle achievements!"

"Demon Nurturing Pill formula. 100,000 battle achievements!"

Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and the surrounding Cultivators were breathing heavily. They had no idea what the secret Dragoneer technique was, but they did recognize the Thorn Rampart seed. The fearsomeness of the Thorn Rampart in the previous battle was something they could never forget.

"And then there's the Five Planets Snow Formation. That's a special spell formation of the Frigid Snow Clan. You can create a Five Planets Magical Shield...."

As the Cultivators discussed the new items, Meng Hao stood there thoughtfully. The Thorn Rampart seed was an expendable item, but was incredibly powerful. The seed he had used before had been given to him by Hanxue Shan. If he wanted to use another one in the future, it most likely would not be very easy to acquire.

Even more eye-catching, though, was the Five Planets Snow Formation.

"Is that what those flying Five Planets items above the city were?" he thought. Then he glanced at the Demon Nurturing Pill formula.

“What pill is that?” Meng Hao smiled. It was obvious that these items had been intentionally put up by the Frigid Snow Clan to attract his attention. “It seems the Frigid Snow Clan really values me because of that battle,” he thought. Instead of taking any of the items, he looked at one of the Frigid Snow Clan members standing next to the pillar of light.

“Is it possible to acquire items on credit?” he asked, smiling. The surrounding Cultivators stared in shock at Meng Hao. They had never thought of doing such a thing.

The very concept of it seemed to cross the bottom line, especially considering the danger that Holy Snow City was in now. The surrounding Cultivators’ eyes began to gleam with a strange light.

The Frigid Snow Clan member who Meng Hao had directed his question to was a middle-aged woman. She gaped at him, somewhat at a loss. It was at this exact moment that suddenly, the battle achievement number next to Meng Hao’s name suddenly increased by one hundred thousand. Now his total was roughly 190,000.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered as he pointed out the items he wanted. The pillar of light sparkled, and two jade slips flew out. One was the Five Planets spell formation method and the other was the formula for the Demon Nurturing Pill.

After this, Meng Hao’s name was no longer in the first place position in the pillar of light, but rather, last. In fact, now his number was in the negative, to the amount of nearly 50,000.

Jade slips in hand, Meng Hao left the palace, under the envious gazes of the surrounding Cultivators. He walked back through the city to his courtyard.

He sat down cross-legged amidst the lotuses, then looked down at the jade slips. Time passed by. It was evening when he looked up again, and his eyes were gleaming.

“This spell formation seems pretty amazing. Too bad I don’t understand spell formations very well. If I meet someone who does, though, perhaps I can get some help in using it.

“This Demon Nurturing Pill is really interesting. It’s not for consumption by Cultivators, but rather, neo-demons and beasts.” Meng Hao put the jade slips away and then closed his eyes in meditation to restore energy.

A few days later, the late night was still and the moon shone brightly up above. The Thorn Rampart had become the final line of defense for the city. On multiple occasions, Black Lands Palace Cultivators had tried to break through but were thoroughly obstructed. Not many were killed or injured, but the effectiveness of the thorns was clear.

In his courtyard, Meng Hao sat cross-legged, meditating. Suddenly, his eyes opened and he pointed his right index finger toward the ground. Immediately, Demonic Qi began to congeal. It only took a moment for a figure to appear in front of him that resembled him in every aspect. After it turned into Meng Hao, it flickered and flew into the air.

In the east section of the city, there was a relatively remote street. It was completely deserted at the moment, until a figure appeared. It was of course none other than Meng Hao.

He strode down the winding street for the time it takes an incense stick to burn, until he reached an even more remote corner, where he stopped. He looked over his shoulder and said, “You’ve been following me for a while. How much longer?”

A grating voice could be heard. “Fellow Daoist Meng, you’re not only a Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy, I think your Spiritual Sense is the most powerful I’ve seen in any Core Formation Cultivator. It’s almost comparable to my own.” One of the shadows behind Meng Hao twisted, turning into Yan Song. He looked at Meng Hao with a smile.

“I’ll give you three sentences to explain yourself,” said Meng Hao lightly. As he spoke, thorns suddenly emerged from the ground.

Without hesitation, Yan Song replied, “I happened upon a manual once that contained information regarding the method to concoct an ancient medicinal pill called the Spirit Severing Pill, which, if consumed when breaking through to the Spirit Severing Stage, can ensure success. After years of searching, I was able to discover the resting place of this legacy of

the Dao of alchemy; it is located in the Western Desert, in a place I visited once. I can't acquire the pill alone; however, with your skill in the Dao of alchemy, Fellow Daoist Meng, I'm sure we can succeed, whereupon we can share the pill formula."

"Considering the level of my Cultivation base, such a pill doesn't interest me very much," replied Meng Hao lightly.

"Fellow Daoist Meng, please reconsider. Considering your skill in the Dao of alchemy, it won't be difficult for you to break into the Nascent Soul stage. If you don't begin to make preparations for the Spirit Severing stage now, the First of your Severings will be difficult. You can't rely on simple enlightenment alone. Besides, the place I intend to go to contains not only the formula, but also a completed Spirit Severing Pill!" Yan Song waved his right hand, causing a wood slip to fly out. "This wood slip is one of the sections of the manual. Fellow Daoist Meng, feel free to confirm for yourself whether I'm telling the truth or not. If you change your mind, you can use the wood slip to contact me. The location in the Western Desert is located close to several Tribes. Without my help, you won't be able to conceal your Cultivator's Qi, and will be unable to enter the area." With that, Yan Song gave Meng Hao a final look, then gradually faded and disappeared.

Chapter 371: Concocting a Nascent Soul like Concocting Pills!

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he watched Yan Song fade away. He reached out to take the wooden slip that hovered in front of him, then turned and left.

He didn't quite trust the man, so he had used his Demonic Qi Clone to meet him.

Of course, Yan Song actually feared Meng Hao quite a bit thanks to the Thorn Rampart. As such, he had also used other means to meet, and hadn't come in the form of his true self.

"Considering neither of us trust each other, why would he invite me to come along...?" thought Meng Hao as he walked back the way he came. "Of course, there's no great enmity between us, so why would he go to the trouble of trying to trick me? Could it be that there is a bit of truth to everything he said?"

It was very late at night, and this eastern section of the city was very quiet. The hustle and bustle that had existed before the war started was now gone. Almost everything was in ruins.

He had barely walked three hundred meters, when suddenly he stopped and retreated three paces.

Even as he did, green ripples suddenly emanated out from the spot he had just been standing in. At the same time, the distorted image of a person became visible within the ripples. It was impossible to see the figure clearly; however, within the greenish glow, Meng Hao could sense the emanations of totemic Qi.

"Western Desert Cultivator!" he thought. "The Thorn Rampart isn't complete in this area! So, Yan Song did have ulterior motives for inviting me here!" A cold light appeared in Meng Hao's eyes. He shot backward, golden light shining out from his body. His right hand clenched into a fist as he struck out at the incoming green glow.

A boom filled the air. Meng Hao's fist did not strike anything; however, a powerful attack shot out, toward the green glow. It seemed preparations had been made specifically for Meng Hao, though. Before his fist attack could strike the green glow, it split into multiple dots of light that spread out into the air. They then shot together, congealing into the image of a green whip that lashed out toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao grunted in surprise. This was the first time he'd encountered anything that could evade a strike from his right fist. True, the fist attack had been illusory, but for his opponent to dodge it showed that he was definitely beyond ordinary.

"This person didn't come with Yan Song. Yan Song hid himself, and was clearly aware that I didn't come in person. However, this Cultivator avoided my fist attack... in a way that made it obvious he wasn't aware that it was an illusory strike. Therefore, he doesn't know that this isn't my true self! If that's the case, then clearly running into him here was a coincidence.... The chances of randomly running into this guy here of all places in this big city, are not high. From that, I can deduce that however he got into the city... he must not be alone!" Meng Hao let out a cold snort as he allowed the whip to wrap around his body.

A boom filled the air as Meng Hao collapsed into countless Qi fragments that dissipated into the air.

A sound of surprise could be heard as the green whip retreated backward. A bad feeling suddenly welled up in the heart of the Western Desert Cultivator.

However, even as he began to back up, the fragmented Qi that had made up Meng Hao suddenly shot forward and formed back together into a new Meng Hao. His left hand stretched out to grab the whip, which he then pulled toward him.

"Get over here!"

A rumbling roar filled the air. The whip pulled tight, and as it did, the vague image of a fleeing person could be made out within the green ripples.

Meng Hao pulled hard on the green whip, and as he did, it began to whither, and then suddenly turned into flying ash.

Meng Hao watched the ripples disappear into the distance, and coldness flashed in his eyes. "It seems quite certain that it has nothing to do with Yan Song. However, no one can just attack Meng Hao and then run away!" His body grew blurry, then suddenly split into ten more Meng Haos. Immediately, they headed off into different directions in pursuit.

Meanwhile, back in Meng Hao's courtyard, his true self sat looking at the lotus flowers. Everything here was quiet and peaceful, and he wasn't paying very much attention to what was going on outside with his Demonic Qi clones.

After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, he rose to his feet, his expression the same as ever. He walked out slowly into the night, strolling down the street at a steady pace. Soon, he was about three hundred meters away from his courtyard.

It didn't take long for him to reach a random remote street corner, where he stopped, apparently waiting for something. After the space of two breaths passed, a collection of ripples shot through the air toward him. Behind the ripples were ten figures that looked exactly like him, their faces cold as they pursued the ripples.

Wu Mu was scared witless. He was a member of the Crow Scout Tribe from the Western Desert, and a member of the forces participating in the Black Lands Palace's great war 1. He was one of the several hundred Cultivators who had survived the Thorn Rampart earlier. Because he possessed wood type totems, he had been dispatched into the city this night on an assassination mission.

There were a dozen or so who came with him. He wasn't too sure the level of their Cultivation bases, but he was in the late Core Formation stage. That, coupled with the secret techniques of his Tribe, and his wood type totems, made it so that even a Nascent Soul Cultivator would have a hard time piercing his concealment technique.

How could he ever have imagined that as soon as he entered the city, the

first person he ran into would be none other than Grandmaster Meng, the person who had summoned the Thorn Rampart? He had assumed that because of his wood type totems, the Thorn Rampart wouldn't be able to detect him, and as such, had chosen to attack.

In his view, if he was able to kill the mysterious Grandmaster Meng, it would count as an incredible battle achievement. After returning to his Tribe, he would definitely be well rewarded. Even if he wasn't able to kill him, he could at least wound him. Either way, he was completely confident of the safety of making an attack.

How could he ever have guessed that what he attacked was not Grandmaster Meng's true self, but rather a clone? That in itself caused him to gape in astonishment, and filled his heart with fear. He had fled at top speed, cursing Meng Hao for coming out in the middle of the night in clone form.

After that, his fear had grown even greater when suddenly ten clones of Grandmaster Meng appeared, all of whom chased him relentlessly, cutting him off at every turn. If it weren't for his special techniques used for concealment and retreat, coupled with his wood type totems, he would have been captured already.

It was as he went all out to flee from the clones when he suddenly saw Meng Hao standing up ahead.

"Dammit," he thought, "this Grandmaster Meng doesn't just concoct pills, he also has a lightning technique AND is proficient with using clones. How could someone as inhuman as him exist in the world!?"

He cursed inwardly as he looked at Meng Hao, who stood there with a look of contempt in his eyes.

"Well, he might have some weird techniques, but he's not good enough to capture me!" Wu Mu snorted coldly, his body flashing as he waved his sleeve, causing the ripples surrounding him to shoot out toward what he assumed was another clone. This was the same method he had used previously to disperse other clones.

As Wu Mu descended upon Meng Hao, he suddenly heard him speak.

“There really is a lot to learn about the Dao of totems.”

Before Wu Mu could react to the words, he saw the Meng Hao in front of him lift up his hand and point toward him.

A boom resonated out as an invisible, tearing force surrounded Wu Mu. His heart filled with astonishment, and he was about to retreat when suddenly, a bloody glow filled the area. The glow permeated his body, ripping away the layers of invisibility around him, revealing him to the world.

“Not a clone!” he thought, his mind spinning. His face was ghastly pale, and he was about to employ another magical technique, when Meng Hao gazed into his eyes. His gaze seemed to contain the power of Time; Wu Mu’s mind reeled, as if he had lost the ability to even think. Everything suddenly seemed to slow down, as if the Time within his body had suddenly changed.

When he came to his senses, he saw Meng Hao’s right hand ripping through the air to latch around his throat. Everything went black as Wu Mu passed into unconsciousness.

Meng Hao held Wu Mu up in his hand. The entire time, his expression hadn’t changed. He slowly walked back down the street. Behind him, the ten Demonic Qi clones faded into nothing. At the same time, a wooden slip flew over, which Meng Hao took. He glanced at it, then walked off into the distance, carrying Wu Mu in one arm.

It was not a peaceful, quiet night in Holy Snow City. Over fifty assassinations occurred; even some members of the Frigid Snow Clan died.

Eventually the four Grand Elders unleashed the power of their Cultivation bases. Explosions rang out in the night sky, all the way until morning.

The chaos outside didn’t affect Meng Hao in his courtyard. He extracted some blood from Wu Mu and also vivisected his totem tattoos to study them.

He wouldn't give up on his desire to understand totems. He had the feeling that they were the key to the path of the Perfect Nascent Soul.

“Wood-type totems... can evade the Thorn Rampart. It must have something to do with its wood characteristics.” Meng Hao held a vial in his hand which contained some of Wu Mu's condensed life force. It emanated wood characteristics, which caused Meng Hao to look down at the man, and the green-colored leaf totem tattooed on his arm.

“Wood is one of the five elements,” he thought, various thoughts congealing in his mind. “Metal, wood, water, fire, earth. Five elements, five colors. White, green, black, red, yellow. Perfection is a Five Colored Nascent Soul.... A wood Nascent Soul would be green. If I could acquire five totems of different properties, cultivated to the ultimate level, then it would be similar to using the five elements pill concoction technique! With five colors, I could concoct a Five Colored Nascent Soul!” This was the result of all the research he had done into totems.

He had come up with the basis of this idea some time ago, but after his recent research, he felt more confident.

“It's also in accord with my Dao of alchemy. My body is the furnace, my heart is the formula. I will concoct a grand pill of Heaven and Earth, a Five Colored Nascent Soul!” His eyes shone with a bright light. The idea of concocting a Nascent Soul in this fashion was something no one before him had ever done.

Other people used cultivation to produce a Nascent Soul. Meng Hao's decision, though, was to use pill concocting techniques to concoct a Nascent Soul!

“That is the only way to achieve Perfection!” he thought, his expression one of intense anticipation.

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1. The “Wu” in Wu Mu's name means “crow” and is the same character as the one in “Crow” Scout Tribe. Incidentally, this character also has

the alternate meaning of “black.” The “Mu” is the same as in Fang Mu, meaning “wood”.

Chapter 372: Did You Forget?

Half a month isn't a very long time. However, as far as Wu Mu was concerned, the fact that he had encountered a certain Cultivator entranced with the idea of studying totems made it an unprecedented period of suffering. From his blood to his bones, from his totem tattoos to his techniques, his entire body was under the complete control of Meng Hao.

The more deeply Meng Hao studied the matter, the more confident he grew regarding the matter of concocting a Nascent Soul. Wu Mu seemed to have been destined to help Meng Hao understand how to fuse the Dao of alchemy with his Cultivation base. At the end of the month, it got to the point where he wasn't learning anything new from the man, so instead of causing further trouble for him, Meng Hao released him.

Before he left, Wu Mu looked at Meng Hao, trembling. He vowed to himself that he would never run into this man again, then fled as fast as he possibly could.

"I need more totems to corroborate my line of thinking," thought Meng Hao as he watched Wu Mu leave. Rumbling could be heard from outside the city walls. During the past half month, reinforcements from the Black Lands Palace and the Western Desert had continued to arrive. Every day, it seemed hundreds came whistling through the air to join the force outside.

Currently, there were around five thousand Cultivators amassed outside the city. Holy Snow City was thoroughly isolated. Beasts attacked from the sky, and glowing chariots charged on the ground.

The Thorn Rampart, during the one month in which it would survive, was impervious to any attack laid against it. Eventually, though, under the relentless attacks and explosions, it began to show signs of falling apart. Clearly, it wouldn't last for very much longer.

A few days later, a contingent of nearly two thousand Black Lands Palace Cultivators appeared, whistling through the air. They were led by a Cultivator wearing a gold mask. It was none other than Black Lands Palace

His eyes were grim, and filled with a faintly discernable turbidness. His entire person exuded a strange aura. He had been a vile mood as of late. After being poisoned that year, he had returned to the Black Lands Palace and used every method he could think of to cure himself. Unfortunately, he was unable to dispel the poison. The situation filled his heart with dread; he had the feeling that his life or death all rested in the hands of the person who had poisoned him.

Not daring to publicly reveal that he had been poisoned, he had attempted every method possible to cure himself, all to no avail. After sensing the poison, his Master had even taken an interest in it.

He had invited an Eastern Lands alchemist to examine him. After doing so, a serious expression covered his face and he'd said, "This poison cannot be dispelled by Cultivators. It can only be diffused with medicinal plants."

The mysterious Demon Lord who had poisoned him became something like a nightmare to him. Every time he thought of the man, intense coldness would fill his heart.

Of course, he had been careful to strictly comply with the man's instructions, and did not step foot within three hundred kilometers of him.

In order to prevent any mishaps, he had holed up in the Black Lands Palace for quite some time. This was actually the first time he had left since being poisoned. In his estimation, though, there was no way he would possibly run into the fearsome Demon Lord in this backwater location.

He did the best he could to hid the depression in his heart, but some of it still managed to slip out.

"I heard this Frigid Snow Clan has a beauty named Hanxue Shan," he thought, his eyes shining with debauchery.

Behind him was an old man wearing a silver mask, who emanated the shocking power of the Nascent Soul stage. His presence increased the

number of Nascent Soul Cultivators in the battle force to five.

It was difficult to describe how much the addition of one more Nascent Soul Cultivator would change the circumstances of this conflict.

As Luo Chong and the others arrived, quite a few of the Black Lands Palace Cultivators flew up into the air to receive them.

Beneath his golden mask, Luo Chong's face was filled with a proud look as he gazed at the Thorn Rampart and the heavily damaged Holy Snow City.

"Fellow Daoists of the Frigid Snow Clan. Ladies and Gentlemen of Holy Snow City. I am Luo Chong, Dao Child of the Black Lands Palace. I am not here today to join in the battle, but rather, to issue a challenge to all of the heroes under Heaven!" He strode forward until he was standing right in front of Holy Snow City.

"Anyone who is not of the Frigid Snow Clan that can hold their own against me, Dao Child Luo Chong, for the space of ten breaths, will be allowed to leave unharmed!" His words echoed about in the city.

He was surrounded by a group of Cultivators from the Black Lands Palace, as well as a few from the Western Desert, the most powerful ones present. The five Nascent Soul Cultivators were also there, a short distance away. Should the Nascent Soul Cultivators in Holy Snow City suddenly dare to attack, the five would be ready to deal with them.

"It is an historic moment!" continued Luo Chong, a lofty expression in his eyes. "Within half a month's time, the Black Lands Palace will topple this city. The day that happens, anyone who remains inside will be buried along with the Frigid Snow Clan!"

Coming from him, a Dao Child, these words were powerful and impressive as they settled down over Holy Snow City.

"Therefore, tell me? Which of you dares to face off against me in honorable battle!?"

Some of the Cultivators at his side began to call out taunting provocations.

Inside the city, the faces of the several hundred Cultivators not of the Frigid Snow Clan were unsightly, although it was impossible for anyone to tell whether or not they were considering the offer.

The four Grand Elders and other Frigid Snow Clan members stood there thoughtfully. They obviously couldn't hold anyone back from leaving; if they did, it would most likely lead to even greater repercussions. Furthermore, Luo Chong was a Dao Child of the Black Lands Palace, an incredibly high position. His Cultivation base was not at the Nascent Soul stage, but as a Dao Child, he directly represented the Black Lands Palace.

After a moment's thought, First Elder sighed. In a hoarse voice, he said, "Fear not. To each his own. Our city is under threat, and anyone who does not have the will to stand and fight, should not stay. Any Fellow Daoist who wishes to leave will not be stopped. You have already shown great favor to the Frigid Snow Clan."

Meng Hao stood in the crowd. He looked through the Thorn Rampart at Luo Chong floating there in mid-air, and a slight smile spread across his face. The poison in Luo Chong had not been dispelled. Meng hao had personally concocted it, and he was confident that few people in the world other than himself would be able to do so.

Silence filled Holy Snow City. Suddenly, someone shot forward. It was a middle-aged man, someone Meng Hao recognized. He had come before to request pill concocting services, and had a Cultivation base in the mid Core Formation stage. Among the Holy Snow City forces, he could be considered quite powerful. In the outside world, his Cultivation base would put him the position to be quite domineering.

Right now, his face was somewhat wan. The pressure he had come to feel in recent days had pushed him to the breaking point. He shot out through the Thorn Rampart, then let out a sigh.

"I've done everything I can," he thought. "I've definitely paid back the Frigid Snow Clan for their magnanimity that year." He shot forward, clasping hands toward Luo Chong and then said, "In accord with your will, Dao Child, I will battle you to save my life!"

The instant the man's words left his mouth, a vicious light gleamed in Luo Chong's eyes. At the same time, three Cultivators standing next to Luo Chong shot into the air at high speed. The approaching middle-aged Cultivator's face twisted.

He immediately flashed an incantation gesture, and the gleam of a magical technique rose up. A rumbling filled the air as a black sword aura glittered into being. After the space of five breaths passed, the three men returned to Luo Chong's side. Shockingly, one of them held the head of the middle-aged Cultivator in his hand, which he then presented to Luo Chong.

"What a pity. He didn't last for ten breaths." Luo Chong laughed, holding the head up high into the air and then crushing it.

"Is there anyone else who wants to give it a try? If not, then I'll give you another option. Bring me the Frigid Snow Clan's number one beauty Hanxue Shan. Whoever does so will not only be exempt from the death penalty, but will also receive a great reward!" He laughed again as he looked toward Holy Snow City. Inside, there was complete silence. All of the Cultivators had grim looks on their faces.

This was especially true of the Frigid Snow Clan members, and Hanxue Shan. Her phoenix-like eyes flashed with killing intent. She was a pretty girl, and the look on her face was instantly noticed by Luo Chong. His eyes flashed and he laughed. "The most beautiful woman in the land is here. It turns out my trip here wasn't a waste!"

The Cultivators in Holy Snow City couldn't hold back from crying out in ridicule.

"You're a Dao Child from the Black Lands Palace! How could you be so despicable!?"

"You said you would fight a duel, but it was nothing more than a low-down trick. You people from the Black Lands Palace are all the same!"

As the voices drifted out from the city, Luo Chong continued to laugh, his eyes filled with arrogance. He didn't give a whit about whether these people lived or died. He had just been toying with them. He knew that

Holy Snow City wouldn't mount any sort of offensive while the Thorn Rampart still existed, so he figured he would take advantage of the situation to have some fun.

"Alright, alright," he laughed. "I won't cause you any more trouble. How about this. Fellow Daoist Hanxue, why don't you warm my bed this night. If you do, then I'll take these two thousand Cultivators I came with and leave. That should take a bit of pressure off of Holy Snow City. What do you think?" His eyes gleamed as he looked over Hanxue Shan's beautiful figure, and his heart burned.

Hanxue Shan was so angry she was trembling. She glared murderously at Luo Chong, but her heart was filled with sorrow. Some of her surrounding Clan Members were looking at her. None of them said anything, but she could see in their eyes what they were thinking, and it filled her heart with pain.

She smiled bitterly, and then, without even thinking about it, she looked at Meng Hao. It was as if she was wondering what he would do about the situation.

Meng Hao's eyes narrowed as he looked at the three Cultivators who had just charged forward to fight. One was a Western Desert Cultivator. He was the one who had slain the middle-aged Cultivator, and the totem tattoo he had used was that of a sword!

It was a sword totem that created a magical manifestation of a sword, and emanated extraordinary power.

"I wonder if that's a Metal-type totem?" he thought. Suddenly, he took a step forward and then shot up into the air, his gaze coming to rest on Luo Chong.

His appearance attracted quite a bit of attention. Cultivators quickly clustered around Luo Chong to impart to him information regarding Meng Hao. Luo Chong's eyes shone, and a vicious smile appeared on his face beneath his mask.

"I'd heard about this Grandmaster Meng who has risen to fame in recent days," thought Luo Chong, his eyes shining with killing intent.

“Eliminating him will ensure that the city falls in a matter of days!” The gazes of the five Nascent Soul Cultivators came to rest on Meng Hao. Once he emerged from within the Thorn Rampart, they would instantly attack.

However, before Meng Hao passed outside of the city walls, he stopped. He hovered in mid-air, an enigmatic smile on his face as he looked at Luo Chong.

“Luo Chong,” he said. “I seem to remember I told you to stay at least three hundred kilometers away from me. Did you forget?”

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1. Luo Chong is the guy that Meng Hao a.k.a. Fang Mu slashed with the Wooden Time Sword by the Ancient Dao Geyser in chapter 269. Later, when he first arrived in the Black Lands, Meng Hao a.k.a. the Demon Lord poisoned Luo Chong in chapter 325.

Chapter 373: How Could It Be Him!?

No one in Holy Snow City understood what Meng Hao was talking about. They could tell that he must have some sort of history with the Black Lands Palace Dao Child, but they didn't understand any of the details.

However, as soon as the words entered Luo Chong's ears, his mind instantly began to reel. Beneath his mask, his face filled with a look of complete disbelief. There were two people he feared most in life, one was Fang Mu of the Southern Domain, the other was the Demon Lord of the Black Lands.

When he heard Meng Hao's words, he instantly understood their meaning. His pupils constricted immediately.

"It's him! It's definitely him! He's the only one who knows about that incident. Dammit, how could it be him!?" Luo Chong began to pant, and his eyes grew wide as he recalled the scene from that day. His heart trembled as he remembered the nightmare his life had become after he went back to the Black Lands Palace to try to dispel the poison.

Every month, there was a period of a few days in which his entire body felt like it was being stabbed all over. The pain was difficult to bear, and the only thing he could do was wail constantly in terror. Even his Master was powerless to help him, and all the Eastern Lands alchemist could do was sigh. All of that exploded out in Luo Chong's mind, overwhelming him.

His mind buzzed, and went blank. Fear filled his eyes. Never could he possibly have imagined that after all his efforts to avoid the Demon Lord, the first time he went out to some remote location, he would run into that very nightmarish figure.

He stood there blankly, his heart filling with indescribable remorse. He wanted to roar out that he was innocent, he really didn't know that the Demon Lord was here. Had he known, he wouldn't have come even under the threat of being beaten to death.

Then he thought about all the things he had just said, as well as the instructions not to come within three hundred kilometers of the Demon Lord, and his entire body began to shake. An unspeakable dread rose up from his heart like a tempest.

He thought about the fearsomeness of the Demon Lord, the feeling the man gave off like that of the underworld, and how he could kill him with a thought. All of these things smashed down onto Luo Chong like endless gigantic mountains.

Black Lands Dao Child? Honor and glory? Face? All of these things vanished from Luo Chong. The most important thing was his life. Because of that, Luo Chong felt the ultimate level of fear.

“Dammit, how could he be here?!”

As Luo Chong’s mind spun, and the fear submerged him, he stood there with a blank look on his face.

The Cultivators next to him were astonished. Meng Hao’s words were filled with an overbearing tone which caused some of the surrounding Cultivators to feel somewhat anxious. Suddenly, someone strode forward and said, “What gall! This is a Dao Child of the Black Lands Palace! The only people to flee three hundred kilometers are the people running away from him, you paltry alchemist! Do you truly dare to rave in such a manner?!”

The words hit Luo Chong like a lightning bolt. His body trembled, and he suddenly recovered his senses. His heart was still filled with terror, as well as an unspeakable fury. However, before he could give vent to his fury....

Another Cultivator hurried forward, exuding a loyal and devoted aura. Angrily, he said, “Just who the hell do you think you are? Dao Children occupy positions of incredible respect. Your words just now earn you the right to die!”

Their statements entered Luo Chong’s ears, causing him to tremble even more violently. His fury was now billowing to the heavens, and a feeling of infinite fear had completely overwhelmed him. That was because he could

see the cold gleam in Meng Hao's eyes.

His mind felt as if it were about to explode.

Another Cultivator stepped forward. "You...." Before he could finish speaking, Luo Chong raised his head to the sky and let out a shocking roar of fury.

"Shut up! Dammit, are you trying to get a Dao Child killed!!" He shot forward and unhesitatingly slapped the Cultivator who had been about to speak.

A boom rang out, and the Cultivator tumbled back like a kite with a broken string, blood spraying from his mouth and a confused look in his eye. Fury written across his face beneath the mask, Luo Chong next spun and flashed an incantation gesture. Immediately the glow of starlight appeared, enveloping one of the other Cultivators who had just spoken up.

A miserable shriek could be heard. It was as if this man was Luo Chong's enemy, and that he would do anything possible to kill him!

"You damned flunky!" roared Luo Chong. "You dare to plot against a Dao Child?! You're dead!" Another boom filled the air as the Cultivator exploded into pieces, exterminated directly by Luo Chong.

"If you want to disrespect me, then fine. But to disrespect the great Demon Lord is the most heinous of crimes! You all deserve to die!! You can be disrespectful to anyone in the whole world except for the Demon Lord!!" With a roar, he charged toward the first person who had spoken. The man stared in shock, his face pale. He was about to try to explain himself, but, would Luo Chong really listen? All he wanted to do was kill the man in the hopes of avoiding any misunderstanding with Meng Hao.

He had quickly reached the decision to vent his hatred on the three. He hoped that the fearsome Demon Lord would understand that he took the words of the three as spoken with the intention of getting Luo Chong killed.

The sounds of explosions echoed out in the air as Luo Chong attacked

with unprecedented might. He moved like lightning, instantly slaying the Cultivator who had been about to speak. His hair was in disarray, and his eyes red as he turned trembling toward Meng Hao. He clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Junior extends greetings, great Demon Lord,” he said, shaking. “Those flunkies just now were merely blabbering, junior has already exterminated them. Demon Lord I beg of you... please forgive me, Demon Lord.” He spoke quickly, but his voice was tremulous and filled with fear. Everyone in the area could hear it.

Complete silence filled the region both inside and outside the city.

The four Grand Elders stared in shock, as did Hanxue Shan and all of the other Cultivators in the city.

Outside, the Cultivators surrounding Luo Chong watched on blankly. Off in the distance, the Black Lands Palace Cultivators had strange expressions on their faces. They clearly weren't sure how to react to the strange turn of events just now.

The five Nascent Soul Cultivators' eyes were wide. Luo Chong was now acting in exactly the opposite way that he should have....

“Junior really did not know that you were in this place, great Demon Lord. Really, I really didn't know. I... I...” Luo Chong trembled as a feeling of imminent death washed through him. He knew that no one could save him, not his master, not the Eastern Lands alchemist, not even the five Nascent Soul Cultivators.

His heart filled with regret, complete and utter regret. He should never have left the Black Lands Palace....

Chapter 374: Spirit Severing Descends

Hanxue Shan stared, her phoenix-like eyes wide with intense astonishment. Feeling awe for the powerful was one of the laws of the land. After all of the things that had happened, Meng Hao's visage was now even more intensely imprinted onto her heart.

That was even more the case considering that in her mind, what Meng Hao had done just now had been for her sake.

Suddenly, her face flushed, and the look in her eyes as she gazed at him was completely different than before.

The four Grand Elders of Holy Snow City all gasped when they saw the inestimably noble Black Lands Dao Child Luo Chong virtually prostrating himself before Meng Hao. They suddenly realized that Meng Hao was even more enigmatic than they had imagined.

This mysterious aura gave the Grand Elders a completely different feeling than they'd had for Zhou Dekun. Meng Hao seemed... far more frightening!

Meng Hao's Dao of alchemy, which they had personally witnessed, his catalyzing and awakening of the Thorn Rampart, and the fear he inspired in the Black Lands Dao Child, all caused their esteem of Meng Hao to increase to an unprecedented level.

"Since you didn't know I was here, I'll forget the matter," said Meng Hao coolly, looking at Luo Chong. "But only this one time. Don't take this to be a precedent." When he heard the words, Luo Chong felt as if he had been given a new lease on life. His body relaxed. Trembling and excited, he bowed deeply to Meng Hao.

He had felt wronged, but now that he saw Meng Hao's understanding, that feeling transformed into gratefulness. Of course, he had been poisoned by Meng Hao, so he really should hate him. Complex feelings filled him, and he swore to himself that in this life... he would never again come into this man's presence.

Of course, if he knew that Meng Hao was also Fang Mu, then he would no doubt swear with redoubled intensity.

“I like the look of that Western Desert Cultivator over there,” said Meng Hao casually. “Could you lend him to me to study for a few days? I’ll give him back afterward.” Actually, this was his main purpose in stepping forward. His eyes glittered as he glanced at the Western Desert Cultivator’s totem tattoos.

The young Western Desert Cultivator’s face fell when he heard Meng Hao’s words. Before he could retreat, Luo Chong glanced back at him. As far as Luo Chong was concerned, Meng Hao’s words were orders to be followed without hesitation.

“Grab him!” he cried. The surrounding Cultivators didn’t hesitate. Their hands shot out as they grabbed the Western Desert Cultivator. He struggled a bit, but it only took the space of a few breaths for them to succeed in capturing him.

The young man trembled, and fear filled his eyes.

“The great Demon Lord has taken a liking to you,” said Luo Chong, his eyes brimming with viciousness. “That’s good luck for you! Don’t struggle!” He didn’t care that his actions might cause grudges or ill feelings with the Western Desert Cultivators. As far as he was concerned, Meng Hao’s instructions were the most important.

“Great Demon Lord, you speak of lending, but please, allow me to give this person to you as a gift. I truly hope that you will accept, great Demon Lord.” He indicated for the hesitant Cultivators behind him to deliver over the young Western Desert Cultivator. They immediately flew over toward the Thorn Rampart, threw the furious young man over, and then returned.

Having done these thing, Luo Chong glanced at Meng Hao, who was looking quite satisfied as he hoisted the young man over his shoulder and turned to head back into the city. At this point, Luo Chong finally heaved a sigh of relief. He clasped hands and bowed, then turned and shot off at high speed. The two thousand Cultivators who had come with him, including the old man with the silver mask, all left with him. Their masks

hid their embarrassed expressions as they did.

As the group was making to leave, one of the two Nascent Soul Cultivators from the Western Desert said, “The Black Lands Palace had better give the Western Desert a good explanation for this.” His voice was cool, and did not contain fury, yet was filled with power.

Even as the old man’s words sounded out, and Luo Chong and the others were about to leave, suddenly, a cold snort rang out, filling the air. The snort shook Heaven and Earth, transforming into a rumble that made everything vibrate. Cracks appeared on the surface of the ground, and it seemed as if the very air would be ripped into pieces.

It appeared as if the land couldn’t sustain the power of the snort, and was about to fall to pieces.

The snort caused the Nascent Soul Cultivator from the Western Desert to stumble backward a few paces. At the same time, Luo Chong and the others felt their hearts shaking, and stopped moving. Luo Chong’s eyes narrowed, and he started to pant.

Down on the ground, the multitude of beasts dropped onto their stomachs, quivering and wailing. The flying beasts also began to shake, and stopped moving.

The thousands of Cultivators on the ground felt their minds buzzing, filled with the sound of the snort, making them incapable of even thinking.

The sky above changed color and the ground heaved.

The countless thorns which surrounded Holy Snow City began to break apart. Shrill cries rang out as the entire city shook and filled with an enormous roaring sound. The massive city walls of ice and snow began to fall, and the star-shaped devices above the city collapsed.

All of the city’s protective spell formations had previously been penetrated, but since repaired. Under the power of this snort, though, they began to shatter and transform into flying dust.

Within the city, countless residences caved in. The Cultivators on the

city walls coughed up blood and their faces twisted. There were even about a hundred Foundation Establishment Cultivators whose bodies directly exploded.

If it weren't for the four Grand Elders' immediate actions to protect their Clan Members, the Clan would have sustained severe casualties. However, the price they paid for this caused them to cough up mouthfuls of blood. The old woman, Third Elder, who had already been injured, felt her Cultivation base suddenly drop. Her body grew weak, and she seemed to be even older than before.

Meng Hao's face flickered as he shot backward, coughing up four or five mouthfuls of blood. He looked up into the sky, where he saw what appeared to be a sun approaching!

This sun was black, and existed in the sky along with the normal blazing sun. If you looked closely, however, this black sun was actually a Cultivator wearing a black robe!

He appeared to be about forty years of age; however, he radiated an air of ancientness that far belied his young appearance. He was surrounded by a black glow that seemed to suck in all of the light around it. It was this that caused him to look like a black sun.

Along with him came an indescribable pressure which descended down from the sky.

Behind the black-robed Cultivator was a young man whose face was filled with reverence, even fanaticism. This young man was none other than... Hanxue Zong!

"Spirit Severing!!" Meng Hao's eyes narrowed and he began to breathe heavily.

It wasn't just him. The hearts and minds of everyone present began to tremble.

"Greetings, Spirit Severing Patriarch!" said Luo Chong excitedly. He immediately began to bow in mid-air. All the Cultivators surrounding him also began to prostrate themselves in shock.

Down on the ground, the thousands of Black Lands Palace Cultivators also dropped to their knees.

“Greetings, Spirit Severing Patriarch!”

The expressions of the Western Desert Cultivators changed. However, they did not kowtow, but merely bowed their heads. The two Western Desert Nascent Soul Cultivators gasped and lowered their heads in greeting.

Meng Hao’s heart sank. The arrival of the black-robed man indicated that this was definitely no longer an opening battle. A Spirit Severing Cultivator had been dispatched to bring things to an end.

Meng Hao frowned. “There are still two more months left before the Frigid Snow Larva is completed...” He sighed as he pulled the good luck charm out of his bag of holding. “Forget it. It seems there’s no way I’ll be able to get a Frigid Snow Larva. I’ll just have to figure out some other way of transcending the Tribulation.” He sighed emotionally. With a Spirit Severing Cultivator here, the situation really was doomed to end in only one way.

“If the mastiff were awake, or if my Cultivation base was at the Nascent Soul stage....” Meng Hao looked up at the black-robed Cultivator, sighing inwardly. Actually, he knew that even if he were of the Nascent Soul Stage, in front of a Spirit Severing Cultivator, he would be nothing more than an insect.

“Spirit Severing... Gain enlightenment of the Dao, Sever the self three times....” The Spirit Severing stage was a legendary realm that could only be reached through fortune, and not through seeking. Throughout the world, there were many Core Formation Cultivators, and not a few of the Nascent Soul stage. However, Spirit Severing Cultivators were rare, even in the expansive Southern Domain. Often, they would exist only as the Dao Reserve of a great Sect.

When Meng Hao thought of Spirit Severing, he couldn’t help but think of Patriarch Reliance.

As the black-robed Cultivator floated down from up in the sky, Holy

Snow City was blanketed with deathly silence. Despair filled every heart and mind, both the Frigid Snow Clan members and the other Cultivators. Each and every one abandoned all hope of fighting back.

A pleased expression filled the face of Hanxue Zong as he followed the black-robed Cultivator. His gaze swept over the Frigid Snow Clan members, and a callous look appeared in his eyes.

However, as the black-robed Cultivator was still about three thousand meters above the city, he suddenly stopped moving. A profound look appeared in his eyes, as if he were in a position of ultimate authority, as if the great Dao of the Heavens gave him the right to look down on all living things.

As he floated there, it seemed like the Heavens and the Earth were fused together, inseparable. And yet, at the same time, it was as if they were separated, congealed into his own Dao, making the will of Heaven impossible to expunge.

It was as if everything in the world existed because of his will. This was because he had long since reached the Spirit Severing stage, and his first Severing. As for what had been severed, only people of the same stage might be able to pick up on some of the clues.

“Fellow Daoist Hanxue, we haven’t seen each other for several hundred years. Still on your deathbed? Why don’t you let me see you on your way?” As his eyes swept across the land, it was as if none of the Cultivators there deserved to be within his line of sight. What he was looking at was located deep in a subterranean chamber. There, sitting cross-legged atop a star-shaped altar, was an old man. He was completely withered and looked like a corpse.

“Still sleeping?” continued the black robed Cultivator in a grating voice. “It seems my attempts to determine whether you are still alive were nothing but a waste. Let’s end this farce.” He shook his hand and then waved his arm.

The land in all directions began to quake. A Heavenly Pit suddenly appeared in the ground, right in the middle of the city!

It was at this very moment that the same ancient voice he had heard before once again spoke into Meng Hao's ear.

Chapter 375: Incredible Luck!

The entire city began to cave in. Many people were sucked along; they wanted to fly away, but suddenly discovered that their Cultivation bases couldn't be rotated at all, as if they didn't even exist.

At the moment, Meng Hao's hand was tightly clasped around the good luck charm. It still required a bit more than ten breaths of time to activate and was already emitting a glow. However, it was then that the ancient voice transmitted into his ear.

"Open your mind and connect with your Thorn Rampart. I am on the verge of death, but can bestow upon you an amazing bit of luck. Think of it as my way of thanking you for the kindness of protecting the bloodline of my Clan over these past months."

The ancient, weak voice was the same one that had told Meng Hao how to control the Thorn Rampart. Meng Hao was well aware who this person was, but nonetheless, he hesitated.

With the good luck charm, he was absolutely confident of being able to leave this place safely. If he listened to the ancient voice, he would be facing up against a Spirit Severing eccentric. No matter how cautious and careful he was, it would still be a perilous situation.

"There's no time," continued the voice. "If I wanted to possess you, I wouldn't have waited so long to do so. What are you hesitating for, lad? Do you really think your ancient good luck charm can help you escape from a Spirit Severing Cultivator?!"

"What luck is it that you plan to give me, senior?" transmitted Meng Hao, his eyes glittering. An intense power suddenly spread up from below. At the same time, miserable cries filled the air. Meng Hao didn't need to look down; he knew that the city was rapidly sinking down into the Heavenly Pit.

Cultivation bases in the entire area were being restricted; however, Meng Hao's Perfect Gold Core was not one of them. He could still flee of his own volition if he wished.

“I’m going to give you my Spirit Severing enlightenment. It will open a door for you in the future when you reach Spirit Severing. It will also create some hope for my Clan members....”

A huge rumbling interrupted the ancient voice. Holy Snow City was now more than half destroyed by the Heavenly Pit in the ground. Not too far off in the distance, in the area where the city was crumbling into, Meng Hao could see a pitch black abyss. It emanated a sinister Qi, which turned black as it circulated around.

It was at this time that Meng Hao’s good luck charm finished preparing. Without hesitation, he pushed down to activate it. It was at this time that his face suddenly fell.

The good luck charm didn’t work!

A boom filled the air as the rest of the city began to fall to pieces. Miserable cries filled the air. Meng Hao could feel the suction force from within the enormous hole growing stronger. The countless strands of black Qi were trying to pull him in.

At this critical moment, a look of determination filled his eyes.

“Junior agrees!” The instant he spoke the words, he opened his mind. At the same time, he sent out his Spiritual Sense to reestablish contact with the remnants of the Thorn Rampart that still existed within the city.

As soon as his Spiritual Sense touched the Thorn Rampart, the withered figure who safely sat cross-legged in the subterranean chamber suddenly performed an incantation gesture, causing a sealing mark to appear.

As soon as the sealing mark appeared, Meng Hao could sense the thorns that existed within the crumbling city expanding. They extended down into the subterranean chamber, which was already beginning to break apart. As they expanded down, they sprouted out with even more thorns, heading directly toward the withered, corpse-like old man who had been sitting there for who knew how many years.

They pierced into him, instantly creating a sort of connection between him and Meng Hao. The two of them were suddenly sharing a single body!

An unspeakably powerful force exploded out into Meng Hao's mind.

A booming sound filled his mind, and veins bulged out all over his body. His face distorted, and his eyes filled with veins of blood. He began to shake, and it felt as if his body were about to be ripped into pieces. Pain stabbed into his soul, and it felt as if his Spiritual Sense were about to shatter!

An intensely powerful Qi suddenly poured through him.

This Qi was not that of Core Formation or Nascent Soul, but rather... Spirit Severing!!

The instant the Qi exploded out, Meng Hao's mind reeled, and he heard a snarling roar.

"I am the Patriarch of the Frigid Snow Clan. I gained enlightenment of the Dao during a great tempest, and performed my First Severing a thousand years ago!"

As the voice echoed out in Meng Hao's mind, an image coalesced. Within the image, Meng Hao saw a tempest that stretched as far as the eye could see, rising from the Earth all the way up to the Heavens. Lightning crackled everywhere, shaking everything. This was a tempest which could flay a Nascent Soul Cultivator into pieces, and yet there in the middle of it all was a figure who exuded immense profundity.

It was a middle-aged man, tall, wearing a long robe. His head was raised toward the Heavens as he let out a powerful roar.

"Clan descendants, remember me! I am Hanxue Bao, sixth generation Patriarch of the Frigid Snow Clan. For my first Severing, I severed familial Love. However, I did not sever my love for my Clan! Severing Love and replacing it with the Dao, accomplished my first Spirit Severing, and incurred a half-Celestial Tempest!" 1

The image faded, leaving Meng Hao's mind spinning. Around him, a wind suddenly appeared. The wind screamed out from within the giant hole in the ground. The city was now no longer collapsing, and the Cultivators were no longer crying out. The vortex in the Heavenly Pit

suddenly calmed. The howling wind filled the hole, pushing the crumbling city back out from within.

The wind was now a tempest, sweeping across everything. An astonishing roar filled the air. The wind seemed capable of crashing through any obstacle; the sky dimmed and the earth quaked.

The beasts that spread out across the land emitted miserable shrieks and fell prone, trembling. The Cultivators from the Black Lands Palace coughed up blood, looks of astonishment on their faces.

The Western Desert Cultivators' faces filled with shock. As for Luo Chong and his group, their expressions also changed, and they began to pant as they looked at the raging tempest that swirled around Holy Snow City.

In contrast, the black-robed, Spirit Severing Cultivator up in the sky was laughing. As his laughter spread out, an unprecedented, black glow shined out from his eyes. At this moment, it really looked as if he were some type of black sun.

“Spirit Severing Will! Patriarch Hanxue Bao, I never realized you would display such courage and power on the verge of death! You transformed your Spirit Severing Will into a legacy brand which you then gave to a Cultivator that isn't even of the Frigid Snow Clan! How sad! You severed Love with your first Severing, and yet, when your son betrayed you, you showed empathy, and didn't kill him! You went against your own Dao, and destroyed yourself!

“Well, since none of your Clan members can accept the legacy of your Spirit Severing Will, it seems it will become luck for this member of the junior generation. Unfortunately, in the end, the luck will not belong to him. This brand, which contains successive generations of Frigid Snow Clan Grand Dragoners, will be mine! Only someone as powerful as me would be able to connect with more than three generations. At the most, this infant could connect with one. Any more would kill him instantly!

“Disciple, spit up some of your blood! Watch as Master eradicates your kin for you. Your Dao will be completed, and the day of your Spirit

Severing will finally come!” The black-robed Cultivator laughed loudly. Next to him, Hanxue Zong had a complex look on his face. However, without another word, he slapped his chest and spit up a mouthful of blood.

As soon as the blood shot out from his mouth, the black-robed Cultivator snatched it up. He squeezed it into his hand, whereupon it formed the bloody image of a teenager, a look of fear filling his face, as well as agitation.

It looked very similar to Hanxue Zong.

As soon as the teenager appeared, his eyes filled with hatred. A bloody glow emanated out from him, and he shot down toward the tempest surrounding Holy Snow City.

As it neared, Meng Hao lifted his head up and let out a roar of pain. His will still remained, and was still his, but the instant he saw the youth, his heart filled with agony. The pain was indescribable, filled with sorrow, fury and insanity.

He could sense that the tempest around him was beginning to collapse, and that it was happening because of the blood-colored teenager.

“Zong’er....” said the ancient voice in Meng Hao’s head. It echoed about inside him, filled with deep emotions that were impossible to state clearly. All of the tens of thousands of things that needed to be said, were all said in that single name.

As it echoed about inside Meng Hao, the tempest around him began to fill with raindrops. As the rain fell, Meng Hao realized that it was not truly rain, but rather, the tears of the sixth generation Patriarch of the Frigid Snow Clan.

“Regrets...? No, no regrets!” The echoes of the voice resonated in Meng Hao’s head as finally, the shocking tempest went mad. It began to collapse, and as it did, it tore everything in its path into shreds, including the blood-colored teenager.

As the teenager shattered into fragments, a new voice suddenly boomed

out in Meng Hao's mind.

“I am the fifth generation Patriarch of the Frigid Snow Clan, Grand Dragoneer Hanxue Ding! I grasped the meaning of Will of Heaven atop a snowy mountain and performed my First Severing in the Ten Thousand Dragons Pool!” This voice was clearly different from that of Hanxue Bao's. It was somewhat less domineering, and yet a bit more dignified. As the voice reverberated through Meng Hao, his body filled with an unparalleled, intense pain. 2

It felt as if his soul were about to collapse, and his body were going to be ripped into pieces. Up above, the sky grew dim, as if it were about to disappear. Suddenly, the image of an immense body of deep water appeared up above.

Ripples moved across the surface of the water, spreading out in all directions. The sound of a multitude of roars could be heard as countless black dragons burst out from the deep waters, which seemed to hang upside down above everything. The roaring dragons caused all of the beasts on the ground to wail mournfully. As for the Cultivators, looks of astonishment filled their faces, and blood sprayed from their mouths.

This was especially true of the Western Desert Cultivators, whose bodies trembled violently. One of the two Nascent Soul Cultivators looked up, and spoke in a weak voice: “The Ten Thousand Dragons Pool! According to the legends, after the Tribal Steward of the Frigid Snow Horde became a Grand Dragoneer, he took the Ten Thousand Dragons Pool as his own. After that, it disappeared from the Western Desert!!”

Up above, the black-robed Cultivator's face flickered. “So, this kid has managed to support a second legacy brand!!”

*

1. The “Bao” in his name is the same character from the word “tempest”.
2. The “Ding” in his name is the character for “cauldron”.

Chapter 376: Brands!

The roars of ten thousand dragons emerged from the inverted black waters up above in the sky. The roars were shocking to the extreme, causing blood to spray from the mouths of the beasts on the ground. One by one, they began to bleed from their eyes, nose and mouth. Then, they simply dropped dead.

As for the Cultivators down below, they also coughed up blood. Their bodies grew listless, their minds reeled, the flow of their Qi and blood was suppressed, and their Cultivation bases hung on the verge of collapse.

A grim look appeared on the face of the black-robed Cultivator in mid-air. He began to perform an incantation with his right hand.

“This is definitely beyond what I anticipated. He can support two generations of legacies. Well, even that will not be enough!

“Life births destruction, Yellow Springs of the Three Worlds! Flowers birth fruit, reveal the Three Worlds!” The black-robed Cultivator’s hand turned into a blur, and in front of him, a black orb appeared. The orb began to expand and emanate a black glow in all directions as it transformed into a black sun. It burned as it shot up.x

As it neared the ten thousand roaring dragons, the black sun suddenly exploded, shredding the air itself, destroying everything near it as it turned into an all-consuming black hole.

As soon as the black hole appeared, the dragons roared. A rumbling filled the air, and the ground quaked. The dragons didn’t seem capable of controlling their own bodies as they were sucked toward the black hole.

“If you really were the Frigid Snow Clan’s fifth generation Grand Dragoneer, then I would turn and leave. But you’re just a trifling legacy brand. You can’t stop me!” The black-robed Cultivator’s voice was cool as he flicked his sleeve. Down below, the Heavenly Pit that the tempest had filled in, once again shook and began to open.

Around Meng Hao in the city were several hundred people, the faces of

whom were all pale white and filled with hopelessness. The war had reached the point that they weren't even capable of participating in it. They were like dried out leaves in a windstorm, incapable of acting for themselves.

Beneath the Ten Thousand Dragon Pool, veins bulged out all over Meng Hao's body. His face was twisted into a vicious expression as he struggled to control the pain inside of him. It surged against him like the tide, and he fought against the urge to simply fade into unconsciousness. Gritting his teeth, he held on.

The ancient, weak voice of Hanxue Bao spoke his dying words to Meng Hao: "You must not lose consciousness. When seizing the luck of Frigid Snow, one generation makes you a chosen son, two generations makes you a hero, and three generations makes you Chosen of Heaven. As for four, such a thing has never been seen!

"Each glorious brand consists of the most powerful expert of a generation. As the legacy joins your soul, the brand enters the world to accompany you. The more generations you acquire, the more brands. The day you enter Spirit Severing, all of these brands, these first turning points of us powerful Cultivators... will explode out to help you!

"Press on! If you are able to support the third generation legacy, then you may be able to avoid the calamity which bears down on you. This is as much assistance as I can provide. I truly hope that you succeed, and help my Clan to pass through this disaster!"

Meng Hao lifted his head up and roared. As he did, his clothing ripped into shreds. His hair whipped about, and everything around him seemed to shatter. The only thing left was his roar.

As he roared, the ten thousand dragons, regardless if they were being sucked in by the black hole or not, all joined him. A massive, glorious roar filled the air.

The black-robed Cultivator frowned, then flashed an incantation with his right hand. He then spread his hand out and pushed his palm down toward Meng Hao.

“Ashes to ashes, dust to dust. That which has passed away, shall pass. What remains, remains for eternity.” As the black-robed Cultivators words echoed out, the ten thousand dragons exploded into pieces one by one. Up above, the Ten Thousand Dragons Pool also collapsed.

It seemed as if everything was ending, just as the black-robed Cultivator had said.

However, it was at this moment that a tremor ran through Meng Hao's body. Whereas his eyes had been scarlet moments ago, they were now pure white.

When the black-robed Cultivator saw this, his face flickered again, revealing an expression of disbelief.

“Impossible!”

Even as his mind was rocked, the voice of a third person could be heard in Meng Hao's head. This voice was venerable and ancient, and filled all of Meng Hao's consciousness.

“I am the fourth generation Patriarch of the Frigid Snow Clan, Hanxue Hui of the Yellow Springs. I awoke to myself in a land of ashen death. I gained enlightenment in a forest of bones. I conceived the concept of spawning the silent spirit. I cast away my body to become a Dao Spirit. This was my First Severing! I am Hanxue Hui, fourth generation Grand Dragoneer!” As the voice echoed out, an unprecedented amount of thick Death Qi suddenly appeared in front of Meng Hao. It spread out, filling the area, causing both the sky and the land to turn gray. 1

Suddenly, countless roars could be heard in the gray sky. The roars soon took on shape; countless phantom souls appeared. They looked ancient, filled with rancor and madness.

On the ground, all of the beasts that had died just moments ago suddenly began to twitch and then rise to their feet. A gray light shone in their eyes as they lifted their heads up and howled. The ground trembled as all the dead bodies on the ground rose up, even those of the Cultivators, who stood with eyes blank and vacant.

Up above in the sky, a rumble filled the air as an enormous skeletal dragon roared into being. Down below, a gigantic skeletal snake burst up through the soil.

The entire world had become like a world of death. It was at this moment that behind Meng Hao, a yellow river suddenly appeared out of nowhere. If you looked closely at the surging waters, you would say that they were actually composed of... countless ghosts.

These were no yellow river waters. These were the Yellow Springs!

The Yellow Springs had appeared, something stupefying to the extreme.

Atop the Yellow Springs floated a pagoda composed of eighteen levels, just like the eighteen levels of hell!

Grayish Death Qi circulated around Meng Hao, causing his face to look pale. Thick Death Qi radiated off of his body. Suddenly, he opened his eyes!

When he did, it was like a clap of thunder. A rumbling boom rose up to the Heavens as he stared out with his pure gray eyes.

“Yellow Springs Grand Dragoner!!” All of the low-level Cultivators in the area suddenly went pale in the face. They looked as if they had lost their minds. Their bodies were stiff as if their life force were being obliterated.

It was the same with the Western Desert Cultivators. The two Western Desert Nascent Soul Cultivators stood there, bodies trembling as they looked at Meng Hao floating in mid-air. The looks of stupefaction on their faces exceeded those when the tempest and the Ten Thousand Dragons Pool appeared.

“Six thousand years ago,” said one of them, “the legendary Yellow Springs Grand Dragoner single-handedly caused a foul wind and a rain of blood to pass over the Western Desert; it was a reign of terror! He enslaved millions of dead beasts and even raised a level 10 neo-demon!!

“According to the legend, the number of lives he took before he himself perished, was impossible to count!! He founded the Land of Bones.... He

established the Gray Mountains.... He....” The minds of the two Nascent Soul Cultivators were filled with absolute disbelief.

“Dammit,” said the black-robed Cultivator. A look of concentration filled his eyes. Behind him, Hanxue Zong looked like he was about to go crazy. His heart filled with intense jealousy, and inwardly, he was screaming that all of this belonged to him!

“So, you can support three generations of brands!! Your piddling Core Formation Cultivation base does seem to have quite a bit of potential. How rare.... Too bad that still won’t be enough!” With that, the black-robed Cultivator flashed another incantation and then waved his hand out.

“I gained enlightenment of the Dao in the blackness of night, under the spinning Cosmos. For my First Severing, I severed Daytime!” His eyes gleamed as he raised his right hand and pointed toward the sky. A lightning bolt suddenly appeared in the grayness. A boom echoed out as the lightning bolt descended directly toward the right hand of the black-robed Cultivator.

This color of this lightning was pitch black!

The black-robed Cultivator snatched it, and as he did, it transformed into a twisted Lightning Blade which stretched all the way up into the sky. The black-robed Cultivator swung the Lightning Blade, seemingly intending to rend the gray sky in two!

A huge boom echoed out as the gigantic Lightning Blade slashed down. A massive breach appeared in the sky as the blade chopped down, directly eradicating the grayness of the world.

Meng Hao’s body shook as pain stabbed through him. Even as the Lightning Blade descended, Meng Hao subconsciously lifted his hands up into the air. As he did, all of the dead creatures began to float up to form a gigantic sphere of bones!

All of the gray Qi in the area shot toward the sphere of bones. In the blink of an eye, the sphere was infused with the grayness, and began to emanate a shocking power as it flew to meet the Lightning Blade.

A massive explosion ripped out that caused all of the Cultivators below the Nascent Soul stage to instantly pass out. Some of them even exploded.

As the sound of it continued to reverberate out, the sphere of bones collapsed into pieces, unable to stand up to the Lightning Blade.

Blood sprayed from Meng Hao's mouth as he fell and slammed into the ground. Once more, the Heavenly Pit opened up beneath Holy Snow City. Again, the city began to collapse and fall. Meng Hao laughed bitterly. Three generations were his limit; even that was not enough to allow him to secure victory over a true Spirit Severing expert.

Up above, the black-robed Cultivator breathed in deeply. Blood oozed from the corners of his mouth as he looked down to where Meng Hao had fallen. A strange light gleamed in his eyes.

"The Frigid Snow Clan's Six Generations of Legacy Brands certainly live up to their reputation. Once I get my hands on them, I'll definitely be able to perform my Third Severing. Then I will complete the great circle of Spirit Severing." His eyes radiated determination as he lifted his right hand. Just as he was about to reach down to grab Meng Hao, his face changed for a third time.

Complete shock filled him!!

Even as Meng Hao landed on the ground, a mark appeared on his right hand!!

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1. The "Hui" in his name is the character for "ash" or "gray".

Chapter 377: Agarwood!!

This mark was not unfamiliar to Meng Hao. It was the same one that had appeared when he reached Foundation Establishment and Core Formation!

When the young woman from the Fang Clan saw the mark, her expression had changed. Instead of striking Meng Hao, she changed the direction of her blow.

Images from all of these scenes played out in Meng Hao's mind.

And now... the mark had appeared again! 1

He felt an intense heat radiating out from the back of his hand. It turned into a stinging pain that spread throughout his body until he was completely submerged in it. Finally, he let out a roar.

At the same time, a sort of boundless life force seemed to be released from within the pain. It spread through him, healing his body. Furthermore, he could sense that it also gave him the chance to accept the fourth legacy.

Suddenly, an archaic voice sounded out in his mind. It was boundlessly ancient, transmitted from ten thousand years in the past. It did not come from the mark on his hand, but rather, the Frigid Snow Clan legacy!

"I am the third generation Grand Dragoner of the Frigid Snow Clan. My name is Qi'nian Ning.... I accepted the legacy of the second generation in the frigid cold of midwinter. I gained enlightenment on Mount Agarwood. I severed my Dao on Midwinter Plain. Before me, the Clan was called Agarwood. After me, it was called Frigid Snow.... Clan members, engrave upon your minds: our power was fading, we could not support ourselves. Sadly, we were forced to leave the Western Desert." 2

As the voice spoke, an image of a mountain appeared in the pupil of each of Meng Hao's eyes!

This was Mount Agarwood. The same moment that the images of the mountains appeared, up above in the sky, the breach slashed by the

Lightning Blade began to split open. An enormous mountain suddenly began to descend.

The size of this mountain was difficult to describe; the power it radiated was boundless and shocking.

Just barely visible on the mountain were two glowing characters that made up the word Agarwood. As the mountain descended, the ground shook and began to crack and sink.

The Heavenly Pit disappeared, and the Lightning Blade shattered. A massive sinkhole appeared on the battlefield, which turned into an enormous basin. The two Nascent Soul Cultivators from the Black Lands Palace coughed up blood. Their masks shattered, revealing the shocked faces of two old men. Immediately, they began to flee.

The two Nascent Soul Cultivators from the Western Desert also coughed up blood as they were tossed backward. The shock that filled their hearts was impossible to describe with words.

“Qi’nan Ning.... Ten thousand years ago, he was one of the three most powerful figures in the Western Desert. He... he was actually a member of the Frigid Snow Tribe?! How is that possible?! How come the ancient records never mentioned anything about this!?”

“Qi’nan Ning.....” The black-robed Cultivator’s face flickered. Behind him, Hanxue Zong stared mutely. He suddenly coughed up a mouthful of blood, a look of disbelief in his eyes. How could he ever have imagined that the Patriarch of his own bloodline was actually a member of the famous Agarwood Clan from ten thousand years ago!

“Why change the name of the Clan?” Hanxue Zong didn’t have any time to think about it further. The black-robed Cultivator, eyes glistening with concentration, lifted his right hand and was about to wave it when suddenly, his face flickered yet again.

“Dammit! How can this kid have so much latent talent? The legacy isn’t concluded yet....”

The ground rumbled as the enormous Mount Agarwood descended.

Meng Hao floated there, his eyes shining with a bright light. As of this moment, he knew with absolute certainty this time, he really was experiencing an incredible amount of luck.

The Spirit Severing brands remained in his mind. He couldn't employ them except during the branding process, but... when it came time for his own Spirit Severing, it would be vastly easier.

Furthermore, after he reached Spirit Severing, the power he would be able to wield would be unprecedented, and he would be able to use any of the brands that existed in his mind.

Such luck was normally something he would never have access to; only Spirit Severing Cultivators should be able to acquire such things.

However, due to chance occurrences, the luck fell upon him. As such, he would do everything within his power to acquire even more!

"The legacies of the sixth, fifth, fourth and third generations... are not enough," thought Meng Hao. "I must acquire the second generation legacy. I will not squander such luck. I'll use it to secure my future rise to prominence! I'm not sure why the mark appeared on the back of my hand again just now, but now I have hope. I possess all the requirements, so therefore, I will definitely open up the full potential of these legacies! It doesn't matter if the second generation is Frigid Snow Clan or Agarwood Clan. Second generation legacy, come out!" Meng Hao lifted his head up and roared. Light shone up from his eyes as he floated there in mid-air, his hair whipping about. The sight of it was shocking and strangely beautiful!

Within his head, a ceaseless rumbling sound could be heard. This sound exceeded that of the sixth generation tempest, swept away the fifth generation ten thousand dragons, crushed the fourth generation Yellow Springs, and shattered the third generation Mount Agarwood. It transformed into eminently domineering, supreme noise.

The sound seemed to be echoing out in response to Meng Hao's expression of desire.

"I am Qi'nan Tian, second generation Grand Dragoner of the Agarwood Clan. With the legacy power of the Patriarch, I controlled the power of the

four seasons. I am not an Immortal, but by controlling the seasons, I silenced the Western Desert. I am... the Heaven of the Western Desert!" 3

The voice was common, but it echoed out with a soaring, overbearing aura. The domineering air emanated out from Meng Hao, changing everything. The patch of sky directly above Mount Agarwood suddenly looked bizarre in appearance.

Within this patch of sky could be seen resplendent Spring flowers, a light Summer rain, dancing, frost-covered Autumn leaves, and bitter Winter snow!

This patch of sky contained all four seasons, and its power spread out over everything, transforming the land, causing everything to tremble. The two Nascent Soul Cultivators from the Black Lands Palace coughed up blood, and their bodies began to wither as they slipped into unconsciousness.

Blank expressions covered the faces of the two Western Desert Nascent Soul Cultivators. They couldn't feel or sense anything; their life force was slipping away.

Hanxue Zong's body shook and his mind reeled; he coughed up a mouthful of blood as his body suddenly aged. Up ahead of him, the black-robed Cultivator's pupils constricted, and his eyes filled with terror and astonishment.

Without even thinking about it, he backed up, panting as he stared at the Four Seasons Sky above Mount Agarwood.

"That's not a Spirit Severing brand, that's... a Dao Seeking brand!! Dammit, the Frigid Snow Clan actually had a Dao Seeking expert! How is that possible? A Dao Seeking expert in the Western Desert.... Agarwood.... Agarwood...." The black-robed Cultivator's face fell as he suddenly lost confidence in his ability to seize the legacy. "If I can't seize this legacy now, then it will never belong to me. Even if I kill this punk later, I wouldn't be able to take it. Dammit! How come this kid is so troublesome!?!?"

A twisted look of madness appeared in his eyes. He had been preparing

for this day for a long time, and needed the luck of the Frigid Snow Clan legacy for his Third Severing. As such, he wasn't willing to give up so easily.

"Five generations. So, you can support five legacy generations. Dammit, there's only six in total. Don't tell me he's going to acquire them all! This kid's greed is something rarely seen in the world! People as greedy as this deserve to die! I won't let you continue!!" The black-robed Cultivator's heart buzzed. As of now, he no longer looked down on Meng Hao, but rather, was convinced that Meng Hao would be able to acquire the full legacy. Even though it seemed unbelievable, he didn't have time to think about the matter too much. Eyes glittering with killing intent, his body flashed. Drawing on the full power of his Spirit Severing Cultivation base, he shot in Meng Hao's direction.

"I don't care what price I have to pay, I will stop you!" Determination filled his eyes as he slammed into the Four Seasons Sky, and Mount Agarwood.

An indescribable pressure weighed down on his entire body, causing the black-robed Cultivator to shake, and his flesh to begin to evaporate.

"BREAK!" he roared. The evaporation of his body suddenly slowed. He gritted his teeth and shot forward toward Meng Hao. In the blink of an eye, he was three hundred meters away from him!

Those final three hundred meters would be extremely difficult to cross.

Actually, he knew that the best way to handle this situation would be to wait until Meng Hao couldn't hold on any longer, and self-detonated. As far as interfering with the branding process, the best would be to take some action while at a distance. The most stupid method was what he was doing right now, which was to personally approach Meng Hao.

Unfortunately, he had no other options. Interfering from outside did no good, and waiting for Meng Hao to self-detonate wasn't possible. Therefore, he had to move in as he was doing now.

As rumbling sounds continued to fill the air, Meng Hao completely ignored the incoming black-robed Cultivator. Breathing heavily, he looked

up into the sky, his eyes radiating intense determination. He had accepted five generations of legacies from powerful experts. However, as this happened, and the increasing power was revealed, it only made Meng Hao's desire for the first generation legacy grow even stronger.

"Agarwood Clan, first generation legacy!!" he roared.

The sound echoed out into the ears of the black-robed Cultivator, causing his heart to begin to pound. An uneasy feeling filled his heart as he looked at Meng Hao, whose head was raised in determination. The black-robed Cultivator gritted his teeth, then raised his hand toward the blank-faced Hanxue Zong behind him.

"Blood and Will Liquefaction!" he cried, pointing at Hanxue Zong. Hanxue Zong's body began to shake, and he let out a blood-curdling shriek. His body rapidly withered, and in the blink of an eye, he had turned into a desiccated corpse. All of the blood in his body spurted out and shot toward the black-robed Cultivator. It circulated around his body for a moment; then he shot forward at incredible speed.

The three hundred meter distance began to close. However, the pressure of the five legacy brands pushing down on the black-robed Cultivator was rapidly eating away at the Frigid Snow Clan blood which gave him his speed. Once it completely disappeared, he would be in great danger.

"DIE!" he cried. He was now less than thirty meters away from Meng Hao. He lifted his hand up, and a billowing Lightning Blade slashed down toward Meng Hao.

Inside his mind, Meng Hao used Spiritual Sense to transmit a message out. "The bloodline of Agarwood comes from the Western Desert. Western Desert totems come from countless demons. As for me, I... I am the Ninth Demon Sealer. Agarwood Clan legacy, yield to me as you should!"

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Note from Deathblade about Agarwood: Sometimes translating a chapter goes super smooth and fast. Other times, I spend more time on a single passage or even word, than the rest of the chapter. This was one such chapter. In Chinese, what I'm translating as "Agarwood" is

pronounced “qi’nan,” and is a sub-species of a type of a fragrant tree that in English is called agarwood. I probably spent about two hours total just researching this term, including some digging into a Sanskrit/English dictionary (the word apparently came into Chinese from Sanskrit). Special thanks to RWX for consulting with me about it. To save you the trouble of a google search, here’s a link to the wikipedia article about it.

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1. As a recap, this mark first appeared in chapter 100. It was seen most recently when he met Fang Yu from the Fang Clan in chapter 309. The events mentioned in which she saw the mark were in the following chapter, chapter 310.
2. Qi’nan is the transliteration of “Agarwood.” Ning means “peace” or “tranquility”.
3. The “Tian” in his name means “Heaven” or “sky”.

Chapter 378: Exterminate the Spirit!

“I am the Agarwood, a Spirit from the Ninth Sea. I fell to South Heaven and into the Western Desert.... I encountered a magical transformation, which reopened my consciousness. Righteous Bestowal made me Demonic. My bloodline remained in South Heaven and evolved into a Clan. My legacy was passed down from generation to generation, but few nowadays possess my bloodline.

“The Agarwood has two heads, the body of a dragon, and the tail of a phoenix. It never sheds tears; shedding tears ends its life. Now, I am gone. I left South Heaven to return home.... Other than the League of Demon Sealers, only my descendants can receive my legacy!” The ancient voice echoed out in Meng Hao’s head. Endless amounts of glorious light surrounded him. Suddenly, the illusory image of a creature appeared. It was shaped like a dragon, with two heads, and the tail of a phoenix, and was no less than three thousand meters long!

The instant the two-headed Agarwood appeared, the sky faded, and a roar filled all creation. Meng Hao could sense a bizarre, unspeakable power pouring into him from the Agarwood.

The descending Lightning Blade of the black-robed Cultivator shattered into pieces. His eyes filled with astonishment, and he immediately fell back, dumbstruck. He could sense an unprecedented aura of fear and terror emanating off of this two-headed beast.

“Run away!” This was the first thing that filled his mind. He had to get away from this place. His Cultivation base was at the Spirit Severing stage, but he was a cautious person. That was why he had done his research before coming here.

His prudence was why he didn’t care that he was a Spirit Severing Patriarch, nor that he was facing up against nothing more than a Core Formation stripling. Matters regarding face meant nothing to him at the moment. All he cared about was the acute sense of crisis that filled his heart.

As the black-robed Cultivator fled, a voice filled Meng Hao's mind. The voice was familiar. It was none other than the sixth generation Patriarch, Hanxue Bao! "Kill him!"

Next, another voice could be heard, that of the fifth generation Grand Dragoneer! "Kill him!"

"Kill him!"

"Kill him!"

Voices filled his head. From the sixth generation all the way to the second, Qi'nan Tian. They rang out one after another, and as they did, Meng Hao's eyes filled with a cold glow. He slowly lifted up his right hand.

The Agarwood which twisted about in the air around him suddenly blurred with speed. It transformed into beams of light that bored into Meng Hao's body, fusing into him!

Meng Hao breathed in slowly, and then said, "Tempest!" Instantly, a black tempest sprang into being around Meng Hao. It spread out rapidly, making it seem as if the entire world were filled with its fury.

Within the tempest appeared the towering figure of Hanxue Bao. His appearance was somewhat indistinct, but his stature was indomitable. As soon as he appeared, his gaze fell upon the black-robed Cultivator.

The black-robed Cultivator's scalp went numb, and a sensation like death swept over him. He suddenly had the urge to laugh out loud. He was a Spirit Severing Patriarch, and yet here he was, feeling the approach of death in front of a Core Formation Cultivator.

Not only was it terrifying, it was supremely comical.

"Ten Thousand Dragons," said Meng Hao, waving his right hand. The Ten Thousand Dragons Pool appeared again. Within it, ten thousand black dragons roared. Shockingly, behind them appeared the figure of an old man wearing a black robe, who gazed coldly at the Spirit Severing Cultivator.

This was none other than the fifth generation Patriarch!

“Yellow Springs!” said Meng Hao, the third in his string of statements. A roaring sound filled the air as the Yellow Springs suddenly appeared, along with the eighteen layers of hell. The world turned gray, and a thick Death Qi sprang up which transformed into the image of a man wearing a gray robe. He held a skull in one hand, and gray Qi rippled around him which transformed into the images of all manner of beasts.

This was the fourth generation Patriarch!

“Midwinter!” said Meng Hao. He felt power bursting around him, all coming from the brands in his mind. This was the bizarre power of the Agarwood that had poured into him!

The third patriarch appeared within a snowstorm, the coldness of which froze the very ground.

Suddenly, crackling sounds filled the air as Mount Agarwood appeared, surrounding by endless snowy winds and lightning. At the very peak of the mountain, surrounding by snow and wind, was an old man who looked down at the black-robed Cultivator.

The black-robed Cultivator’s face was pale white. He spit up a mouthful of blood, dramatically increasing his speed. He was trying to create a portal to teleport away, but couldn’t.

“Four Seasons!” Killing intent radiated out from Meng Hao’s eyes. As it did, the sky above changed as images of the four seasons appeared, covering everything.

“Agarwood!” This was the last of Meng Hao’s successive words. As he spoke them, his right hand descended, and he pointed directly at the fleeing black-robed Cultivator.

As he extended his finger, the black tempest congealed into the form of two enormous wings!

The ten thousand roaring dragons, along with the Dragons Pool itself, began the head of a dragon!

The Yellow Springs twisted, pulling the eighteen layers of hell along with it to form an enormous dragon-shaped body, nearly three thousand meters

long.

Mount Agarwood collapsed, and the pieces formed into the tail and claws of a phoenix!

Finally... the Four Seasons Sky fused together to form a second head. All of these things congealed together to become what in ancient times had rebuked the Heavens... the Agarwood!

Stormy wings, dragons' heads, a body formed from the Yellow Springs, a mountain for a tail, and the Four Seasons!

When the Agarwood appeared, it let out a roar that cracked the sky and shattered the land. It was a force that could annihilate everything, sweeping out in all directions. At this moment, the black-robed Cultivator sensed an unprecedented feeling of life-and-death danger. It was a force of destruction which he could simply not bear.

His pupils constricted, and both hands rapidly flashed an incantation. Magical treasures appeared, and finally a black glow that rose up to the heavens and took on the shape of a black sun.

"If the true self of any of you appeared, I would be dead. Instead, you've formed the Agarwood. Well, I've performed my Second Severing. You can't destroy my reincarnation. The only thing you can do is stop my first body!

"Reincarnation exists, so I will always exist. My Karma cannot be annihilated! The Deification Altar of the Heavens of Ji has my name on it! You can't hook my Karma! I'll be resurrected!" The black-robed Cultivator raised his head up and howled. The black sun slammed into the Agarwood, and an enormous boom rose up. Everything shattered, destroying the land, killing all of the Cultivators directly below.

Luo Chong was lucky; around the time Meng Hao had received the brand of the fifth generation Frigid Snow Patriarch, he'd gotten a bad feeling and had fled. Because of his prudent action, he and a few hundred other Cultivators who went with him were spared.

The explosion rippled out, and the Agarwood slowly vanished.

The black sun also faded. As it did, an image could be seen within of the

black-robed Cultivator, which then transformed into ash. The brightly glowing light which had surrounded them slowly sank into the earth, and they were gone.

The black-robed Cultivator was nowhere to be seen.

Meng Hao wasn't sure if he was alive or dead. Slowly, everything around him started to return to normal. An unparalleled sense of weakness washed through him. His vision started to fade and he began to collapse into unconsciousness.

Before that could happen, though, he bit the tip of his tongue, using the last scrap of borrowed energy he possessed to do something he would normally be incapable of doing... he spit out some Divine Will which then shot off in the direction of the former Dongluo City.

That was his final action before everything faded into blackness and he fell down to the ground.

Holy Snow City was still there, although it was virtually in complete ruins. There were less than three hundred Cultivators left alive, including the Four Grand Elders. All of them stood there, their faces pale, looking at Meng Hao with expressions of deep veneration.

Meng Hao couldn't see anything, but he could sense that someone was holding him. He also smelled a delicate fragrance. Within the blackness of his world, an ancient voice slowly echoed out in his mind.

"Successor, remember the Agarwood. I can project to you three times to help you avoid death."

Meanwhile, far away from Holy Snow City, on the other side of the Black Lands, in the former Dongluo City, more than five thousand Cultivators were running and yelling.

"Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life! When the Lord Fifth appears, who dares to cause strife!"

The more than five thousand Cultivators were dashing around the city in a circular pattern. The sight of it was quite astonishing. The ground shook as they ran, and a fog roiled around them, deep within which was

what appeared to be a bright glow.

The glow bore the semblance of a sword, slowly gathering together. The glow didn't spread out, although it did emanate a frightening Qi. Nearby the glow was the parrot, who looked nervous. Its wings flapped as it flew around the bright glow.

"Ah, the Immortal Execution Formation, created by none other than myself, Lord Fifth. Dammit, this spell formation never screwed Lord Fifth over nine times. That never happened!" The parrot clenched its jaw as if it had just made a difficult decision. Just as it seemed to be on the verge of charging into the bright light, the Divine Will from Meng Hao arrived.

The parrot suddenly stopped moving. It stared in shock for a moment, then let out a shriek.

"Scared me to death! Just about completely broke my concentration. So, you're in trouble, eh Meng Hao? Need me to rescue you? Alright, alright. We'll have to see what furred and feathered things you can find for me in the future. I guess I'll go save you." With that, the parrot flapped its wings, flying up.

A roaring filled the air and the ground shook. More than five thousand Cultivators who had taken refuge in the Church of the Golden Light stared blankly up into the sky at the parrot as it spoke.

"Listen up, children! Your Patriarch Golden Light is in trouble. Let's go save him! Come come. Start running in the way I taught you. Use the steps of the Immortal Execution Formation. Three circles to the left, three circles to the right. Shake those butts.... Go as fast as you can! Now, call it out with me...."

The Cultivators formed a long line and began running. A billowing fog sprang up that looked like dark clouds, which then whistled off into the distance.

Chapter 379: Offers

When Meng Hao woke up, he found himself staring at someone's back.

It was a beautiful silhouette. Graceful curves accentuated beautiful shoulders. A supple waist descended into perfect roundness.

She wore a light pink blouse that Meng Hao almost didn't notice when he looked at her.

Her hair was long and beautiful, and she emanated a delicate, youthful aroma. Suddenly, the overcast sky seemed to brighten a bit for Meng Hao.

It wasn't that Meng Hao didn't enjoy looking at beauty. However, as a Cultivator, the first thing he did when he opened his eyes was not gaze upon the beautiful figure in front of him; instead, he sent out his Spiritual Sense to check whether or not his belongings had been touched after he passed out.

He was surrounded by ruins. However, he could tell that he was still in Holy Snow City. Although, the city itself now consisted only of broken and shattered buildings. There was something strange about everything. A silver light covered the ground, clearly some kind of spell. However, this spell was clearly not complete; it was obviously just beginning to form.

Everything was quiet. The only thing that could be heard was the crackling which came from the bonfires in the area.

Off in the distance, he could see two of the four Grand Elders sitting there cross-legged. In addition, there were a little over a hundred Cultivators, all of them meditating, clearly exhausted.

Almost all of these people were members of the Frigid Snow Clan. There were only a few that didn't belong to the Clan. Meng Hao remembered glancing toward the ground before passing out and seeing about three hundred people.

The other two Frigid Snow Clan Grand Elders were concentrating on the spell, and were conversing in low tones. Their expressions were anxious, and they occasionally glanced up to look at the sky.

The moment Meng Hao woke up, the four Grand Elders looked over at him. This, in turn, attracted the attention of the other surrounding Cultivators. Soon, everyone had opened their eyes and were looking at Meng Hao. The beautiful figure in front of him was, of course, Hanxue Shan, who opened her eyes from meditation to turn and look at Meng Hao.

Happiness flickered within her gaze, as well as something else, the infatuation of a young girl, and adoration.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and then slowly sat up. Hanxue Shan approached and then supported him with her arm. He felt weak, but his Cultivation base was intact. He couldn't make himself refuse her assistance.

He could see the haggard expression on her face. It was filled with suffering because of the destruction of her city, the decline of her Clan, confusion regarding the future, helplessness, and concern for him.

All of that would not vanish just because Meng Hao woke up.

First Elder stood and then approached Meng Hao. He looked Meng Hao over, then clasped hands and bowed deeply. "Many thanks for your actions, Grandmaster Meng. The Frigid Snow Clan will never forget your kindness."

Second Elder, the old woman, and Fourth Elder were all injured. However, they too clasped hands and bowed deeply to Meng Hao.

It wasn't just them. All of the surrounding Cultivators rose to their feet and then bowed to Meng Hao.

Everything that had happened before Meng Hao passed out had been deeply imprinted onto their hearts. Without Meng Hao, they would be dead, transformed into a sea of blood.

Meng Hao had single-handedly saved everyone present here, and the Frigid Snow Clan itself.

Their bows to him were filled with complete and utter sincerity.

He nodded but didn't say anything. It was appropriate to accept their bows but would have been somewhat pugnacious to comment. After a moment passed, Meng Hao slowly asked, "How many days was I unconscious?"

"Seven days." The person who answered his question was not one of the surrounding Cultivators. The voice came from behind him. It was ancient, and caused looks of veneration to appear on the faces of all the surrounding Cultivators.

Meng Hao's mind suddenly trembled. He turned to see an old man approaching from within the ruins, accompanied by a dozen or so Frigid Snow Clan members. He was wizened, as if he had just crawled out from the grave. His clothing was simple, and his Cultivation base was not high. However, as he approached, it felt as if a tempest were swirling around the area.

"Senior...." said Meng Hao, feeling shocked. At a glance, he could tell that this was the sixth generation Frigid Snow Clan Patriarch, Spirit Severing Cultivator Hanxue Bao. For this man to suddenly appear was quite a shock. Logically speaking, he should have perished.

He approached Meng Hao, and, seeing the serious look on his face, explained: "I've dispersed all my skills, and given up on trying to break through. I'm no longer of Spirit Severing. When you absorbed my legacy, I let go of the life force of the Thorn Rampart in exchange for ten years of longevity. In ten years, I will perish." The surrounding Cultivators, including the four Grand Elders, concealed the pain in their expressions, showing only respect.

"You did a good job," said Hanxue Bao, sitting down in front of Meng Hao. An affable smile covered his face. "I think perhaps there is only one person on South Heaven in the entire Core Formation stage that could possibly accept all six legacies of our Clan. Obviously, that person is you."

Meng Hao's heart filled with gratitude. As of now, he understood that this man truly had no aspirations of possessing him. Meng Hao really had stumbled onto an incredible bit of luck.

He was about to speak when Hanxue Bao shook his head, cutting him off. Gazing at Meng Hao sincerely, he said, "If you join our Frigid Snow Clan, under my authority, you will be given Hanxue Shan as your beloved."

Meng Hao gaped. Off to the side, Hanxue Shan's face went red, and she bowed her head to cover up her embarrassment.

"Don't worry, I won't interfere with your love life. She can be one of many beloved. Become a member of the Frigid Snow Clan, and you will be the Patriarch of this generation!" Hanxue Bao's eyes glowed with an air of solemnity.

"I will make it worth it for you to join, by offering you three blessings.

"I've dispersed my skills, and am no longer of the Spirit Severing stage. However, I have a lifetime of enlightenment. With my aid, you will have an eighty percent chance of reaching the Spirit Severing stage within five hundred years! That is the first blessing I will give you!

"The blood of the Frigid Snow Clan contains another secret Grand Dragoneer technique. It's more powerful than any other magic you have ever acquired. By passing it on to you, all living creatures will be powerless to do anything but sleep in front of you. That is the second blessing!

"Third, although the Frigid Snow Clan is currently in decline, our Dao Reserve is still here. We cannot remain in this location, so we will travel to the Southern Domain. Long ago, I was friends with Grandmaster Pill Demon from the Violet Fate Sect. We will move our Clan into the Violet Fate Sect.

"Come with us from the Black Lands to the Southern Domain. My reputation can earn the patronage of Grandmaster Pill Demon. You have proved that your Dao of alchemy is strong. If I request it, Grandmaster Pill Demon will surely give me face and accept you as an apprentice."

Hanxue Bao's voice echoed into Meng Hao's ears. He sat there thinking, smiling to himself wryly. Other than the Spirit Severing enlightenment, nothing that had been offered him was very appealing. The secret Dragoneer technique was surely powerful, but Meng Hao already possessed three great secret techniques. As for being Grandmaster Pill

Demon's apprentice, well it wasn't that the idea of it was inherently unappealing. However, Meng Hao, even though he'd long since left the Violet Fate Sect, still considered Grandmaster Pill Demon to be his Master.

He had kowtowed three times to become an apprentice, and that first kowtow lasted for a lifetime.

Chapter 380: Eyeless Larva!

“You don’t agree?” asked Hanxue Bao, gazing at Meng Hao. His expression was gradually fading into one of disappointment. Based on his experiences throughout the years, he was able to see the slight hesitation visible in Meng Hao’s otherwise calm expression.

He sighed inwardly and then shook his head, laughing slightly.

“Senior....” said Meng Hao, feeling a bit guilty. He could sense the sincerity in Hanxue Bao, and even though it was all for the sake of his own Clan, Meng Hao knew that he truly was offering a new path to tread.

Unfortunately, Meng Hao couldn’t go back to the Southern Domain for now.

Hanxue Shan’s face was now pale white. She held her head up high and forced a smile onto her face, but her mood couldn’t be lower. She stood and curtsied to Meng Hao, then walked off into the distance, her head hanging. It seemed she couldn’t stay behind for fear of crying from the grief she felt.

“Well, never mind,” said Hanxue Bao, not wanting to force Meng Hao to explain. “I put you in an awkward position just now. You have your own path, and don’t need me to arrange things for you. That’s great.” He stood, eyeing the spell that was forming on the ground.

“The Frigid Snow Clan has a total of seven Nascent Soul Elders. You’ve met four already. The other three went to the Southern Domain last year, where they’ve been preparing a teleportation spell. Unfortunately, the spell has to penetrate the Black Lands Palace’s blockade spell, making the teleportation to the Southern Domain a bit difficult.

“It is only just recently that the teleportation spell was completed on their side. Within about five days, we should be able to activate it. Once that happens, we will leave this place.” Hanxue Bao slapped his bag of holding. Suddenly, everything got very cold, and snowflakes appeared in the air to drift down. Meng Hao’s eyes filled with a serious look as he looked at the object in Hanxue Bao’s hand.

There, in his palm, was a blue silkworm, about the size of his pinky finger. It was translucent, like crystal, and glowed with a blue light. The coldness in the area was emanating out from this very larva.

Meng Hao's breathing immediately grew heavy.

"You were promised a Frigid Snow Larva. Given the Cultivation bases of the others, they would need half a year to complete it. But time is running out, so I will give you mine! This is a mutated Frigid Snow Larva, with a much more vigorous life force than an ordinary larva. Throughout all the years, our Frigid Snow Clan only ever produced six mutant Frigid Snow Larvae. This is the seventh.

"Because of its mutation, this type of Frigid Snow Larva can bond two masters. Feed it your blood, and it will become yours." He waved his hand, and a blue light shot toward Meng Hao to hover in front of him. He took a deep breath as he gazed at the blue Frigid Snow Larva floating there before him. Then, he bit the tip of a finger and squeezed a drop of blood out onto the larva.

The instant the drop of blood vanished, Meng Hao could sense a connection between him and the Frigid Snow Larva. The larva's body glittered as it descended slowly onto his hand. An immense coldness emanated out from it. It felt like he was holding a piece of freezing ice.

Meng Hao took a deep breath as he bowed deeply to Hanxue Bao. His entire purpose for coming to this place was now complete. He felt incredibly excited. Now the only thing he had left to do was transform the Frigid Snow Larva into an Eyeless Larva.

Once it became an Eyeless Larva, the larva could never be destroyed, and its thread could not be broken. The thread could not be broken, nor could the larva be destroyed! A miraculous bug like that was a remarkable treasure of Heaven and Earth, one of his most powerful methods for dealing with Heavenly Tribulation.

"Senior, I will be going into secluded meditation," said Meng Hao, pushing down the excitement which bubbled up in his heart. He bowed again, then turned to walk off. He didn't go too far, but rather climbed

deep into a half-collapsed building nearby.

Hanxue Bao watched him walk off and sighed again in his heart. He really had taken a liking to Meng Hao, but he knew that he had his own plans and aspirations. Hanxue Bao then looked over toward Hanxue Shan and sighed yet again.

Within a room in the collapsed house, Meng Hao sat cross-legged, breathing deeply. He performed an incantation and then pointed toward the ground, causing Demonic Qi to noiselessly begin to gather. It circulated around him, forming a barrier. Although he was on good terms with the Frigid Snow Clan right now, he still needed to take measures to protect himself.

This was especially true considering that he had just turned down their offer. Covered by the Demonic Qi, Meng Hao produced some medicinal pills, then closed his eyes and began to meditate. After a few hours passed, he opened his eyes again, and they shone brightly. His body was now completely recovered from its weak state. His Spiritual Sense had grown, and his Cultivation base had made significant progress.

Meng Hao was confident that after he transcended the Heavenly Tribulation, he would pass directly into the late Core Formation stage.

With his preparations complete, Meng Hao took out the Frigid Snow Larva. Then, he took out a Mulberry Thunderclap Leaf and placed it in front of the larva. As soon as the leaf appeared, a tremor ran through the Frigid Snow Larva. It appeared to find the leaf incredibly enticing. In the blink of an eye, lightning surrounded the leaf, and it was completely consumed by the Frigid Snow Larva.

Meng Hao's eyes gleamed as he produced the copper mirror and began to duplicate more Mulberry Thunderclap Leaves. Thankfully, he had quite a collection of Spirit Stones in his bag of holding. Although he hated to see them disappear as the price of duplication, the thought of acquiring the Eyeless Larva caused him to do so without hesitation.

One leaf, two leaves, one hundred leaves.... Meng Hao's eyes began to grow wide with disbelief that this tiny little Frigid Snow Larva could

consume so many Mulberry Thunderclap Leaves. It didn't seem to show any signs whatsoever of stopping. It appeared capable of eating all of the Mulberry Thunderclap Leaves in existence.

Meng Hao's heart began to sink a little bit. His information about the larva came from the Black Lands Cultivator he had met in the Southern Domain. After much analysis, he had taken most of the man's words to be true. Now, however, he was starting to feel a bit of skepticism.

He muttered to himself, his eyes glittering as he decided to go all out. He used all the Spirit Stones available in his bag of holding to continue to duplicate Mulberry Thunderclap Leaves to feed the Frigid Snow Larva.

Time passed by. Soon, it was a day later. By afternoon, Meng Hao's eyes were bloodshot as he continued to feed one leaf after another to the Frigid Snow Larva. From what he could tell, he had fed enough Mulberry Thunderclap Leaves to create a mountain forest.

And yet, the Frigid Snow Larva showed no signs of being full. However, it did appear to be changing! It was still blue, but now had several white circles on its surface!

The circles looked something like eyes, and if you looked at them, it seemed as if they had the power to suck in your mind. By this point in Meng Hao's process of feeding the larva, it had accumulated five such circles on its body.

Meng Hao looked at his bag of holding, and his heart filled with pain. He had acquired quite a lot of Spirit Stones after becoming Patriarch Golden Light. However, as of now, they were half gone. Gritting his teeth, Meng Hao continued to feed the Frigid Snow Larva.

Leaf, after leaf, after leaf....

By morning of the third day, Meng Hao's eyes were completely filled with veins of blood. The Frigid Snow Larva in his hand now had eight circles. By the time the ninth appeared, Meng Hao's bag of holding would be virtually devoid of Spirit Stones.

Grief filled his face. A few days ago he'd had a vast accumulation of

Spirit Stones that left him confident of being able to purchase whatever he wanted, wherever he was.

Now, he had the exact opposite feeling.

“If I can’t create the Eyeless Larva....” Meng Hao clenched his fists and stopped thinking about the matter. He decided to risk it all. Having gone this far, he might as well continue on to the very end.

By night of the third day, Meng Hao’s bag of holding was completely empty. As the Frigid Snow Larva consumed the very last Mulberry Thunder Leaf, a ninth circle finally appeared, causing Meng Hao to gape.

“Dammit, I’m out of Spirit Stones, and this thing still hasn’t changed yet? Isn’t it supposed to transform?” He stared in shock at the Frigid Snow Larva, which lay on his palm, unmoving. Within his mind, Meng Hao could sense that it wanted to continue to eat. Meng Hao was on the verge of collapsing.

“My millions of Spirit Stones....” As he looked down into his bag of holding, he realized that the only thing he had left were the ultra high-grade Spirit Stones. They were his final assets, life-saving objects that he could use at a critical moment to absorb spiritual energy.

He went back and forth about it for the time it takes an incense stick to burn. It seemed the Frigid Snow Larva realized there was no food left. It ceased transmitting its desire to eat and began to create silk.

Meng Hao watched as the Frigid Snow Larva continued to spit out the silk, which looked like snow. This was not the legendary silk of the Eyeless Larva. It took only a moment for the larva to completely cover itself. Soon, it had become a cocoon about the size of the fist of an infant.

Meng Hao frowned. Something seemed strange. After probing with his Spiritual Sense, his heart began to pound. He continued to examine it for a moment, then began to pant.

“I can sense another Qi,” he said, his eyes gleaming. “It’s not the Frigid Snow Larva, it’s much, much more powerful.... There’s not even a way to compare the two!” He closed his eyes to think for a moment, and when

they opened again, he was smiling.

“Two days, and it will emerge from the cocoon!” He put the precious cocoon away and dispelled the Demonic Qi in the area. It was currently late at night, and bright moonlight illuminated the land. Meng Hao took a deep breath as he walked out of his secluded meditation area.

People from the Frigid Snow Clan who were standing guard immediately saw Meng Hao. They clasped hands and bowed, faces filled with veneration.

These recent days had been very difficult for the Frigid Snow Clan. They weren't sure when Cultivators from the Black Lands Palace would arrive. If they invaded a second time, it would be very difficult to fight back, considering the current situation of the Frigid Snow Clan. All they could do was maintain their vigilance and wait for the spell to activate.

Snowflakes danced about in the moonlight. It had been snowing for two days, and the ground was now covered with a thick layer of snow. Even though it was late at night, the moonlight reflected off of the white snow, making everything look silver.

Meng Hao breathed in the frigid air as his gaze flitted about. Finally, his gaze came to rest on the back of a familiar figure off in the distance.

It was Hanxue Shan. She sat atop a pile of rubble, looking off into the sky. It was impossible to tell what she was thinking.

Looking at her, Meng Hao sighed inwardly. Because of the matter of the Frigid Snow Larva, he had completely forgotten about how disappointed this young girl had looked after having been rejected by him.

Murmuring to himself, Meng Hao thought about the soft arms which had embraced him before he passed out earlier. He also recalled how the concern in her eyes had been replaced by joy when he regained consciousness. The falling snow brushed against his face as he walked toward her. She looked back. Amidst the snow and the moonlight, her pretty face looked even more beautiful. Tears could be seen in the corners of her eyes. She looked at Meng Hao, then bit her lip and turned her head away.

Meng Hao stood behind her for a moment, then cleared his throat.

“Hey, I heard you really admire Grandmaster Pill Cauldron. Would you like me to help introduce you to him?”

Chapter 381: Whenever It Snows, Think of Me!

“You know, I heard Grandmaster Pill Cauldron has no beloved,” said Meng Hao teasingly as he looked at Hanxue Shan. “You never know, you might have a chance!”

Hanxue Shan turned her head to look at Meng Hao. She had a slight smile on her young face, which she quickly covered up.

“Look, I’m pretty close with Grandmaster Pill Cauldron,” he continued, smiling as he crouched down next to her. “If I make the introduction for you, it will probably help quite a bit.” The cold wind blew across his face and caused his hair to lift up, revealing his distinct profile. Beneath the moon like this, the slight darkness of his skin was not visible. There was something distinctly handsome about him, and also something slightly strange.

Hanxue Shan couldn’t keep a straight face. She laughed, giving Meng Hao a sidelong glance. Her eyes shone in a way that seemed to indicate her mood was lifting, and the despondency which had filled her the past few days was passing.

“It’s not like YOU’RE Grandmaster Pill Cauldron!” she said with a laugh. Then, she intentionally straightened her face again, as if she were enduring great suffering. She continued, her tone not exactly polite: “You’ve never even been to the Southern Domain, how could you possibly be familiar with him?”

Meng Hao scratched his head, then laughed as he sat down next to her atop the pile of broken rocks. Ruins and rubble surrounded the two of them, and the snow fluttered down from above. The cold wind whimpered as it blew past.

Meng Hao cleared his throat and allowed an unfathomable expression to fill his face, something he’d picked up from Zhou Dekun. “You don’t understand. Even though I’ve never met Grandmaster Pill Cauldron, we’re

both Grandmasters of the Dao of alchemy, and have long since been friends in spirit. After you get to the Violet Fate Sect, when you see Grandmaster Pill Cauldron, ask him if he remembers the person he saw in the snowstorm that year.” He looked up into the sky with a look of reminiscence. It would have looked very realistic if not for the fact that he was looking at Hanxue Shan out of the corner of his eye.

Hanxue Shan covered her smile with her hand, looking at Meng Hao with her beautiful eyes. Seeing his expression, she couldn’t hold back her laughter any longer. When she laughed, it sounded like bells. The depression in her heart seemed to be dissolving.

“Alright, alright,” she said with a laugh. “After I get to the Violet Fate Sect, when I see Grandmaster Pill Cauldron, I’ll ask him exactly that.” Then winked and continued in a crafty tone, “I think I should probably add some information, though. I’ll remind him of something that person said in the snowstorm that year. He said, ‘Every time it snows, think of me.’”

“That sounds a little bit flirty....” said Meng Hao, coughing lightly. He laughed. “That’s fine, though. Ordinary people can’t understand the relationship between myself and Grandmaster Pill Cauldron.”

Hanxue Shan laughed again. “In Holy Snow City, that’s what two people who care about each other say when they part.” She laughed again, then rubbed her chest and straightened up.

“Alright, then, I forgive you,” laughed Meng Hao. He gathered together some snow from the ground and held it in his hand, watching it as it melted. It seemed the melting of the snow caused memories to rise up within him; he suddenly thought back to the Violet Fate Sect. The images of all the people he knew there began to flit through his mind.

“I wonder if they’re all okay....” he thought, looking off in the direction of the Southern Domain.

Seeing the manner in which he had picked up the snow, Hanxue Shan continued in a low voice, “Actually, I only admire Grandmaster Pill Cauldron, that’s all. The things I told you before weren’t really true. All I really want is a pill that he personally concocted.” Seeing Meng Hao

smiling, her eyes turned hard and she earnestly added, "Just one pill would leave me completely satisfied."

Meng Hao shook his head with a smile. He looked at her, so delicate and innocent, and then muttered something to himself. Finally, he retrieved a medicinal pill from his bag of holding. It was a Foundation Establishment Day pill that he had concocted some time ago. The quality of the pill wasn't bad; it contained more than eighty percent medicinal strength.

"I'd like to offer you this pill as a gift," he said. After a moment's thought, he used his fingernail to carve the character "Snow 雪" onto its surface. Then he handed it out to her. "This medicinal pill is more valuable than one concocted by Grandmaster Pill Cauldron. The reason is not because of the pill itself, but rather, because it was concocted by me." He smiled.

Hanxue Shan thought for a moment and then took the pill. She held it in her hand and looked down at it. She was about to say something when Meng Hao suddenly stood up.

"If you run into any problems in the Violet Fate Sect," he said, "you can use that medicinal pill to gain an audience with Grandmaster Pill Demon. After he sees it, he will resolve whatever situation you're in." Meng Hao smiled as he spoke, but his voice contained hints of melancholy. As for Hanxue Shan, her eyes went wide. His words gave her the unconscious feeling that he was being intentionally mysterious.

"If Grandmaster Pill Demon asks about me...." before he could finish, Hanxue Shan suddenly interrupted.

"I'll tell him that whenever it snows, you think of him."

Meng Hao was taken aback. He could only imagine the expression that would appear on his Master's face were he to hear such words. He couldn't help but laugh out loud, a laughter that contained happiness. There was something beautiful about it, although no one could possibly understand what it meant except he himself.

Continuing to laugh, Meng Hao descended from the pile of rubble and began to walk off.

However, before he could take three steps, his expression suddenly flickered. Immediately, he dashed back, grabbed Hanxue Shan, and then Bloodburst Flashed away.

The instant he disappeared, a noiseless beam of mysterious light shot through the night to land in the exact position they had just been standing in. An explosion ripped through the air, causing the ground to tremble. The pile of rubble where Meng Hao and Hanxue Shan had just been standing on was transformed into nothing but ash drifting on the wind.

Some distance away, Meng Hao's eyes gleamed coldly as he looked at beam after beam of light approaching from far away. Without hesitation, he held Hanxue Shan in his arms and retreated backward.

The rest of the Frigid Snow Clan members were instantly roused from sleep. The four Grand Elders, Hanxue Bao, and the more than two hundred Cultivators all leaped out of their beds.

"So, you want to wipe out the Frigid Snow Clan to the last man!" said Hanxue Bao wrathfully. His Cultivation base had fallen, and he was no longer an eminently powerful expert of the Spirit Severing stage. Now, he could only wield the power of the late Nascent Soul stage. As he spoke, he stamped his foot down onto the ground.

The ground rumbled, and cracks spread out in all directions. The earth showered up as a Thorn Rampart shield emerged. The shocking thorns spread out in all direction, and a massive roaring sound filled the air.

As the Thorn Rampart appeared, nearly a thousand Cultivators came into view outside in the snow. Among this group of a thousand, there were eight who seemed far more shocking than the others. No snow touched their bodies; even as it neared them, it was destroyed.

These eight were Nascent Soul Cultivators. Six of them were from the Western Desert, the remaining two being from the Black Lands Palace. It seemed this deadly attack on the Frigid Snow Clan was being led by the Western Desert.

The exterminating power of a Spirit Severing Cultivator wasn't a threat that faded from people's minds after only a few days. These people

obviously dared to attack the Frigid Snow Clan because they knew its true circumstances.

Booms filled the air. The thousand Cultivators along with the eight Nascent Soul Cultivators employed magical techniques and divine abilities, constantly attacking the Thorn Rampart.

The ground quaked, and the Frigid Snow Clan Cultivators' faces flickered as they stood there silently.

"No wonder they came so quickly," said Hanxue Bao, his cold gaze coming to rest somewhere off in the distance, upon something no one else could see. "They're benefiting from the augury of the Western Desert's Constellation Tribe!"

Meng Hao approached, holding Hanxue Shan protectively. As he did, he heard Hanxue Bao's words, whereupon he looked out past the thorns into the snowstorm outside. A moment passed, and then he blinked his right eye seven times. Immediately his view of the world changed. Everything became black and white. At the same time, out in the snowstorm, Meng Hao caught sight of a figure that he hadn't been able to see before.

It was a man wearing a white robe with a hood that obscured his face. Ripples were emanating out from his hands and floating in front of him was a black bowl, within which churned turbid waters. It seemed to be some sort of magic.

The instant that Meng Hao looked over, it seemed the white-robed man sensed it. He looked up and directly at Meng Hao. Meng Hao's heart trembled. What he saw were eyes with two pupils.

He felt something clawing at his heart, whereupon he immediately ended the technique he had been using. His vision of the world went back to normal.

"Do you see him too?" said Hanxue Bao, looking over at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao nodded seriously.

"The Constellation Tribe is one of the three great Tribes of the Western Desert. They excel at augury, and believe that all the stars in the night sky

are Demons.”

As soon as he finished speaking, a rumbling sound could be heard. Outside the Thorn Rampart, three giants appeared in the snowstorm. Each one was over one hundred and fifty meters tall, and caused the ground to shake as they moved. They held enormous cudgels in their hands as they charged forward.

Up above in the sky, piercing shrieks could be heard as multiple Flood Dragons appeared.

Further off in the distance, glowing war chariots could be seen charging forward. Magic swirled around the eight Nascent Soul Cultivators, along with magical items.

“Ignore the outside world! Focus on activating the spell!” As Hanxue Bao’s powerful voice echoed out, the four Frigid Snow Clan Grand Elders, as well as the other Clan members, lowered their heads to look at the spell beneath them.

The Thorn Rampart shook and began to crumble. It seemed it wouldn’t be able to stand up against a combined attack like this for very long.

A sigh escaped the mouth of Hanxue Bao. He waved his right hand, catalyzing another Thorn Rampart seed, which grew out to fortify their defenses.

“It’s too bad that Constellation Tribe member is here. He’s really suppressing the power of the Thorn Rampart.” Anxiety seeped onto Hanxue Bao’s face. However, it was at this moment that a bright glow suddenly emanated out from below.

“It’s activating! Patriarch, the spell is activating!!” Frantic, joyful cries rose up from the Frigid Snow Clan members.

Meng Hao looked back and saw the glow of the spell in the ground growing stronger and emitting a bright glow. From the look of it, it would fully activate in quite a short time.

The Frigid Snow Clan members were starting to get excited. However, it was at this time that suddenly a huge boom filled the air. Everyone’s

attention was drawn off into the distance. All of the magical techniques and items of the enemy were being drawn together to form into a massive glow of extermination that resembled a star. It was with indescribable speed that it shot forward, slamming into the Thorn Rampart and smashing it into pieces.

Hanxue Bao let out a growling roar. He lifted his right hand into the air, causing the Thorn Rampart to reform once again. He shot forward, flashing an incantation signal and then waving his arm. A tempest shot forward, roaring toward the star of extermination, slamming into it and destroying it. Blood sprayed from Hanxue Bao's mouth, and he staggered backward, his face listless.

"Patriarch!!" Grief and indignation appeared on the faces of the Frigid Snow Clan members. Hanxue Shan gnawed on her lower lip, her face pale. After everything she had experienced, she was no longer afraid, just concerned.

Meng Hao said nothing. He looked at the dawn light spreading out, and the Western Desert Cultivators. A strange glow appeared in his eyes as he looked off into the distance.

"If my calculations are correct, any moment now...." His heart began to thump as he saw a soaring fog appear off in the distance.

"Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life.... Three circles to the left, then three to the right. Shake those butts!" When the faint voice drifted across the air, a strange smile broke out on Meng Hao's face. It continued to grow stronger until he started laughing.

Chapter 382: Eyeless But Not Voiceless!

“Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life! When the Lord Fifth appears, who dares to cause strife!

“Three circles to the left, three circles to the right! Shake those butts.... Gaze upon the Immortal Execution spell formation!”

A sound like the rumble of thunder slowly grew louder and louder. Off in the distance, a billowing fog could be seen that covered Heaven and Earth. Within the roiling fog were thousands of huge figures running back and forth, their bodies twisting into strange postures. The sound of it echoed about, and as they ran, it emanated out an indescribable power, such that anyone who laid eyes on the whole sight would be struck speechless.

More than five thousand people were running, causing everything to tremble and shake. The roiling fog seemed to affect everything around it, as if the sky and the land would be sundered. In front of the five thousand running men was a multicolored parrot. It blustered haughtily, its squawks ringing out into the air.

“Come come! Shout out a little louder for Lord Fifth!”

This whole scene completely shook the one thousand Western Desert Cultivators. The eight Nascent Soul experts stared in shock at the bizarre-looking men, and the bird.

As for the white-robed Cultivator from the Constellation Tribe, the bowl in front of him suddenly started to tremble. The turbid waters within began to spill as he stared up at the sight.

As for the Frigid Snow Clan members within the Thorn Rampart, the light from the spell beneath them continued to grow brighter. However, the more than two hundred Cultivators couldn't help but gasp. Their scalps began to go numb at the shocking scene, and all they could do was stare numbly.

The four Grand Elders gaped, as did Hanxue Bao. Hanxue Shan stared

with mouth wide opened, her face filled with disbelief.

Outside of the Thorn Rampart, some of the Black Lands Cultivators within the force from the Western Desert began to cry out in quavering voices.

“That’s... the spell formation of Lord Fifth from the Church of the Golden Light!!”

Immediately, this caused people to understand what exactly this bizarre scene was.

“The Church of the Golden Light!! Patriarch Golden Light!”

Within the Thorn Rampart, the Frigid Snow Clan members were breathing heavily as the voices from outside drifted into their ears. It didn’t take long for them to react. Suddenly, some of the Cultivators began to speak.

“They’re from the Church of the Golden Light?”

The name of the Church of the Golden Light had risen to thorough prominence in the Black Lands recently, and the stories told about Patriarch Golden Light were completely mysterious and fascinating. To see what they were seeing now caused their minds to fill with shock.

None of the Cultivators present were sure exactly why they were here. Meng Hao coughed lightly as he thought about the fame earned recently by the Church of the Golden Light. He looked at the approaching group of more than five thousand Cultivators, all of whom were said to be his own followers.

“Church of the Golden Light!” he cried out. “Hear my orders. Surround the enemy Cultivators outside the Thorn Rampart!” Suddenly, a blinding golden glow erupted out from him, which was none other than light from his Gold Core. It circulated around his body, bathing everything around him with golden light. Anyone who was nearby couldn’t help but see clearly.

As his voice echoed out, and the golden light began to shine, the Cultivators around him turned to stare at him.

The four Grand Elders' eyes were wide, and even Hanxue Bao was looking at him with a deep expression.

Even as they stared at him, the five thousand Cultivators flew whistling closer. They heard Meng Hao's voice, and saw the golden light, whereupon their voices combined with shocking power to cry:

"We shall follow the Patriarch's commands to the death!!" Five thousand voices roared the words, which reverberated out. The roiling fog followed the five thousand Cultivators as they ran to surround the area. Shocking booming sounds accompanied their running; the sky above grew gray, and the earth quaked. Layers upon layers of fog rose up, within which could be seen towering, phantom figures that bore the appearance of Celestial warriors.

However... their postures were bizarre, and their rear ends shook in an odd fashion. It gave the whole image a very bizarre tone....

The sight of it thoroughly shocked the surrounding Western Desert Cultivators, as well as the Frigid Snow Clan cultivators. They stared in amazement at Meng Hao, their minds reeling. If by this point they didn't realize who Meng Hao was, then they truly didn't deserve to even be alive.

"You're... you're Patriarch Golden Light!" exclaimed First Elder with a gasp, his face filled with disbelief.

One by one, the Frigid Snow Clan Cultivators began to breathe heavily and utter hushed exclamations.

"Patriarch... Golden Light?!"

"Patriarch Golden Light!"

They knew that the Church of the Golden Light had surged up in recent days amidst the chaos of the Black Lands. It had occupied Dongluo City, and caused quite a headache for the Black Lands Palace. Patriarch Golden Light was a figure of complete mystery; his congregation numbered five thousand, and they could form a thoroughly shocking spell formation.

There was nobody in the Black Lands right now who hadn't heard of the name of Patriarch Golden Light; he was completely famous.

To suddenly find out that Meng Hao was actually Patriarch Golden Light filled them with disbelief.

Hanxue Shan's eyes were wide; just how many secrets did Meng Hao have? Whether it was his abilities as a Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy, his power in catalyzing the Thorn Rampart, or his identity as Patriarch Golden Light, at the moment, he continued to reveal layer after layer of astonishment.

Hanxue Bao looked thoughtful as he stared deeply at Meng Hao, then clasped hands and bowed.

Seeing him bow, the four Grand Elders and the rest of the Frigid Snow Clan all immediately followed suit, bowing deeply to Meng Hao.

"Senior," said Meng Hao, "there's no need for that." He understood the meaning of the bow; it was a means of thanking him for saving the Frigid Snow Clan.

Booms sounded out continuously from the roiling fog outside. The glow from the spell below continued to grow brighter. It seemed that they would be teleported away at any moment.

"The Frigid Snow Clan will forever remember your great kindness, Fellow Daoist," said Hanxue Bao. "Neither myself nor the successive generations after me will ever forget you." Gazing at Meng Hao, he lifted his right hand, whereupon a Thorn Rampart seed flew out. "There is really nothing the Frigid Snow Clan can do to repay you. When we reach the Violet Fate Sect, this seed will be of little use to us. However, on the perilous path which you tread, it might be able to provide you with a bit more protection."

Meng Hao didn't refuse. As far as he was concerned, this seed was very important. He was quite sure that he would be able to have his vines consume the seed, or perhaps use some other transformation technique on it. He nodded as he accepted it.

"Senior, and all other Fellow Daoists of the Frigid Snow Clan. Your spell is ready to activate. I will stay here to protect you as you leave. Once everyone has departed, I will destroy what remains of the spell portal. I

sincerely wish that you all... have a safe journey!" He had been with the Frigid Snow Clan for around half a year and had experienced quite a bit with them. He had achieved his goals in coming here, so now he would do one last thing in repayment.

Explosions could be heard in the outside world. Countless figures could be seen within the fog, and the blood-curdling screams of the Western Desert Cultivators echoed about. All of this merged together to form into a sort of song of departure. Meng Hao looked over the Frigid Snow Clan members as the spell activated. As the Clan members disappeared, they looked back at Meng Hao, clasped hands and bowed deeply.

These people were no strangers; he recognized the faces of each and every one. Of course, he did not know all their names. But considering how he had defended the city together with them over these months, and had saved them on multiple occasions, it had given birth to a certain camaraderie.

"I will forever remember your kindness, Grandmaster Meng!"

"Grandmaster Meng, I hope that a day comes in the future when we can meet again!"

"Grandmaster Meng, please take care of yourself!"

One by one, the Frigid Snow Clan members disappeared into the teleportation spell. The four Grand Elders gazed at Meng Hao, giving him deep bows. Their expressions were somewhat wistful as they disappeared into the spell.

Hanxue Shan stood there; she did not bow, nor did she speak. She couldn't prevent the tears from flowing down as she looked at him, and he looked back at her.

They stood looking at each other, separated by the spell, their figures slowly glowing blurry to each other's eyes.

In the moment before the entire world faded into a blur, Hanxue Shan mustered her courage and spoke out to Meng Hao's disappearing figure. "Every time it snows, you must think of me."

Meng Hao knew that she couldn't see him, but he smiled and nodded nonetheless.

A sigh welled up within Hanxue Bao's heart, and he shook his head. He was now the only Frigid Snow Clan member left who hadn't entered the teleportation spell. He looked around at the ruins around him, and then at the churning fog, from within which could be heard both howls of rage and shrieks of misery. All of it suddenly seemed very far away.

"Are you sure you won't come with us to the Southern Domain?" he projected to Meng Hao.

"I can't. Thank you for your kindness, senior. I wish you a safe journey." With a slight smile, he clasped hands and bowed to the disappearing Hanxue Bao.

Hanxue Bao didn't reply. He closed his eyes as he disappeared. Blinding lights of teleportation shot up into the air, transforming into ripples that emanated out and then vanished.

Meng Hao watched them as they disappeared. After a thoughtful moment, he waved his right hand toward the spell portal. A boom filled the air and the ground shook as the portal shattered, transforming into ash that would never be reformed.

He turned to look at the surrounding fog. Suddenly, a multicolored streak of light appeared. It was the parrot, which flew over to perch on Meng Hao's shoulder. It was followed by the meat jelly, which was in the form of a hat.

The ground quaked as vines erupted up to surround them. At the moment, Meng Hao's figure was thoroughly Demonic.

It was at this moment that cracking sounds could suddenly be heard from within his bag of holding. He slapped his right hand, whereupon the cocoon flew out. The cracks covering its surface suddenly collapsed, and a white larva emerged!

This larva was as white as winter snow. It was the size of a pinky finger, and its entire body was as translucent as crystal. It was not cold, but

instead, emanated a strange, shocking power that seemed capable of shaking Heaven and Earth.

The Eyeless Larva!

Its empty eyes emanated a cold light, and as it crashed out from within the cocoon, it emitted a cry which caused everything to vibrate!

Larvae make no sound. But this Eyeless Larva did!

This was a sound which it would emit only once in its life!

As the Eyeless Larva cried out, shockingly, everything trembled. The Black Lands. The Southern Domain. The Western Desert. Even the Eastern Lands shook.

Chapter 383: An Eternal Breath

Larvae are living creatures which cannot produce sound. However, in this instant, the metamorphosed Eyeless Larva emitted sound. This was a sound which would only be heard once.

It was the voice of the Larva!

When the voice called out, Meng Hao's ears buzzed.

In that instant, the entire world seemed to grow still.... The Eyeless Larva spoke only once, and when it did, it silenced the world!

During this space of one breath, everything around Meng Hao, the wind, the people, the sky, the land, everything... grew still....

The five thousand running Cultivators, the dust they kicked up, the ripples of the magical techniques, everything in the area. The effect spread out to cover all of the Black Lands.

It spread to the Western Desert, covered over the Southern Domain, swept across the Milky Way Sea to enter the Eastern Lands, even the Northern Desert. In this moment... everything grew still.

This was an absolute stillness. Nascent Soul, Spirit Severing, even Dao Seeking experts were all the same. In this moment, within this silence... one breath was stolen from all of them!

This theft was incredibly difficult to detect!

It was a manifestation of the frenzied and indescribable dominance that the Eyeless Larva manifested upon its appearance. The Eyeless Larva had no life force, therefore, it needed to steal it. It plundered life from all existence. All living things which existed in the flow of time... lost one breath.

Plants, animals, mortals, Cultivators... all living things. Everything grew still and motionless, and then lost one breath.

One breath was not much, but when you combine everything in the entire world, it adds up to a myriad of years!

In all of the Southern Domain, all of the Western Desert, all of the Eastern Lands, all of the Northern Desert, there was nothing in existence that sensed this breath being stolen. Even experts at the peak of the Dao Seeking stage had no way to sense the loss of the breath or the stillness in the world.

Only Immortals could!

Other than Immortals, no one had any clue!

Although they could not sense it, their life force now lacked one breath. Their time in the world slipped down; the higher the Cultivation base, the greater the loss.

That breath belonged to the Eyeless Larva, and Meng Hao!

During the stillness, ripples suddenly emanated out from the Rebirth Cave in the vast lands of the Southern Domain. They spread up into the air, and a figure appeared, formed from countless strands of Qi. It looked toward the Black Lands.

“The Eyeless Celestial Larva....”

In the vast Western Desert, in a profoundly mysterious location, was a stretch of ruins and rubble. Countless years ago, this place had a name which shook Heaven and rocked the Earth. It was called... the Bridge of Immortal Treading!

Now, it was nothing but rubble. Even still, it was one of the most profound and mysterious places in the Western Desert.

Currently, within the endless ruins, an incredibly ancient voice heaved a sigh.

“Has the Celestial Larva appeared...? It doesn’t seem like it, it seems too weak....”

In the Eastern Lands, the Northern Desert, the Milky Way Sea, it was the same. Faint Qi appeared and then vanished.

During this moment of silence, a gargantuan face flashed across the sky above the Milky Way Sea.

On a forested mountain in the Western Desert, an old man sat there painting a picture of the distant mountains and rivers. During this moment of time, his paintbrush suddenly stopped moving and he lifted his head.

“The Celestial Larva... and that kid.... So, they’re bound by Karma. I guess I’ll help you once again.” Shaking his head, he waved his paintbrush, causing some ink to fly out and splash onto the ground.

This was Shui Dongliu. 1

A moment later, in the Eastern Lands, the old man from the Ji Clan who had battled with Pill Demon was holding his fishing rod out over the Pool of Heaven. Suddenly, a bang sounded out as the line snapped.

He coughed up a mouthful of blood, and astonishment filled on his face.

“What just happened...?”

In the Milky Way Sea, there was an island floating among the waves. An entire nation existed on this particular island. There were mountains, the North Sea, Yunjie County, and Cultivators. It was, of course, the State of Zhao.

And this was none other than Patriarch Reliance!

As the world returned to normal, the island trembled. At the far end of the island, a gigantic head suddenly emerged from the shell and looked up into the sky, shocked.

All across Planet South Heaven, things like this happened in various locations, although not many.

Back in the Black Lands, Meng Hao was panting as he stared blankly at the Eyeless Larva that rested on his palm. Earlier, when he had fed the Frigid Snow Larva, it had seemed completely normal. But all of a sudden, Meng Hao’s heart was filled with fear.

Granted, he had gotten the information regarding how to create the Eyeless Larva by means of interrogation. He knew that perhaps ninety percent was true and ten was false, although it was impossible to

determine which parts were which.

Therefore, he had done things very carefully.

However, even the Black Lands Cultivator who had given him the information would have had no way to know how truly fearsome the Eyeless Larva would be when it appeared!

Actually, one of the bits of information that he had intentionally left out was the fact that in order to get the Eyeless Larva to appear, one needed an unimaginably vast amount of Mulberry Thunderclap Leaves. In fact, all the Mulberry Thunderclap Leaves on Planet South Heaven were probably not enough.

How could he possibly have imagined that Meng Hao would be so inhuman as to actually be able to metamorphose an Eyeless Larva?

It was actually something impossible to do!

The truth was, once a Frigid Snow Larva consumed a Mulberry Thunderclap Leaf, if it did not continue to feed until a certain point, then it would explode with shockingly destructive power. The force unleashed would be powerful enough to annihilate everything within a three hundred kilometer radius.

That was his true plan. He didn't covet the legendary Eyeless Larva, but rather the fearsome, destructive power. It was a precious treasure that would give him incredible powers of threat.

Meng Hao took a deep breath as he sensed what the Eyeless Larva was doing. It lay there in his palm, unmoving. However, Meng Hao could sense a vast, strong power of life force, incredibly intense. He suddenly thought about that moment of silence.

This life force exceeded anything he had ever seen before. Not even the Blood Mastiff could compare to the Eyeless Larva in this respect. Even if he faced up against a Spirit Severing expert, that person would not be able to compare to the life force of the Eyeless Larva.

No outsider would be able to sense such an intense life force. Only Meng Hao could do that, because of the unbreakable bond that now existed

between the two of them. It had begun with the Frigid Snow Larva. By the time it metamorphosed into the Eyeless Larva, though, the connection was deep-rooted, branded upon the very life of the thing.

Because the brand emerged at the same time as it metamorphosed, it was something that exceeded the imaginations of normal people, and the power of magic. You can say that there were very few powers under the Heavens which could extinguish the connection which now existed between Meng Hao and the Eyeless Larva. It was as if the larva was now a part of him. Because of this, Meng Hao could now sense the thick and fearsome life force which existed inside of it.

It was because of this life force that, after its metamorphosis, the Eyeless Larva could employ its shocking divine ability!

The larva would never be destroyed, and its thread could not be broken. The thread could not be broken, nor could the larva be destroyed!

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Note from Er Gen: It took me a long time to write this chapter, and I made a lot of changes in an attempt to get the right feel, that of the combination of a breath's worth of time, and eternity. However, my ability is limited, and even after all the changes, this is the best I can do. I'm extremely tired now. I've pumped out a lot of chapters in the past few days, so please permit me to rest for a bit. Thanks!

*

1. Shui Dongliu is the painter who sealed the Resurrection Lily in chapter 208.

Chapter 384: MY Gold Core Tribulation!

It was if there was some inexplicable cycle that existed, within which appeared a type of rule. Because of this, the Eyeless Larva could never be killed, nor could its silk be destroyed. It was truly miraculous.

“This creature is a defiance of the Heavens....” After feeling the connection with the Eyeless Larva, Meng Hao’s eyes began to shine, and his heart pounded.

Lord Fifth looked crestfallen and filled with envy as it looked at Meng Hao, as if its heart was on the verge of exploding. It was something extraordinary and special, and was also able to sense what had just happened. Its gaze fell onto the Eyeless Larva, and after a long moment passed, it let out a sigh.

“Lord Fifth is so handsome and debonair,” it said, continuing to sigh, “esteemed in all Heaven and Earth, a unique, beautiful bird. During this life, I’ve never been able to have such a miraculous, heaven-defying creature. Why does Meng Hao suddenly get one.... It’s not fair, you dog-fart of a Heaven! It’s not fair!”

Meng Hao lifted his head up to look into the sky.

“Parrot, it’s time to remove whatever force you put on me to conceal me from the Heavenly Tribulation. The time has come to transcend my Gold Core Tribulation!” His eyes glittered with an unprecedented glow. It was the glow of self-confidence, as well as a virtually imperceptible look of disdain.

The parrot glanced at Meng Hao, then flapped its wings. A multicolored glow shot out from it to cover Meng Hao’s entire body.

As the multicolored glow passed over him, a Qi suddenly emanated out from him with great intensity. This was not Qi from his Cultivation base, but rather undulations placed upon him by the parrot to conceal him from the Heavenly Tribulation.

Now that the undulations had revealed him, intense rumbling sounds

immediately filled the sky. Deafening thunder rang out, reverberating out in all directions, covering everything for thousands of kilometers in all directions, shaking the land.

The lightning seemed to be furious, as if it had been searching for Meng Hao for a long time, and now that it found him, was filled with an awe-inspiring desire to crush him out of existence.

The sound of thunder reverberated around in the air; as it did, immense black clouds filled the sky, covering over everything. Layer upon layer rose up, emanating shocking sounds of thunder. Lightning twisted and crackled amidst the layers of clouds. The sight of it was astonishing.

As for the Western Desert Cultivators trapped within the spell formation, expressions of astonishment covered their faces. The face of the white-robed man from the Constellation Tribe, also caught within the fog, immediately fell.

“That’s... Heavenly Tribulation!”

Meng Hao looked up at the Tribulation clouds filling the skies, and the countless bands of silver lightning, twisting about like snakes. As the ear-splitting thunder sounded out, he coolly said, “Get the Cultivators of the Church of the Golden Light out of here! Retreat them to a position fifteen hundred kilometers away! The rest of you, get fifteen hundred kilometers away too. For this Tribulation... I will not need your assistance. This is MY Gold Core Tribulation!”

The parrot hesitated for a moment, then flew up into the air. The meat jelly hovered off to the side, looking at Meng Hao. “I hope you don’t get killed by the lightning...” it said solemnly. It put on an ancient and wizened appearance. “If you do, there will be one less evildoer in the world. Don’t worry, though, if the lightning does kill you, I won’t be too heartbroken. In fact, I...” Seemingly reveling in Meng Hao’s misfortune, it was just making to leave when Meng Hao grabbed it.

“Hey! What are you doing!?” it howled furiously.

“You don’t get to leave,” replied Meng Hao calmly. The vines surrounding Meng Hao instantly burrowed down into the ground and were

gone in the blink of an eye. The parrot also shot away at top speed; within an instant, it was five hundred kilometers away.

At the same time, the parrot transmitted the information to the Cultivators of the Church of the Golden Light who were in the fog. They immediately began to scatter, fleeing as far away as possible. Soon, the only people around Meng Hao were the Western Desert Cultivators, emerging from the fog, expressions of shock on their faces.

During the same moment in which they caught sight of Meng Hao, massive thunderous booms sounded out from up above. The brutality of the sound itself threatened to cause everything around to collapse. Roughly thirty percent of the Western Desert Cultivators coughed up blood and then let out miserable shrieks as they realized they had been deafened.

Simultaneously, a bright red lightning bolt shot down toward Meng Hao from up above. As it descended, it attracted other nearby lightning toward it. By the time it was about to slam into Meng Hao, it was as thick as a human thigh.

The instant it was about to hit him, Meng Hao lifted his hand up with blinding speed. There in his hand was the meat jelly.

A boom echoed out, along with the miserable cry of the meat jelly, who instantly turned black. Meng Hao's body quivered as massive amounts of red sparks danced down his arm and then covered his entire body. They then passed down his feet to crawl across the ground, turning the snowy ground three hundred meters in all directions into a red lake of lightning!

"So this is Heavenly Tribulation..." said Meng Hao, lifting his head up to laugh. "Bring it on!" His hair whipped around him, and his eyes filled with disdain as he laughed uproariously toward the Heavens.

"Dammit, he's transcending the Tribulation! He's actually doing it!" The nearby Western Desert Cultivators' faces filled with shock. It was without hesitation that most of them retreated backward, their scalps numb. The only thing that they could think to do was flee.

However, some of them had a different idea. Killing intent flickered in

their eyes as they shot toward Meng Hao.

“Kill him, and the Heavenly Tribulation will go away!” This was what they were thinking as they shot toward him as fast as possible, unleashing magical techniques to attack him.

“How naive!” said Meng Hao with a cold laugh, ignoring the incoming Cultivators. Even as they closed in on him, massive rumbling could be heard from the sky as another lightning bolt descended toward him.

This time, Meng Hao didn’t use the meat jelly. That was because this particular lightning bolt, when it was about three hundred meters away from him, suddenly broke apart. It transformed into a dozen or so smaller lightning bolts that fell like rain onto both him and the Western Desert Cultivators who were charging him.

BOOM!

“Ahh, that’s really scratching my itch,” said Meng Hao with a laugh. After all his time dealing with the Heavenly Tribulation attacking him at intervals over the past months, his skin had grown a lot tougher. A bolt of Heavenly Tribulation lightning that could easily kill a Western Desert Core Formation Cultivator wouldn’t so much as hurt Meng Hao.

He was used to it. Having experienced Heavenly Tribulation in a way that ordinary people could never even imagine, his body was now much more used to lightning.

As for these smaller lightning bolts, they really did feel like they were scratching an itch. When the lightning hit his body, all he felt was a little numbing sensation.

In fact, it was somewhat comfortable.

As for the dozen or so Western Desert Cultivators who had been trying to kill him, when the boom rang out, they were all instantly blackened into ash. Their magical techniques and treasures were destroyed like rotten wood.

Almost at the same time as Meng Hao’s words rang out, their charred corpses toppled to the ground. Seeing this caused the other surrounding

Western Desert Cultivators to gasp with shock.

Even the pupils of the eight Nascent Soul Cultivators constricted.

“Is he even human?”

“Dammit, it looks like he’s actually enjoying the Heavenly Tribulation. This guy is inhuman!” The surrounding Cultivators were in an uproar. More were beginning to flee, wanting nothing more than to get out of the region of the Heavenly Tribulation. They could tell that only if they could get thousands of kilometers away would they be safe, and not attract the Heavenly Tribulation.

Suddenly, Meng Hao’s voice echoed out, filled with coldness and killing intent. “Congregation of the Church of the Golden Light! Encircle the surrounding three thousand kilometer area with the spell formation. Trap these people here! Do not let them step half a foot outside!” Now that they were here with him, Meng Hao was disinclined to let them leave.

It didn’t matter if they were Core Formation, Nascent Soul, or even the mysterious white-robed man from the Constellation Tribe. Meng Hao would keep them here to share in transcending the Tribulation!

“Abide by the holy commands of the Patriarch!” cried out the five thousand Cultivators. The sound of their voices turned into a powerful wave which fought back against the thunderous roars of the Heavens. It echoed out in all direction, filling the three thousand kilometer area. The five thousand Cultivators of the Church of the Golden light then began to run. As they did, a billowing fog suddenly rose up, and rumbling could be heard.

“People are always asking me if I dare to fight. Well today, I ask you, who is there... that dares to fight with Meng Hao!?” He flicked his sleeve and accompanied the echo of his own voice as he flew forward toward the other Cultivators.

As he charged toward them, the sky rumbled with furious, crackling lightning that seemed to contain the might of the Heavens. A red bolt of lightning, even thicker than before, began to fall. It was when this happened that Meng Hao arrived in front of a group of a dozen or so

Cultivators.

Their faces twisted, and in their hearts filled with enough curses that if they had the time, they would give voice to them for three days and three nights. Booms echoed out everywhere as the Heavenly Tribulation lightning bolt split, slamming into everyone present. Instantly, Meng Hao was surrounded by corpses. His body vibrated as sparks flowed down past his feet and across the ground. Again, he was surrounded by a lake of lightning dozens of meters in every direction. Meng Hao's laughter once again rang out.

"Who dares to fight me!?" he cried.

"Dammit, this guy is a supernova of evil!"

"Stay away! Stay away!"

More booms filled the air. Everywhere Meng Hao went, lightning roared. Anyone within three hundred meters of him all became selfless, bosom buddies of Meng Hao, there to help him transcend the Tribulation....

Just as a bolt of Heavenly Tribulation lightning was descending to slaughter a dozen or so more people, killing intent suddenly gleamed in the eyes of the eight Nascent Soul experts. The Heavenly Tribulation had thrown the Qi in the area into chaos, making it impossible for them to use minor teleportation. Therefore, they all flew toward Meng Hao from different directions.

They couldn't use minor teleportation, but their speed was incredible. It took only a moment for them to be right on top of Meng Hao. The eight of them combined their powers into a single attack all aimed at Meng Hao.

"DIE!!" they screamed. They hated him to the bones. First he had trapped them, then directed lightning against them. All of that was caused by someone of the trifling Core Formation stage. They were determined to shred him to pieces, to make him understand that regardless of any circumstances, Core Formation Cultivators were like insects compared to the Nascent Soul stage.

Seeing this, the white-robed Cultivator from the Constellation Tribe's

face suddenly flickered. Immediately, he cried out, “Stop!” However, he was too late.

With a slight smile and a cool look, Meng Hao ignored the eight attackers and looked up into the sky.

“Just what is the might of the Heavens...?”

Chapter 385: Bring It On!

Thunderous roaring rose up as the divine abilities of eight Nascent Soul experts descended upon Meng Hao. Vicious expressions covered their faces, and their intense killing intent radiated out.

Each and every one could imagine the scene in a moment as Meng Hao's weak body shattered like porcelain, exploding into countless pieces. After that, the Heavenly Tribulation would disperse, and this farce of a battle would be over.

Meng Hao's gaze lowered from the Heavens to the approaching Cultivators. "The Heavens are not to be offended. Not to be provoked! Not to be superseded!! The Heavens are trying to slay me! Who do you think you people are? What qualifies you to try to replace the Heavens in an attempt to exterminate me?" He laughed proudly.

His laughter caused the faces of the Nascent Soul Cultivators to instantly fall. It was with great astonishment that they discovered their divine abilities had no effect whatsoever on Meng Hao. They disappeared like an ox tossed into the sea with rocks tied around its feet.

Simultaneously, an indescribable sense of danger suddenly appeared. Lightning began to amass in the sky, to a far greater extent than before. A roaring sound could be heard as a massive bolt of lightning three meters thick began to fall. It looked like an enormous pillar of light.

It immediately split into nine parts which descended downward.

Meng Hao lifted up his right hand, within which was the shrieking meat jelly. The eight Nascent Soul Cultivators' scalps went numb; Meng Hao's laughter had turned everything into a nightmare. They immediately retreated from the incoming Tribulation Lightning.

It didn't matter how quickly they evaded. The lightning descended, slamming into them with a huge boom. Blood sprayed from their mouths and their faces went white. They shot backward at high speed, staring at Meng Hao with immeasurable dread.

The white-robed Cultivator from the Constellation Tribe frowned, his face unsightly and pale. “The ancient records say that whoever is transcending Tribulation is an inauspicious life form of Heaven and Earth. Everything within five thousand kilometers of him will be turned into nothing but ash. However, until then, he is still an inauspicious life form! Anyone near him will be dead for sure!

“Furthermore, it will be impossible to kill him. The Heavens are difficult to fathom, especially in regards to dignity. The Heavens will exterminate this person, how could they possibly allow others to assist? Attempting to kill him now is making yourself an enemy of the Heavens!

“The instant he gets killed by the Tribulation Lightning, his body will explode into a ball of lightning.... According to the ancient records, when that explosion of lightning occurs, everything within the Tribulation transcendence zone will be reduced to nothing.

“The only hope of survival is to make sure that he transcends the Tribulation. Furthermore, you can’t let the Lightning infect your body. If it does, and you don’t die, then you are evoking Karma.... If you evoke such Karma, then the Tribulation Lightning won’t stop until you’re dead. You eight Nascent Soul Cultivators... are dead beyond the shadow of a doubt!”

Face grim, the white-robed Cultivator retreated at top speed.

The Heavenly Tribulation boomed as one lightning bolt after another shot down onto Meng Hao, who held the meat jelly upraised in his hand to defend himself. The lightning would subsequently disperse into the area around him. Any nearby Cultivators would let out bloodcurdling screams. Soon, the air filled with the sounds of cursing and reviling.

Meng Hao didn’t care. This was something he had learned from Patriarch Reliance. When you con someone and then end up getting cursed by them, you must maintain your cool. It was really a realm unto itself.

Throughout the years, Meng Hao had conned many people, and had refined that skill to the very pinnacle. Therefore, he continued to redirect the descending lightning to the various Cultivators in the three thousand

kilometer region.

Wherever he went, he was surrounded by a lake of lightning, along with plaintive cursing. What he left behind was scorched corpses.

To the Cultivators here, it was nothing but a massacre, a slaughter in which no one could do anything to fight back. They couldn't attack him, nor could they flee as... they were horrified to discover that Meng Hao's speed was incredible, even if he was being struck by lightning!

Time passed, and the Heavenly Tribulation continued to fall, and nearly all of the surrounding Cultivators had been conned into death thanks to Meng Hao. There were roughly a hundred left, all of whom had split off toward different areas, their faces pale. If Meng Hao even looked their way, they would flee at top speed in the opposite direction.

Unfortunately... the lightning fell continuously, there were some people who couldn't avoid it. That was especially true of those Cultivators who had at some point attacked Meng Hao. Meng Hao didn't even have to get near them to attract the falling lightning.

The eight Nascent Soul Cultivators, for example, soon found that no matter where or how they fled, whenever lightning shot toward Meng Hao, they would also be struck.

Each lightning bolt contained incredible power. Even though they were of the Nascent Soul stage, if things kept up as they were, they wouldn't be able to take it.

"Dammit, that Heaven-damned bastard is too sadistic! This is his Tribulation, we're innocent...."

"I'm gonna kill him! Kill him!!"

"If he doesn't die, then I swear that he will be the greatest archenemy in my entire life!!"

The roughly one hundred surviving Cultivators howled continuously amongst the roaring of the thunder. Whenever the lightning sought out Meng Hao, they, too experienced lightning.

Meng Hao coughed lightly as he lowered the meat jelly. It seemed to be full, almost bulging. It glared furiously at Meng Hao.

“You’re immoral, you’re too wicked....”

Boom!

“Aiiiii! You evil bastard....”

Boom!

“Let me go, okay, Master? You’re the best Master in the world. Forgive little old me, okay? I’m full. Really, I’m full. I can’t eat any more....”

Looking at the wretched condition the meat jelly was in, Meng Hao held it up to block one final lightning bolt, then flicked his sleeve. The meat jelly instantly turned into a prismatic beam of light that shot off toward the fog.

“Dammit Meng Hao,” it roared. “You just wait, you wicked, immoral bastard. I’ll definitely convert you in this life!” Feeling very wronged, it was continuing to curse when Meng Hao transmitted a single sentence to it.

“If nothing unexpected happens, then when I reach Nascent Soul, I’ll need your help with the Tribulation Lightning again.”

The meat jelly suddenly trembled, and an ingratiating expression appeared on its face. Not saying another word about the subject, it flew into the fog. It feared Meng Hao, feared him completely. It was worried that if it spent any more time talking back, it would be forced to get so full that it would explode.

Meng Hao looked around the three thousand kilometer area and didn’t see anyone else. The remaining hundred or so people had long since dispersed and found places to hide. If Meng Hao couldn’t find them, then it indicated that the Heavenly Tribulation couldn’t either.

He took a deep breath as a look of concentration filled his face. Now the true transcending of Tribulation was to begin. This was because the Tribulation Lightning was no longer pure red; now it contained, an additional color.

It could be described as abstruse, and pitch-black!

Abstruse, pitch-black lightning!

Each bolt now had doubly destructive power. As it roared down, Meng Hao could see that within the red and black was incredible power of annihilation. He lifted his right hand into the air, wherein appeared the Li Clan Patriarch.

The explosion echoed out, accompanied by a miserable shriek. The soul embodiment twisted, but did not disperse. After all the time Meng Hao had spent getting it used to lightning, while it wasn't a complete Soul of Lightning, it was more than halfway there.

"Damn you Meng Hao, I'll never let you get away with this!" The Li Clan Patriarch's roars were shocking and filled with grief. During the last half year, he had experienced torment and pain like nothing he had experienced in his life. He had been born into a lofty status, and in the Li Clan was considered a Patriarch. However, with Meng Hao, he had experienced untold suffering.

At the moment, even as the grief welled up from his heart and he reviled Meng Hao, he was lifted up again. A boom filled the air, along with a miserable shriek.

In fact, he now felt that spending time with the meat jelly was much better than being with Meng Hao. Before, he used to consider the meat jelly to be the biggest nightmare in existence. He had long since changed his mind. Now, the meat jelly actually seemed somewhat charming. Meng Hao was the true ultimate nightmare.

Booms rang out as one lightning bolt after another fell down. Even with the Li Clan Patriarch, and Meng Hao's increased resistance to lightning, it was still difficult to take.

Meng Hao's body trembled. The ground around him was thoroughly destroyed, and much of it had crystallized. It looked like blackish-red gems, horrible and fearsome in appearance.

When the lightning slammed into this new type of ground, it would

ricochet off, inflicting even more injuries onto Meng Hao. As such, he needed to constantly change locations. The pressure bearing down on him was growing increasingly greater, as well as upon the hundred or so other people who were still in the fifteen hundred kilometer area.

As the lightning continued to rain down, occasionally, bloodcurdling screams would rise up. Just now, five hundred kilometers away, blood sprayed from the mouth of a man festooned with totem tattoos. Lightning smashed down onto him until he couldn't take it any more and died. In the end, he'd had no choice other than to help Meng Hao transcend this tribulation.

After the man died, even more lightning fell from the Heavens.

Two hundred and fifty kilometers away, three Western Desert Cultivators were currently sitting cross-legged, converging their power, along with a total of nine glittering totems and dozens of magical items, to create a shimmering shield above their heads. Lightning bolts continued to fall down onto the shield. Suddenly....

Three successive bolts of black-red Tribulation Lightning smashed into the shield, shattering it to pieces. Their magical treasures collapsed into pieces, and the nine totems were split apart. The three Cultivators' bodies spasmed and blood sprayed from their mouths. Moments later, they were nothing more than ash drifting in the wind.

A thousand kilometers away was a Western Desert Cultivator who had fled into a subterranean chamber. Above him hovered rings composed of thousands of human skulls, his attempt to conceal himself. It had worked up until now, when bolt after bolt of black-red lightning smashed the skulls into pieces, which were then transformed into ice crystals. Moments later, the man was nothing more than a collection of crystals fused with the ground.

After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, Meng Hou coughed up some blood, then lifted his head up and laughed. His hair whipped around, and his body was covered with lightning wounds. However, his maniacal laughter had not reduced even in the slightest.

Of the hundred or so people who had joined him in this transcending of Tribulation, only twenty or so still held out. The rest were dead.

After enough time passed for two incense sticks to burn, a boom rang out from Meng Hao's body. The Li Clan Patriarch seemed on the verge of death. Having accomplished all he could with him, Meng Hao put him away. After this particular round of lightning, Meng Hao's body felt as if it were on the verge of collapse. It was at this point that violet Qi appeared in his eyes, and his body began to recover.

"Bring it on!!" he roared, holding his head back as he laughed and laughed. His laughter was shrill but filled with determination and even a touch of madness. As the laughter reached the ears of the five thousand running Cultivators of the Church of the Golden Light, it seemed completely brutal.

Chapter 386: Five Colored Sky, Cultivation Base Breakthrough!

The parrot stared blankly at Meng Hao as he stood there surrounded by Heavenly Tribulation. Within the three thousand kilometer region, the ground had been completely transformed into ice crystals. The sky was thick with black clouds, and lightning fell down like rain, shaking Heaven and Earth.

Meng Hao was in the middle of it all, head thrown back as the brutal sound of his laughter rose up into the face of the Heavens. The parrot was breathing heavily as it recalled a figure it had seen once, also laughing in the face of Heavenly Tribulation. The only difference was that Meng Hao was on the ground, and the person in its memory was in mid-air.

Apparently infuriated by Meng Hao's laughter, the clouds in the Heaven seethed, and another color appeared in addition to the red and black.

Green!

Shocking green lightning mixed in with the red and black. Three-colored lightning descended upon Meng Hao, twenty bolts at the same time!

The eight Nascent Soul Cultivators had lost even the power to curse. They were doing everything to fight back against the lightning. Amidst the booms, Meng Hao's laughter rang out as slender, white strands began to fly about in the air around him. The lightning was completely incapable of breaking these strands, not even a bit.

Of the Cultivators in the three thousand kilometer area, only the eight Nascent Soul Cultivators could resist the three-colored lightning, as well as... the white-robed Cultivator from the Constellation Tribe.

All of the other Cultivators who had lasted up to this point were now dead.

The white-robed Cultivator's heart filled with alarm. He had exercised utmost caution up to this point, and yet in the end, had been infected by Karma. He was now sucked into being part of the Tribulation. His eyes

filled with venomous hatred, but there was nothing he could do about it.

“Dammit, how could it be three-colored Tribulation Lightning? Just what did this guy do to offend the Heavens to invoke legendary Tribulation Lightning like this!?!?”

A roaring sound rose up again as bolts of three-colored lightning continued to fall relentlessly. Meng Hao’s body shook. Silk swirled around him continuously.

The silk thread spit out by the Eyeless Larva is neverending, and is impossible to break!

The thread could be long or short; at the moment it spun to surround Meng Hao, creating layer after layer. When the lightning fell from the Heavens to slam into it, giant booms filled the air. The lightning seemed to be split into pieces by the silk, which was not breaking. However, the resulting reverberations slammed into Meng Hao.

He coughed up a mouthful of blood as sparks danced through the air around him and then slammed into the ground, only to ricochet back up and hit Meng Hao. Cracking sounds could be heard from his legs as shattered bones suddenly poked out through his skin.

Meng Hao’s vision was starting to grow dim. Blood filled his mouth, but he simply spit it out and then started laughing again. His eyes were filled both with determination, and a violet glow. Using the power of the Violet Pupil Transformation, and borrowing from his longevity, he healed himself. In the blink of an eye, he was back to normal.

As of this point, there was no land within the three thousand kilometer region which had not been crystallized; this led only to further injury for Meng Hao.

Given this situation, there was no reason not to simply... fly straight up into the sky!

This action caused the parrot’s eyes to grow wide. As of now, he was having difficulty separating the previous image in its memory with that of Meng Hao’s.

“This is my Gold Core Tribulation, and I’m gonna last until the end! No more hiding! No more fear and awe! If fear and awe exist in the heart of the Cultivator, then how can any great Dao be cultivated!? How can self-confidence be cultivated!?”

“When I reached Foundation Establishment, I ran away. When I reached Core Formation, I hesitated. Well now... I will retreat no further!” A roar echoed up from deep within Meng Hao, filled with his determination to become powerful.

“When this Tribulation is over, I will be even stronger!” He held his head back and roared as he floated there in mid-air. His black hair danced around him, and his back was straight. His appearance was that of lofty heroism. The silk of the Eyeless Larva swirled around him, unbreakable by anything under the Heavens.

As Meng Hao roared, more three-colored lightning fell, heading directly for him. He laughed, his eyes shining with confidence as he lifted his right hand, formed it into a fist, and directly punched the Heavenly Tribulation.

This was his first attempt to actually fight back!

Such resistance seemed simple, but few people would ever think to use this method to attempt to transcend Heavenly Tribulation. It was a rare thing for someone to attempt to actually destroy the Heavenly Tribulation.

Almost the same moment that Meng Hao’s fist slammed into the lightning, it was as if some new part of him were suddenly ripped open. His will and heart moved in accord, and his Cultivation base mobilized. As soon as he put to action his intent to fight back against the Heavenly Tribulation, his Cultivation base suddenly exploded up!

He was no longer in the mid Gold Core stage. He had broken through into the late Gold Core stage. Granted, he was not at the peak, but had without any doubt stepped into the late stage. Such willingness to undertake actions that can lead to grave consequence, and the resulting instant breakthrough, were shocking to the extreme!

Seemingly endless amounts of golden light radiated out from his body. His eyes shone with a dazzling golden brilliance. Without hesitation,

Meng Hao produced an ultra high-grade Spirit Stone. The instant it appeared in his hand, he absorbed the spiritual energy within, then crushed it into dust. He roared, drawing upon the new power of his Cultivation base, the energy within the Spirit Stone, and the bizarre force in his right hand, to shot directly up toward the Heavenly Tribulation.

A roaring sound filled the air and Meng Hao coughed up blood as one, two, three... five bolts of Heavenly Tribulation slammed into him, shoving him downward. Silk spun madly around him, and violet Qi exploded in his eyes. The injuries he was sustaining were constantly being healed. Among the eight Nascent Soul Cultivators who remained in the three thousand kilometer region, three of them suddenly coughed up blood and then were killed by the lightning.

They had no magical items with which to defend against the Heavenly Tribulation, nor any experience standing up to lightning. Neither did they possess wild, stubborn determination; the only path for them was the one that led to death!

Even Nascent Soul Cultivators could not flee this Heavenly Tribulation; their bodies exploded into pieces.

Meng Hao's body was shaking, and it seemed as if every inch of him was covered in blood. He shot down toward the ground, and yet even as he did, the Violet Pupil Transformation went to work. He quickly consumed a vast collection of medicinal pills; when he was a mere nine meters away from the ground, he suddenly stopped in mid-air. Shockingly, hoarse laughter once again filled the air.

Suddenly, the sky above went black. Ten lightning bolts shot down, carrying with them all the pretentious dignity of the Heavenly Tribulation. They descended directly toward Meng Hao, and as they did, the sky above suddenly burst into chaos. The massive clouds began to rotate to form a vortex. Shocking rumbling filled the air. If this scene could be painted onto a canvas, anyone who looked at it would never be able to forget it.

"Meng Hao is not the type of person to passively take a beating!" laughed Meng Hao. He lifted his hand up and pointed toward the sky.

Suddenly, the power of the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex poured out from Meng Hao. Ghost images sprang up everywhere as the power shot up toward the Heavens.

“Demonic Qi! Art of Righteous Bestowal! Eighth Demon Sealing Hex!”

Heaven and Earth shook. Qi visible only to Meng Hao himself surged up from the crystalline ground and shot toward him. The countless strands immediately congealed together to form a churning mist.

This Demonic mist surged out to completely surround Meng Hao, as if he was calling upon the very essence of the land, and it was following his direction. It shot toward the incoming ten bolts of lightning.

A massive boom rocked everything above and below. The lightning descended, causing a shocking roar to fill the sky. It slammed into the Demonic Qi surrounding Meng Hao, causing the Qi to shatter, layer by layer. As it did, the lightning slowly began to dissipate.

In the blink of an eye, only three of the ten Tribulation Lightning bolts remained. The Demonic Qi crumbled away, and the three remaining Tribulation Lightning bolts screamed toward Meng Hao. Immediately, the silk of the Eyeless Larva surrounded him, and yet, some of the lightning still managed to slip through.

A tremor shot through Meng Hao's body, and a vast quantity of blood sprayed out of his mouth. His body shot down toward the ground like a meteor. A huge boom could be heard as he slammed into the crystalline ground. The ground shattered, cracks spread out, and a crater was suddenly visible.

The Tribulation Clouds up above churned, lightning dancing about within. Suddenly, the lightning began to congeal together, its color changing once again. Now the lightning had four colors. Peals of thunder crackled out.

Within the three thousand kilometer region, the remaining five Nascent Soul Cultivators coughed up blood. Two of them directly exploded. Their weakened Nascent Souls attempted to flee, but were obliterated by lightning.

Begrudged screams could be heard before they died. Now, there were only three Nascent Soul experts left in the area. Their bodies trembled and their eyes filled with despair. Hatred for Meng Hao filled their hearts; unfortunately for them, there was nothing they could do about it.

It was at this time that the four-colored lightning began to descend from within the churning clouds. It sped toward the crater, and yet, even as it neared its destination, a fist suddenly flew out from within to slam directly into the lightning bolt.

A huge explosion filled the air and everything trembled. Meng Hao emerged, his body scorched black, blood everywhere. However, the violet glow continued to shine in his eyes, healing his body. He chuckled hoarsely and then, heart filled with valiance, flew up into the air.

“Gold Core Tribulation. You’ve already let loose around a hundred lightning bolts. Please, feel free to bring on some more!” As his voice echoed out, madness glowed within his eyes.

The Tribulation Clouds up above seethed, roaring with thunderous superciliousness and fury. Suddenly, everything up above turned bright red; simultaneously, countless bolts of red lightning fell like rain toward Meng Hao.

They slammed into him, transforming into endless sparks. And yet, Meng Hao remained floating in mid air, his grandeur only continuing to grow.

Suddenly, another color appeared up above. Black!

The sky was half black and half red! The rain of lightning now included black lightning. Thunderous roars filled the sky. Next, green appeared!

Red, black and green. Three colors interlocked in the sky, and the rain of lightning was now that of these three colors!

It wasn’t over, though. A fourth color appeared!

White!

Four colors now could be seen in the sky. White-colored lightning now

descended from this sky of four colors. The ground shook as the lightning slammed into it.

Amidst this four-colored lightning, Meng Hao floated, the silk of the Eyeless Larva spinning around him. He rotated his Cultivation base as he fought back against the Heavenly Tribulation.

It was at this moment that everything shook, as if some invisible person was roaring. Suddenly... a fifth color appeared in the sky!

Yellow!

Red, Black, Green, White, Yellow!

A Five-Colored Sky, and Five-Colored Tribulation Lightning. This was the final Heavenly Tribulation Meng Hao would face in his Gold Core Tribulation. He suddenly had the intense feeling that if he could transcend this lightning of five colors, then this Heavenly Tribulation would end.

“So, the final Heavenly Tribulation!” His eyes glistened with intense determination.

Chapter 387: This chapter title is a total spoiler, so I'm putting it at the end of the chapter...

"Heavenly Tribulation has five colors, and the five elements have five colors.... I wonder if there's some connection between the two." Meng Hao's eyes glittered. Now was not the time to worry about such things. As soon as the five colors up above finished merging together, a five-colored bolt of Tribulation Lightning appeared and began to descend.

At first glance, this five-colored Tribulation Lightning bolt looked to Meng Hao almost like a gigantic tree falling down from the sky. However, it quickly changed into something that resembled a golden sword. It pierced through the air, changing again, this time into a massive sea that seemed poised to wipe away everything in sight.

After a brief moment, it changed another time. Now it was a Flame Sea that could burn away everything in existence, within the midst of which was an enormous bird formed from clay!

These five changes happened instantly, and then vanished. However, Meng Hao saw them all; instantly his heart trembled as he understood what was happening.

Boom!

The five-colored Tribulation Lightning bolt slammed into Meng Hao. He had the Eyeless Larva and its silk. He had the Violet Pupil Transformation. He had a Perfect Cultivation base, exploding intense power. He had the glove on his right hand, which even Heavenly Tribulation could not destroy. A massive boom filled the ears of the five thousand running Cultivators, a boom that rose up all the way to the Heavens.

When the five-colored Tribulation Lightning descended one among the remaining three Nascent Soul Experts in the three thousand kilometer region shook and then exploded into a cloud of flesh and blood, which then dissolved into ash. His Nascent Soul was also exterminated.

“Five-Colored Sky!” cried the white-robed Cultivator from the Constellation Tribe. “It’s the legendary Five-Colored Sky!!” By now, the man’s clothing hung in tatters on his body, and his ancient face was revealed. The most shocking thing was that his facial features were all deformed, and his ear was covered up with his own skin!

His eyes shone with a red glow, and his body was trembling as he looked up into the sky. A look of unprecedented fear and awe could be seen in his eyes.

Meng Hao’s body was also trembling. He clenched his jaw tightly as the five-colored lightning showered over him. It danced about, seemingly intent on ripping him to shreds and blotting out his soul. It wanted to bore into his flesh and smash his blood and Qi passageways.

But the Eyeless Larva fought on tenaciously, like an ultimate treasure of Heaven and Earth, sending out layer after layer of unbreakable silk to shatter the five-colored Heavenly Tribulation.

Thanks to the silk, the five-colored lightning gradually disappeared. Not a single lightning bolt could be seen anywhere. Meng Hao raised his head up and roared. Violet Qi surged, once again restoring his body. However, on his face, wrinkles of age were now visible.

“Five-colored Tribulation Lightning cannot break the will of Meng Hao!”

The Five-Colored Sky rumbled, and the seething clouds suddenly began to congeal together. As the clouds moved, it seemed as if Time itself were dancing within. Peals of thunder filled the Heavens as countless bolts of five-colored lightning appeared. All of them gradually began to merge.

At the same moment, an unspeakable pressure could be felt from up above. As the clouds contracted, it seemed as if they were now filling with an unprecedented lightning of annihilation.

“Hold on, Meng Hao!” squawked the parrot from its position outside the three thousand kilometer region. “This is the final bit of lightning!”

The lightning rumbled as the final collection of Heavenly Tribulation formed. Within the space of about ten breaths, no more Tribulation

Clouds could be seen in the sky. The only thing visible now was the glow of the five colors!

This five-colored glow... was not lightning. Instead, it had taken the shape of a gigantic hand. Each finger of this hand was one color, making it a gigantic Five-Colored Palm. It was Heavenly, and of lightning; after all, it was formed out of five-colored lightning itself. Upon examination, this massive palm truly seemed incomparable.

Strangely, it had no palm print whatsoever!

Rumbling filled the air as the Five-Colored Palm began to fall down from the sky.

As it neared, the ground shook, shattering the land within the three thousand kilometer area. Everything collapsed. The remaining two Nascent Soul Cultivators who held on until now could do so no longer. With blood curdling shrieks, they exploded. Their Nascent Souls, along with every trace of their life force, were completely eradicated.

As for the white-robed member of the Constellation Tribe, he coughed up a mouthful of blood, his face filled with despair.

The palm descended, and Meng Hao could feel an unprecedented pressure. His body trembled, his face paled, and blood sprayed from his mouth. He hovered there in mid air, shaking, slowly being pushed down by the immense pressure.

The descended palm seemed capable of crushing a mountain into nothing; Meng Hao felt as if he couldn't take it. He would soon be squished flat.

"The final lightning," said Meng Hao, his body trembling as he was pushed down. "You wish to exterminate me? Well, how about I seal you!" He suddenly threw his hand out. He emanated viciousness and madness as he pointed down to the ground.

"Demonic Qi! Art of Righteous Bestowal!"

Demonic Qi once again poured up from the land in the three thousand kilometer area. What Meng Hao wasn't aware of, however, was that this

time, there was simply not enough Demonic Qi. He continued to descend, until finally he landed directly onto the shattered earth.

“Not enough Demonic Qi!!” he exclaimed, his facial features twisted. With a cry, he produced the Demon Sealing Jade. A deafening roar filled the air, and the earth trembled. At the same time, the Demon Sealing Jade in Meng Hao’s hand began to emanate ripples which extended out. Fifteen hundred meters, twenty-five hundred meters....

Meng Hao’s face twisted with savagery. Power poured out from the Frigid Snow Clan’s Agarwood legacy, as well as Immortal Shows the Way, which he had received during the events near the Rebirth Cave. The power shot out of him and then into the Demon Sealing Jade.

Meng Hao’s mind spun. The ripples from the Demon Sealing Jade spread out. Five thousand meters. Fifteen thousand meters....

A complete fifteen thousand meters!

Suddenly, Meng Hao could sense all of the vegetation that existed in this area. All living things existed within his will. Every change and fluctuation was under his control.

“Demonic Qi! Art of Righteous Bestowal!” He looked up at the enormous Five-Colored Palm that was descending onto him. As his voice echoed out, all of the Demonic Qi within the fifteen thousand kilometer region rushed madly toward him.

It congeal around Meng Hao, creating a vortex of Demonic Qi. It started out thirty meters wide, then three hundred, then three thousand, finally thirty thousand meters!

Meng Hao’s eyes glowed with brilliance and determination. He slowly lifted his right hand up and then extended it toward the massive palm up above.

As he did, the Demonic Qi vortex lifted up, forming into a hand that was visible to no one except Meng Hao.

This palm seemed capable of sealing anything in Heaven and Earth!

“I am the Ninth Generation Demon Sealer! I SHALL SEAL THE HEAVENS!”

He struck his right hand up toward the descending Five-Colored Palm.

His strike carried along with it his stubbornness, his dream of treading the path of Cultivation until he became a powerful expert, and in addition, his very life force!

After all, if he could not transcend this tribulation, then he would be dead without a doubt!

This strike also carried with it Meng Hao's Immortal Shows the Way, the Agarwood legacy of the Frigid Snow Clan, and his own madness.

Such madness was required! This was not a battle of magic, but a sealing of the Heavens!

This strike was filled with the dignity of the Ninth Generation Demon Sealer, with the power to seal the Heavens, and the explosive power of all the Demonic Qi of the land within fifteen thousand kilometers!

In addition to all this, the Li Clan Patriarch emerged, along with the howling meat jelly. Every tool he had to fight back against the Heavenly Tribulation was now in play!

The parrot was clamouring excitedly, its eyes bloodshot. This was the moment it had been waiting for. It was only when the final lightning bolt descended that it could make a move, and lead in the five thousand Cultivators. This way, they would not be infected by the lightning.

The five thousand Cultivators shot toward Meng Hao, circling around him. Massive amounts of fog rose up to fight back against the final bolt of Heavenly Tribulation Lightning.

An immense roaring, louder than anything that had occurred up to this point, pressed down onto the five thousand Cultivators, covering over even their shouts. It was the only thing that could be heard... and it echoed five times!

This sound was none other than the sound of the two gigantic palms

slamming into each other and shattering.

Upon the first echo, the five thousand Cultivators coughed up blood. They were flown tumbling across the ground in all directions, and the fog dissipated. The white-robed man from the Constellation Tribe screamed as he was shredded into pieces, his body and spirit annihilated.

Upon the second echo, the sky and land shook. Everything on the surface of the land was transformed into ash and ruins. All the crystalline ground became a huge crater....

Upon the third echo, the meat jelly let out a plaintive howl, and the Li Clan Patriarch teetered on the verge of destruction.

Upon the fourth echo, the parrot let out a disconsolate shriek as all of the colorful feathers on its body were shattered. Everything visible was now a world of five colors.

Upon the fifth echo... Meng Hao saw his Demonic Heaven-Sealing Palm slam into the Five-Colored Palm. It looked as if a massive sealing mark were preparing to seal up the Heavenly Tribulation.

Amidst the roaring, the two palms collided. One was of the Five-Colored Sky. One was from a Demonic Sealer of the Heavens. One wished to destroy. One wished to seal the Heavens. The amount of power involved was impossible to describe. In this moment, the Heavens were not the Heavens, the Earth was not the Earth, and the Demonic was not Demonic!

The air itself shattered. As the roar filled everything, the five-colored world suddenly faded into complete blackness....

Within the blackness, Meng Hao's eyes shone with faith. He glared up at the black Heavens, and softly said, "So, you can seal the Heavens!"

With that, an incredible sense of weakness poured out from within his heart. Smiling, he closed his eyes, employing the Eyeless Larva's ultimate protective ability. Endless amounts of silk shot out, transforming into an enormous cocoon!

Meng Hao's body was completely encased inside the cocoon.

There was no sound. No Heavenly Tribulation. There within the crater, was a cocoon that seemed as if it would be there for an eternity.

Gradually, the sky regained its color. The Five-Colored Palm was gone. Meng Hao's Demonic Sealing Palm had transformed into ash. The only thing that remained was that which had formed the nucleus of the palm, the Demon Sealing Jade. It banged down onto the ground near Meng Hao's cocoon.

The pressure exerted by the Heavenly Tribulation was now gone. The area which the Tribulation had descended upon... was now completely soundless and motionless. The Tribulation had been transcended.

The parrot and the meat jelly, as well as the surrounding five thousand Cultivators, all looked weary and listless. They gathered around the cocoon to stand guard for Meng Hao and wait for him to break out.

Time passed. Soon, a Qi of transformation emerged from the cocoon. Inside, Meng Hao was sleeping, but his body was gradually changing. He was now even more accustomed to lightning. In fact, occasionally, bolts of lightning would shoot out from his body to dance around the cocoon and then spread out into the region beyond.

Chapter 387: The Ninth Generation Demon Sealer's First Sealing of the Heavens!

Chapter 388: Breaking Out of The Cocoon

Meanwhile, the Frigid Snow Clan had long since teleported onto a high mountain peak in the Violet Fate Sect of the Southern Domain. The Violet Fate Sect had arranged for this mountain to be the new home for the Clan.

Because of her beauty, Hanxue Shan had already attracted quite a bit of attention from the alchemist Cultivators of the Violet Fate Sect. The Clan assimilated into the Violet Fate Sect, and Hanxue Shan chose to join the East Pill Division, and follow her dream of becoming an alchemist.

After arriving, she finally learned the news that Grandmaster Pill Cauldron had forsaken the Sect. It was difficult to describe how she felt about that. There was some amount of loss, but also tranquility.

If she hadn't met Meng Hao, perhaps she would have felt more loss. Now, though, whether or not she got to see Grandmaster Pill Cauldron wasn't very important.

Hanxue Shan stood atop the mountain, looking off toward the Black Lands, when suddenly, a voice interrupted her thoughts. "Little sis Shan, I heard from your fellow Clan members that you met a certain Grandmaster Meng back in Holy Snow City."

Hanxue Shan looked back to see an incredibly beautiful woman standing behind her, wearing a long blue gown. Her features were bright and alluring, so delicate it seemed like the slightest breeze could break them. It was as if Heaven and Earth had taken all favor and placed it upon her, as if she were something stepped out from a painting into the mortal world.

"Greetings, Senior Chu," said Hanxue Shan, lowering her head and then bowing from the waist. Standing in front of her was none other than Chu Yuyan, the most beautiful woman she had seen since arriving at the Violet Fate Sect. Her beauty was such that Hanxue Shan sometimes found it somewhat distracting to look at her.

She had also heard some of the gossip about past events regarding Senior Chu and Grandmaster Pill Cauldron.

“Perhaps someone like her is really worthy of Grandmaster Pill Cauldron,” she thought. Seeing Chu Yuyan just now made Hanxue Shan’s thoughts suddenly shift to that of her own relationship with Meng Hao. His face suddenly appeared in her mind.

“Shan?” said Chu Yuyan softly, walking a bit closer.

Hanxue Shan’s face reddened, and she immediately bowed her head. Deep in her heart, she felt somewhat embarrassed, wondering why she was thinking about Meng Hao in this way. He was the kind of person who couldn’t take a hint at all when it came to love.

“Yes, I did meet Grandmaster Meng,” she replied quietly. “He is good at concocting pills. Without him, the Frigid Snow Clan would have been wiped out, and I wouldn’t be here.”

“Is this Grandmaster Meng a Black Lands Cultivator?” asked Chu Yuyan, gazing at Hanxue Shan.

“Yes, he’s a local Black Lands Cultivator known as Patriarch Golden Light.” As she spoke, her face continued to grow redder. “His Cultivation base is unfathomable. He was even able to catalyze our Thorn Rampart. The Dao Child of the Black Lands Palace was afraid of him.... Even Grandmaster Zhou couldn’t measure up to him when it came to pill concoction. Senior Chu, why is it that you ask about him?”

Chu Yuyan laughed. She looked at Hanxue Shan and could tell based on her own experience that this young girl had clearly fallen in love. Obviously, her heart was entangled with this Black Lands Cultivator, Grandmaster Meng.

“Oh nothing,” she responded with a slight smile, shaking her head. “It’s just that I’ve heard him mentioned quite often by your Fellow Clan members, and I’m interested in his Dao of alchemy. I’m curious what realm he has achieved. Unfortunately, he’s not here, so I figured I would ask around a bit.” Considering this Grandmaster Meng was a Black Lands Cultivator, he must not be the person she’d assumed. She was just about to turn and leave when Hanxue Shan continued speaking.

“Well, Grandmaster Meng isn’t too fond of the Southern Domain.

However, I happen to have a medicinal pill he gave me. Senior Chu, do you think you could tell the level of his Dao of alchemy by looking at it?" Hope suddenly lit up her face. After arriving in the Violet Fate Sect and joining the East Pill Division, she now had a much better understanding of the ranking system for alchemists. Her curiosity regarding Meng Hao's skill in alchemy had been piqued.

"Yes, I can help," replied Chu Yuyan with a smile and a nod. "Let's see what realm this Grandmaster Meng that you like so much is in." Considering her status, she would normally never do something like this. However, Hanxue Shan reminded her of herself all those years ago. She sighed inwardly.

Hearing Chu Yuyan's words caused Hanxue Shan to feel even more embarrassed. Head bowed, she immediately produced the medicinal pill given to her by Meng Hao. As soon as she handed it over to Chu Yuyan, she felt regret.

She recalled what Meng Hao had said regarding showing the pill to Grandmaster Pill Demon. "He was probably just bragging. To expose him in this way really isn't the right thing to do...."

At the moment, she hadn't noticed the incredible change in Chu Yuyan's facial expression when she laid eyes on the medicinal pill. She began to breathe heavily, causing Hanxue Shan to raise her head in astonishment. Chu Yuyan staggered back slightly, a blank look on her face.

"Senior Chu...."

Chu Yuyan closed her eyes for a long moment before opening them again. She looked at the character "snow" scratched onto the side of the pill, and then back up at Hanxue Shan. For some reason, a wave of irritation rose up in her heart.

"What is his name?" she asked, gritting her beautiful teeth.

Hanxue Shan was suddenly a bit frightened. Her voice low, she said, "Meng... Meng Hao...."

"Damnable Meng Hao!" growled Chu Yuyan through clenched teeth,

unable to control her reaction. Her voice was filled with a complicated tone, including both irritation but also gratification. Now she knew that Meng Hao was not only safe but also doing quite well.

This caused the irritation in her heart to grow even stronger.

Hanxue Shan looked at her. Chu Yuyan was far above her in terms of both Cultivation base and status in the Sect. However, the anger on Hanxue Shan's face was clearly visible.

"Why are you getting mad for him?" said Chu Yuyan with a sigh. "Meng Hao IS Grandmaster Pill Cauldron. He and Fang Mu are one and the same!" Chu Yuyan gave Hanxue Shan a final look, then handed the medicinal pill back to her and left.

Hanxue Shan looked as if she had been struck by lightning. She stood there with a blank look on her face, her mind spinning.

"He is Grandmaster Pill Cauldron...."

At the same time that these events were occurring, far off in the Western Desert was a stretch of desert plagued year round by sandstorms. The wailing, sand-filled wind rolled over the land, making it dark both day and night.

Anything that entered this place instantly could tell that it was like some sort of forbidden danger zone.

In the depths of this stretch of the desert was an altar complex half-buried in sand. Located inside the altar complex was a box the size of a hand. Suddenly, the box began to glow with dazzling light. At the same time, the wind outside grew more intense as it swept across the land. The flickering light began to transform into something that looked like a black sun capable of sweeping in everything around it.

A roaring sound emanated out from within the altar as the box suddenly flew out from inside. It shattered into pieces, whereupon a writhing mass of blood emerged from inside. The blood slowly began to take the shape of a person. This person appeared to be very weak. Eventually, the facial features became clear.

This was none other than the black-robed Spirit Severing Cultivator who had been killed by the Frigid Snow Clan's Agarwood legacy!

He was not truly dead! His body had been killed, but his Dao remained. His essence was not exterminated, nor his life extinguished.

As time passed, the body finished growing. He lifted his right hand, causing a black robe to cover his frame. He slowly lifted up his head, and a look of grim rage could be seen in his eyes.

"A person who can accept the full branding of that legacy is not someone to be casually trifled with," he said. "But just wait until I extricate myself from this place.... We will meet again!"

The former Holy Snow City was now nothing but a deep crater. Snow drifted about in the air, covering the bodies of the five thousand Cultivators who were located in its depths.

Located in the middle of all these Cultivators was a cocoon roughly three meters long. Wisps of boundless Qi emanated off of it. Over the past several days, the Qi had grown stronger and stronger.

Suddenly, cracking sounds could be heard. The surrounding Cultivators all looked over at the cocoon, which was now shrinking. It sounded as if a wind had suddenly kicked up; its whimpering cry echoed out in all directions.

If you looked closely, you would see that there was actually no wind. Instead, the silk strands which made up the cocoon were beginning to unravel from the inside out. Soon, the cocoon was very thin, and speed of the shrinking increased rapidly until it was no longer like a wind, but a whirlwind.

It prevented the surrounding Cultivators from seeing anything, but it did not prevent the intense Qi from emanating outward.

The Cultivators began to back up slowly, watching the process for the time it takes an incense stick to burn. Slowly, a person appeared within the whirlwind. Lightning danced around him, and beneath his feet was a lake of lightning. It appeared as if this person now understood the will of

lightning and exercised command over it.

After emerging completely, the Cultivators could now clearly see this person's face. It was, of course, Patriarch Golden Light... Meng Hao!

His long hair fluttered, and he wore a long green robe. His features were handsome. Beneath his feet was a crackling lake of lightning, and countless sparks writhed over his body, making it seem as if his green robe were a cloak of lightning.

Meng Hao had completely transcended the Heavenly Tribulation. His Cultivation base rotated; it was at the very peak of the late Gold Core stage. He was now only... a mere step away from the Nascent Soul stage.

Meng Hao took a deep breath. His Cultivation base was now completely different than it had been before. After transcending the Heavenly Tribulation, his Perfect Gold Core was now even more firmly condensed. The power emanating from his Cultivation base gave him an utter confidence of his place in the Core Formation stage.

Even more shocking was that having experienced the refinement of the eleventh level of Qi Condensation, the distillation of the Foundation Establishment, and now this baptism of Heavenly Tribulation, his physical body now far exceeded that of any ordinary Cultivator. In fact, not even the body of a Nascent Soul Cultivator could compare to his in terms of strength and durability.

All of this, however... was merely secondary!

What was most pleasing to Meng Hao was that after experiencing this Heavenly Tribulation, his body was now much more resistant to lightning, to an astonishing degree. In fact, lightning even existed inside of him, and his magical techniques contained the Qi of Heavenly Tribulation.

This was truly luck for him, gained in the midst of Heavenly Tribulation. This was not the type of luck that anyone could acquire. It was the type that you got when you looked death in the face, and came out only by sacrificing some of your life force.

Meng Hao took a deep breath as he strode forward. The vortex faded

away, and the Demon Sealing Jade flew up to disappear into his bag of holding. The Eyeless Larva drifted up and then transformed into a white ring which slipped onto Meng Hao's finger.

He rubbed the ring, cognizant of the fact that without the Eyeless Larva, he would have been incapable of transcending the tribulation.

"From now on, my path is as boundless as the sea and the sky. With my Cultivation base, as long as I'm careful, I can go anywhere."

As Meng Hao lifted his head, the surrounding five thousand Cultivators immediately dropped to their knees to kowtow.

"Congratulations Patriarch!"

Chapter 389: Appointment With Yan Song

Several days later, in the border region between the Black Lands and the Western Desert, green-robed Meng Hao sat cross-legged atop the Wild Giant, which roared as it sped forward.

In the Wild Giant's hand was a Western Desert Cultivator, his face awash with grief and indignation; this was none other than Gu La.

During the collapse of the city, he and the Wild Giant had been buried inside of the Heavenly Pit created by the magic of the black-robed Cultivator. The magic had disappeared, but the Wild Giant and Gu La had remained buried within.

If Meng Hao hadn't remembered them, he and the Wild Giant would never again have been able to see the light of day.

The parrot was perched on Meng Hao's shoulder, the meat jelly was, once again, attached to its ankle in the form of a bell. The parrot's face was as wildly arrogant as ever. It proudly looked up into the sky, occasionally sighing with emotion and regret.

What it regretted was that Meng Hao had left the five thousand Cultivators of the Church of the Golden Light back in the Black Lands, in the former Dongluo City.

Wrapped around the Wild Giant was a vine. The vine was somewhat listless, and thorns would occasionally protrude from its surface and then sink back in. According to his previous idea, Meng Hao had the vine consume the Thorn Rampart seed he had acquired. Unfortunately, that made it temporarily impossible to control. At the moment, it seemed to be on the verge of death. It would definitely need some time to recover and completely absorb the abilities of the Thorn Rampart.

"The Black Lands is in complete chaos," he said softly. He had been sitting perched on the Wild Giant for several days now as they traveled through the Black Lands. He had made quite a few inquiries, and now knew that after the fall of Holy Snow City, the only remaining city in the former United Nine had finally capitulated and joined the Black Lands

Palace.

After a few days of hesitation, Meng Hao had decided to arrange for the Church of the Golden Light to do the same. The general course of events had already been determined, and to struggle against it was useless. Doing so would only result in being crushed and destroyed.

On the surface, it seemed as if the Black Lands Palace had unified the Black Lands. However, the truth of the matter was that the true great turmoil was just beginning.

Seven great Tribes from the Western Desert had openly entered the Black Lands, and seemed intent on completely transforming the place. Everywhere they passed was left in ruins.

Meng Hao muttered to himself, and his facial expression flickered as he looked off into the distance. He immediately sent out his will, causing the Wild Giant to stop moving. In the blink of an eye, it began to glow with a yellowish-brown light as it transformed into what looked like a hill.

This shape-changing art was a natural ability of Wild Giants. Even a Nascent Soul Cultivator would have to spend some effort to identify it now.

After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, piercing cries could be heard from off in the distance. A patch of black clouds soared through the sky, in the middle of which were several condors. Their eyes were red, and they emitted a putrid Qi odor. They were surrounded by a mist of decay as they flew through the air.

Down below, a veritable sea of beasts caused the ground to shake as they ran along. Behind the sea of beasts sped several thousand Western Desert Cultivators.

A huge banner whipped about in the air above. The banner was emblazoned with the mark of their Tribe, an image of a skull, pale white and emanating a Death Qi. This was one of the Western Desert Tribes which was invading the Black Lands.

After the Tribe disappeared off into the distance, the hill shape began to

slowly transform back into the Wild Giant and Meng Hao. Meng Hao looked off toward the horizon and frowned.

“That’s the fourth Tribe so far,” he thought. This was indeed the fourth Tribe he had encountered in the recent days. “Is it because the Black Lands is part of the Western Desert, and that’s why Tribes are coming to occupy the area?” Meng Hao’s frown deepened. Something didn’t seem right about the whole thing. The passing members of the Tribe had looks of relief on their faces, which made Meng Hao question the situation even more.

“Well, it doesn’t really matter if there’s something fishy with these Western Desert Tribes. At the moment, I can’t go back to the Southern Domain, and the Black Lands is simply too small and in too much chaos. It’s not suitable for cultivation right now. The only place I can go to for the moment is the Western Desert.” He lifted up his head and looked off in that direction.

“The Western Desert. That’s my destination!” Having declined the offer made by the Frigid Snow Clan, Meng Hao was now convinced of where he should go next. Only in the Western Desert would he be able to continue his research into totems, and finalize his theory regarding the five elements. He would use pill concocting techniques to concoct his own Five-Colored Nascent Soul.

No one had ever gone down such a path before!

“Metal, wood, water, fire, earth. I need five totems, one for each of the five elements. That will be the foundation, just like the medicinal plants you need to prepare before concocting a medicinal pill!

“Unfortunately, the difference between Western Desert and Southern Domain cultivation is too obvious. They use the power of totems, the resulting Qi of which is completely different. One glance, and they will recognize me.” A ponderous look appeared in Meng Hao’s eyes. Some of the most important aspects of Western Desert cultivation would be very difficult for a Southern Domain Cultivator to uncover. If he wanted to research totems, the best way would be to infiltrate the Western Desert

under the guise of a Western Desert Cultivator.

He consulted with the meat jelly about this, but after helping him transcend the Tribulation, it was completely worn out. According to its explanation, it needed to rest for some time before it could provide any more assistance to the wicked and immoral Meng Hao.

Meng Hao even played his trump card and mentioned three bullies, which caused the meat jelly to tremble with excitement. However, tears also covered its face, as if it had seen some precious treasure, only to have it taken away.

Meng Hao sat there silently as the Wild Giant proceeded forward. However, a moment later, his eyes suddenly glittered and filled with determination.

“It seems that I really do need to work with Yan Song after all. He said before that he had a way around this Qi problem. If he really has been working on this matter for years, then presumably, he is trustworthy.” His eyes flashed and filled with determination. 1

“With my current Cultivation base, along with the Bloodburst Flash and the Lotus Sword Formation, there is some distance between myself and the early Nascent Soul stage. However, if an early Nascent Soul stage Cultivator wanted to kill me, it wouldn’t be an easy task. If you add in the blood-colored mask... then I can definitely battle the early Nascent Soul stage!” He produced Yan Song’s wood slip and transmitted some Spiritual Sense into it. After that, he patted the Wild Giant on the head. It roared and then changed directions according to Meng Hao’s instructions.

Several days later....

In the border region between the Black Lands and the Western Desert is a region with endless mountain chains. In the middle of a dense forest was a stream with flowing waters that let off a silver glow. During the nighttime, this glow was particularly conspicuous to anyone who was able to use a particular method of rotating the Cultivation base.

Currently, Yan Song sat next to the little stream, smiling at the two middle-aged men in front of him.

Both men had Cultivation bases at the early Nascent Soul stage. One wore a long blue robe, the other, a black gown. Along with Yan Song, they formed a triangle as they all sat there cross-legged.

“Fellow Daoist Yan, when will we begin?”

“No need to be anxious, Fellow Daoist Wang. There are still two other Fellow Daoists en route. Based on my calculations, they should be here within two days. When they arrive, we can begin.” 2

“Fellow Daoist Yan,” said the black-robed Cultivator in a cool voice, “you should consider this matter carefully. Every additional person will indeed increase the chances of success, but will also mean dividing the rewards even more.”

“Fellow Daoist Mo Li, don’t worry,” said Yan Song with a smile. “I’ve thoroughly researched our destination. I’m absolutely certain that the Spirit Severing Pill can be split between five people.

“I truly hope you are telling the truth, Fellow Daoist Yan,” said the Cultivator in the blue robe, the one named Wang. He laughed, but the threat in his words was clear.

Yan Song also laughed. His voice cool, he replied, “Fellow Daoist Wang, you saw the wood slip with your own eyes, and can make your own decisions. If you don’t trust me, then even if I tried to convince you, you wouldn’t stay.”

The Wang Cultivator gave a cold harrumph, but didn’t say anything in response.

The moon soon appeared, causing the three people to look up. Suddenly, off in the distance, a prismatic beam of light could be seen streaking through the darkness. Moments later, an old man appeared next to the three Cultivators.

This man’s Cultivation base was at the early Nascent Soul stage, and clearly at the peak, placing him above Yan Song and the others.

“Patriarch Transmutation, Li Tian!” said the Wang Cultivator, his eyes narrowing. A serious expression filled his eyes.

The black-robed Cultivator next to him, the one surnamed Mo, also had a grave look on his face as he narrowed his eyes.

The old man Li Tian calmly glanced over the two of them and then smiled. It was a sinister smile, filled with coldness.

“So Fellow Daoist Wang and Fellow Daoist Li are here. When we last parted, years ago, the both of you were already so intimate. Now it seems you’ve gotten even closer? When will I be able to toast you at your wedding feast?” His voice was grating, and his eyes radiated condescension.

When they heard his words, the two men’s faces didn’t change in the slightest. It seemed they were used to the man speaking in such a fashion.

“You have always paled in comparison to us, Fellow Daoist Li,” responded the Cultivator named Wang. “Throughout your years of Cultivation, it’s hard to say how many female disciples from various Sects you’ve ruined. You don’t even dare to step half a foot into the Southern Domain nowadays. You’re like a stray dog, constantly on the run. I guess you must enjoy that type of life, Fellow Daoist Li.” He feared Li Tian in his heart, but his words were incisive nonetheless.

Li Tian’s eyes glittered with coldness. He gave a gruff laugh but said nothing more.

Seeing that the three of them would speak no more, Yan Song cleared his throat.

“Fellow Daoist Li is a trustworthy person,” he said with a laugh, clasping hands. “On this journey into the Western Desert, all Fellow Daoists must work together.”

“Very well,” said Li Tian in a jarring voice that sounded like iron rubbing on stone.

Yan Song smiled and was about to say something else when suddenly, old man Li Tian’s face flickered and he turned his head.

“Who’s that?”

Even as his voice was sounding out, a beam of blood-colored light streaked through the forest toward them. Within an instant, it was a dozen or so meters away from the group.

The appearance of this newcomer was too sudden. Yan Song, Wang, and Mo didn't even sense anything until Li Tian said something. It was at that point that suddenly they realized something was amiss.

Almost the same instant that the newcomer appeared, Li Tian gave a cold snort. He immediately lifted his right hand to perform an incantation. Black strands of Qi swirled out to form a black crane. Emitting a piercing cry, it shot directly toward the blood-colored figure.

"Without a face," said the blood-colored figure, waving its right hand. Instantly, an enormous face appeared. The face was indistinct but emanated shocking power. When the black crane slammed into it, it suddenly looked angry, and a booming sound echoed out.

The roaring sound caused Li Tian's face to twist. Coldness still radiated out of his eyes, but now, within that coldness existed fear.

*

1. Yan Song is the alchemist from the Eastern Lands who came looking for Zhou Dekun in chapter 361. Later in chapter 370, he invited Meng Hao to go on a quest to find a Spirit Severing Pill.
2. Just to be clear, the surname Wang here is 汪, spoken with the first tone, different from the Wang of the Wang Clan 王.

Chapter 390: The Five Tribes of the Crow Divinity

The blood-colored figure retreated a few paces and nonchalantly flicked a sleeve. The image of this person underneath the moonlight was instantly etched into the memories of all present.

The mask had two eyeholes, but no other features. Even the eyes themselves were bright red. However, they were not filled with madness, but rather ruthless coldness.

As the moonlight fell onto his green robe and long, black hair, he exuded a powerful air as well as something slightly Demonic.

This, of course, was none other than Meng Hao wearing his blood-colored mask!

“Your excellency, who are you?” said Li Tian in his grating voice. Next to him, the eyes of Wang and Mo narrowed as they looked at Meng Hao. Inwardly they were on full alert; they were unable to see the mask’s extraordinary abilities, but they could see that Meng Hao’s Cultivation base was only at the Core Formation stage. In contrast, the attack just now, while seemingly rather casual, had actually displayed ripples of power comparable to the Nascent Soul stage.

Therefore, everyone here was suddenly somewhat hesitant regarding Meng Hao’s Cultivation base.

Yan Song’s eyes flickered as he looked at him. There was something familiar about Meng Hao that caused shock to well up within his heart.

“Fellow Daoist Yan invited me here,” Meng Hao said coolly. “Is this how you receive guests?” Behind him, the Wild Giant slowly approached through the forest. As for Gu La, Meng Hao had rendered him unconscious earlier; the matter at hand was not something for his ears.

The Wild Giant was enormous, but nothing that the Nascent Soul Cultivators would care a whit about.

Yan Song's eyes flickered with understanding as he recognized Meng Hao's voice. "Fellow Daoist Meng!" he said. He took a deep breath. Deep inside, he suddenly realized that Meng Hao was much more mysterious than he had realized. His previous appraisal was that Meng Hao was of the Core Formation stage and a Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy. But the scene from just now could not possibly have left him unmoved.

"Just what secrets is he hiding...?" thought Yan Song, realizing that there was much about Meng Hao that he didn't know. Suddenly, he let out a loud laugh and then clasped hands and said, "I didn't realize it was you, Fellow Daoist Meng. A simple misunderstanding, nothing more. Fellow Daoists Li, Wang, and Mo, allow me to introduce you to Fellow Daoist Meng. He is the last member of our party, a Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy to whom even I cannot compare. With Fellow Daoist Meng here, our undertaking will have a much higher chance of succeeding."

Li Tian and the others exchanged slight nods. There was much less hostility in the air than there had been moments before.

As far as Meng Hao joining the group, they might have looked down on him because his Cultivation base was at the Core Formation stage. However, Nascent Soul Cultivators are generally an eccentric lot. Most knew that many of their fellow Nascent Soul Cultivators liked to conceal their true Cultivation base, and very much did not like it when others saw their true level.

Yan Song did not offer any further explanations regarding the matter as the party gathered next to the silver stream.

Meng Hao's expression was cool. He had chosen to wear the mask at the expense of some of his life force, the reason being his previous experience in a similar situation in the Southern Domain, in the Black Sieve Sect's ancient Blessed Land. Because his insufficient Cultivation base, he had been attacked. Although the matter had been resolved, it had led to some awkwardness and unfavourable situations. 1

This time, he figured he might as well lead off with a tough posture. After all, by donning the blood-colored mask, he was much stronger than

normal.

“With Fellow Daoist Meng here,” said the man named Wang, “all are accounted for. Fellow Daoist Yan, would you mind explaining in detail the matter regarding the Spirit Severing Pill?” He looked at Meng Hao, then glanced over at the black-robed Cultivator named Mo. When he did, his eyes flickered with irritation and killing intent.

He made no attempt to conceal his expression, which caused Li Tian to chuckle. Yan Song also noticed. He gave a wry smile, unsure of what to say.

Meng Hao was taken aback. The Wang Cultivator’s killing intent seemed completely inexplicable, leaving Meng Hao astonished. It was then that he noticed that the Cultivator named Mo was looking at Meng Hao with a look of appreciation, even curiosity. The man was middle-aged, but his skin was as white as jade, and his features handsome, filled with a certain gentleness.

The gaze of the Mo Cultivator was surprising, but as soon as he heard the chuckle of Li Tian, he seemed to think of something which terrified him. He coughed lightly and stepped back to avoid Wang.

Yan Song shook his head. He could only smile wryly and clear his throat, then say, “Fellow Daoists, I’m indebted to the four of you for the trust you have shown me. Your arrival here has ensured that we can definitely accomplish our task in the Western Desert. However, I, Yan, will not attempt to pull the wool over your eyes. This undertaking will be very dangerous!” He looked around at the four others, noting their expressions, then continued.

“The ancient Dao of alchemy vastly exceeds that of modern times. Much has been lost, and currently, it is only common to find medicinal pills that are effective up to the Nascent Soul stage. Medicinal pills useful for the Spirit Severing stage are very rare. Nowadays, one can acquire medicinal pills that have survived since ancient times or even remote antiquity, then re-concoct them to make pills that are, at best, not even ten percent as effective as the original.

“The greatest dividing mark between the ancient Dao of alchemy and modern days, is none other than the Spirit Severing Pill. Upon consuming this pill, which is also known as Resurrection Day, the Cultivator will be submerged in an enlightenment of Heaven and Earth. He will be able to clearly understand himself and then accomplish his First Severing.

“You can review all of this information on the wood slip I gave to you all. Throughout the years, I, Yan, have traveled to many places, and finally confirmed that a location connected to the ancient Dao of alchemy exists in the Western Desert!

“Perhaps its existence is connected to the rise of the Crow Divinity Tribe. I’ve attempted to secretly enter their Sacred Mountain but was unable to even get near it. I could only observe from a distance. Even still, I could verify that it is connected to the ancient Dao of alchemy!”

As Yan Song slowly made his explanation, Meng Hao’s expression remained the same. However, deep in his heart, he was analysing Yan Song’s words, trying to determine how much was true and how much was false.

“The Crow Divinity Tribe has long since fallen into decline and split apart. It now exists as five separate powers, each of which now exists as a Tribe in its own right. They are the Crow Soldier Tribe, the Crow Fighter Tribe, the Crow Scout Tribe, the Crow Flame Tribe and the Crow Gloom Tribe!”

Hearing this, Meng Hao’s expression remained the same as always. However, a tremor ran through his heart as he thought back to the man he had captured, Wu Mu, who was from the Crow Scout Tribe. 2

“What’s the point of all of this?” said Wang somberly, his face expressionless. “Just lead us to this Crow Divinity Mountain, and we can enter it together.”

“Fellow Daoist Wang, the matter is not that simple,” responded Yan Song, shaking his head. “The Crow Divinity Tribe might have split apart, but atop Crow Divinity Mountain is a Totem God, in other words, a Spirit Severing Patriarch. With him on Crow Divinity Mountain, do you really

think we can just barge in?

“No, we must employ a different tactic. The Crow Divinity Tribe was split up into five sub-Tribes. Every so often, according to a predetermined schedule, the five tribes will enter their Sacred Mountain to pay obeisances to their ancestors, and to acquire totemic power.

“That is the only way to openly enter Crow Divinity Mountain. Therefore, our job is to infiltrate the Tribes and then make names for ourselves. We must gain their trust by joining their Tribes as vassals, and then acquire the right to enter Crow Divinity Mountain! After we get into the Mountain, we will reassemble and work together to acquire the pill of the ancient Dao of alchemy!” Yan Song’s eyes shone with a bright light. Clearly, he had been working on this plan for a long time in order to assure that it would go off smoothly.

Meng Hao’s eyes narrowed and Li Tian appeared to be lost in thought. Wang and Mo exchanged a glance; both seemed to approve of the plan.

Yan Song looked around at the ground and then laughed. “As for how to make a name and gain their trust, I’m sure all of you Fellow Daoists will have your own ways to do that!”

“How do we resolve the problem of our Qi?” asked Meng Hao.

“For that matter, we will have to prevail upon Fellow Daoist Li. He has resided in the Western Desert for a hundred years, and all the way until now, no one has ever been able to determine which Tribe he is in, nor what he looks like. Clearly, he is quite skilled in this regard.” With that, Yan Song clasped hands and bowed to Li Tian.

“Absolutely no problem,” said Li Tian coolly. “Before coming here today, I used a secret art to create five rare treasures. These objects can alter your Qi and conceal your Cultivation base for three years. Using this object will also enable you to manifest a totem tattoo that completely resembles that of Western Desert Cultivators.

“However, I will not blithely dole out such treasures. Yan Song, you are the leader of our party, so I will offer one to you with no questions asked. However, if the other three Fellow Daoists wish to acquire my treasure,

you will explain to me what use you will be in this mission regarding the ancient Dao of alchemy.” Li Tian’s eyes glittered. The message was carefully worded, but it was obvious that he wanted to pry into the private details of the others.

The Wang Cultivator gave a cold snort and said, “The two of us can analyze and explain all of the complex spell formations in Crow Divinity Mountain. The rest of you won’t have to move a finger.”

Li Tian laughed, then waved his right hand. Three beams of white light shot out toward, two of them landing into the hands of Wang and Mo, the other flying to hover in front of Yan Song.

“What about you, Fellow Daoist Meng?” asked Li Tian, looking over at Meng Hao. All of the people present feared Meng Hao. His casual attack earlier had clearly impressed them upon their hearts.

“I am a master of all Daos of alchemy,” said Meng Hao, his expression placid. His words caused Li Tian’s pupils to constrict. Wang and Mo suddenly looked very serious.

Yan Song smiled wordlessly. After a long moment passed, Li Tian waved his sleeve, sending a white light shooting toward Meng Hao.

“As for how to use the item, you all can figure it out on your own.”

“Very well,” said Yan Song. “Since we are all in agreement, we should now make our way toward the five Tribes. I will go to the Crow Flame Tribe.

“I choose the Crow Soldier Tribe,” said Wang.

“The Crow Scout Tribe!” said Meng Hao, his expression the same as always, not revealing even an ounce of anything.

“Then I shall select the Crow Fighter Tribe,” said Li Tian.

That left the Crow Gloom tribe for Mo. The assignments having been made, Yan Song produced an eight-sided Feng Shui Compass, which he placed onto the ground. The glow of teleportation magic immediately rose up.

“After entering the five Tribes, we will keep any communication to a minimum,” he said. “We will reassemble in Crow Divinity Mountain, using the wood slips to communicate.” He next produced jade slips which he handed over to the others. “Here is a detailed introduction of the five Tribes and the Western Desert. Incidentally, all five of the Tribes are currently recruiting large numbers of vassals. Infiltrating them should pose no difficulty.” With that, he stepped into the teleportation spell and disappeared.

Wang and Mo followed in succession. Meng Hao’s eyes flickered as he carefully examined the teleportation spell. After hesitating for a moment, he summoned the Wild Giant, who was still holding Gu La in hand. He then entered the spell under the watchful eyes of Li Tian.

Colors blossomed in Meng Hao eyes as he was teleported away. He felt as if his body were being pulled apart, as if he were suddenly adrift in Time. He wasn’t sure how much time passed before a buzzing sound filled his head. He felt like he was being torn into pieces. Then, everything went back to normal. He reappeared in a stretch of barren, greenish mountains.

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1. He’s referring to when he met up with Han Bei before entering the Cauldron world in chapter 156. There was a woman in the party who instantly attacked Meng Hao. He beat her soundly, and she ended up being the first person killed..
2. Meng Hao used his clones to capture Wu Mu in chapter 371, and then studied and subsequently released him in chapter 372.

Chapter 391: Initial Entry into the Crow Scout Tribe

There was no one around, only silence. It was late at night, and as soon as Meng Hao emerged from the teleportation, his body flashed and he was gone. He reappeared atop a tree off in the distance, whereupon he examined his surroundings.

The Wild Giant and Gu La were nowhere to be seen, which caused Meng Hao to frown.

Muttering to itself, the parrot burrowed out from within Meng Hao's robe. It flapped its wings and sniffed about, whereupon an intoxicated expression appeared on its face.

"There is ancient Qi here. Ahh, Lord Fifth likes this place. I suddenly feel like reciting some poetry...."

"You wicked, immoral, shameless bird! You think you're gonna recite poetry!? More like recite crap!" Of course, the meat jelly bell wouldn't miss out on any opportunity to attack the parrot. It continued to jabber on loudly.

Meng Hao swept the area with Spiritual Sense. After confirming that there was nothing dangerous nearby, he removed the blood-colored mask and took out the jade slip given to him by Yan Song. After looking at it closely, he found that it contained a map, as well as short introductions of the five Crow Divinity Tribes.

Meng Hao examined the map, then looked up and off into the distance.

"Some slight inconsistencies, but nothing too great. They seem intentional. It seems Yan Song doesn't trust everyone that much after all." Meng Hao laughed coldly, then produced the glowing ball of light from Li Tian. He examined it closely with several different methods before finally interrupting the parrot and meat jelly and asking their opinion.

That was the best method to get information regarding the thing. The parrot slapped its chest and then spit out a multicolored glob of light

which it examined before waving it away.

“No problem. Don’t worry, when Lord Fifth takes action, one Lord Fifth is equivalent to two!”

“Two of you?” said the meat jelly complacently. “You have the skill to split into two? Humph. You should really say, ‘When Lord Third takes action, one Lord Third is equivalent to three!’ Its body suddenly made a popping sound as it transformed into three bells, all attached to the parrot’s foot.

The parrot’s eyes narrowed with disdain.

“You know, the reason I’m called Lord Fifth is an allusion to the fact that I’m a parrot. Do you know what parrots are, huh? The last character in the word ‘parrot’ is the same pronunciation as ‘fifth.’ That’s why I’m Lord Fifth. What about you? Bitch!” 1

The meat jelly was furious. It truly felt as if it were being discriminated against. All three bells simultaneously let out furious shrieks.

“I’m called Lord Third, and that’s an allusion too, because I can count to three! That’s why I’m Lord Third! So what? You have a problem with that?!?!”

In this instance, the meat jelly really did seem to be quite bold and confident in its conviction, leading to a rare occurrence; the parrot gaped.

Meng Hao cleared his throat and ignored his clownish companions. He looked back at the ball of light in his hand and thought for a while. Next, he glanced at the ring on the finger of his right hand, which was, of course, the transformed Eyeless Larva. He quickly took it off and transformed it back into the Eyeless Larva, which he then combined with the glowing light.

The Eyeless Larva gradually disappeared. The glowing light transformed; moments later it was a totem, within which was the Eyeless Larva.

Meng Hao scanned it with Spiritual Sense, and after confirming that nothing was suppressing the Eyeless Larva, he lifted up his right hand and pressed it down onto the totem, which then covered the back of his right

hand. It slowly sank into his skin, after which, a totem tattoo appeared.

As soon as the totem tattoo appeared, Meng Hao could sense his Qi rapidly changing. It was no longer that of a normal Cultivator, but rather, the Qi of totems.

It was exactly like that of a Western Desert Cultivator!

Upon closer examination, Meng Hao's eyes filled with understanding. His Cultivation base was still there, but it was surrounded by a protective layer. Whatever magical technique this was, it was touched with totemic Qi. Because of that, Meng Hao appeared to be, not a Southern Domain Cultivator, but a local from the Western Desert.

"This Li Tian really does have some skill," thought Meng Hao. The more he thought about it, the more he realized this technique really was extraordinary.

A moment later, Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he transformed into a colorful beam of light that shot off into the distance. The parrot and the meat jelly hastened to follow, arguing the entire way. The parrot, of course, continued to come out on top.

However, the meat jelly would never admit defeat. It continued to clamor on that it would convert the parrot, and never lose.

Meng Hao examined the introduction to the Crow Scout Tribe from the jade slip. There wasn't much to it. "The Crow Scout Tribe is not the most inferior of the five Tribes that originated in the Crow Divinity Tribe," he mused. "However, they are not that particularly amazing. At best, they rank in at second from the bottom.... Considering such a situation, it was unavoidable for hidden struggles to break out between the various Tribes.

"Obviously, some of the larger Tribes wish to restore the former glory of the Crow Divinity Tribe. As such, there are internal struggles as the various Tribes attempted to swallow up the others. Such internal power struggles... are often at times more brutal and bloody than the wars on the outside.

"This particular Tribe focuses on Wood-type totems and is proficient in

concealing arts.... So Wu Mu really was a member of this Tribe.” Meng Hao took a deep breath, and his eyes filled with anticipation. One of the primary reasons he had selected the Crow Scout Tribe was because of Wu Mu’s Wood-type totems.

“Wood-type totems are a good fit for me. If I can acquire a Wood-type totem here, then I will have taken my first step on the path to the Five-Colored Nascent Soul!” Meng Hao increased his speed as he shot off into the distance. As he did, he slowly pushed down his Cultivation base until it reached the mid Foundation Establishment stage.

This was the most appropriate level to use to enter the Tribe. As a vassal, it wouldn’t be good to have too high of a Cultivation base. Contrariwise, with too low of a Cultivation base, he would be looked down upon, and it would be difficult to be accepted.

At dawn, the first rays of light spread out across the land to push back the darkness. Night transformed into the warmth of day; the vegetation swayed in the wind, within which could be detected a fragrant aroma.

The Crow Scout Tribe was located in a basin below a mountain. The basin wasn’t very large, but was big enough to house roughly one thousand members of the Tribe. Smoke curled up into the air from the houses below. The sound of children playing could be heard in the peaceful morning air.

At first glance, it looked less like a Tribe and more like a village. There were no walls surrounding it, only some vines clumped together. However, the vines, though they seemed ordinary, were actually enough to entangle even someone of the Core Formation stage who tried to break through them.

At the very center of the Tribe was an enormous statue of a tree!

The tree was covered with countless leaves, each one of which glittered with magical symbols. Some had red strings tied around them, upon which were hung small bells and bottles. When the wind blew, the tree wouldn’t move, but the bells and bottles would clink out a melodious song.

Stone stairs could be seen snaking around the mountain located behind

the basin. Apparently there was another area behind it which also belonged to the Crow Scout Tribe.

In front of the main gate was a pillar of light that shot up toward the Heavens. Even from a distance, it was possible to see that countless leaves swirled about within the light. A powerful pressure also emanated out from within.

Sitting cross-legged below the pillar of light was Wu Hai. Every year around this time was a ten day period in which the Tribe recruited vassals. Local Rogue Cultivators, or even travelers from further distances, could choose to join the Tribe. All of them had their various reasons for doing so. 2

As far as vassals were concerned, the Crow Scout Tribe had never been very keen on accepting them. However, in the past three years, they had expended quite a bit of resources in that regard, and had even issued special instructions regarding recruitment. Wu Hai wasn't quite sure the reason for this.

"It's really not necessary," he thought with a sigh. "Unless there's a war going on, what's the point in recruiting so many vassals?" Every time he laid eyes on the ten or more new vassals who had joined the Tribe in recent years, he felt a bit irritated. That was especially the case because quite a few of the women in the Tribe seemed very interested in the vassals. Wu Hai really didn't like that.

Even as Wu Hai was stewing in his discontent, he saw a beam of light approaching through the sunlight. As it whistled through the air, he saw a young man within, handsome, wearing a green robe and a bright smile.

"Hello Fellow Daoist, is this the Crow Scout Tribe?"

Wu Hai blinked as he glanced over the handsome young man. In his heart, he felt disdain; Western Desert Cultivators were usually tall, but not always. There were many who closely resembled Cultivators from the Southern Domain.

From the aesthetic point of view of the Western Desert, such Cultivators were not the type that women preferred. Therefore, although Meng Hao

had pleasing features, there was nothing about him that Wu Hai found particularly threatening.

Wu Hai liked this type of vassal. What he hated were the ones who were taller than himself.

He rose to his feet, revealing his tall and sturdy frame. He had two totem tattoos; one was of a leaf, the other a vine. He emanated the Cultivation base Qi of the late Foundation Establishment stage.

“That’s right,” he said. “This is the Crow Scout Tribe. Fellow Daoist, do you wish to become a vassal of the Crow Scout Tribe? Our legacies stretch back long into the past. We are descendants of the Crow Divinity Tribe, which was one of the four most respected Tribes in the Western Desert.

“There is no other Tribe which contains the resources of the Crow Scout Tribe. True, the Crow Divinity Tribe split up into several other Tribes, but that was because each of those Tribes excels in different types of totems. However, none of them can measure up to the Crow Scout Tribe.” Wu Hai slapped his chest, looking very proud to be a member of the Crow Scout Tribe.

Meng Hao smiled as he looked him over. Then, he turned his head to look at the Tribe, especially the tree statue; a look of concentration appeared on his face.

Seeing this, Wu Hai continued, “Becoming a vassal of the Crow Scout Tribe is the best decision you could possibly make, Fellow Daoist. As soon as you become a vassal, you’ll receive half a Spirit Crystal. After a half year probation, if you’re approved, you’ll become a full vassal, with access to Crow Scout Tribe totems and techniques.

“What do you say? There are a lot of benefits, right? Are you interested?” Wu Hai laughed heartily. The words he’d spoken had been from the heart. It had been many years since the Crow Scout Tribe had expended such thought and resources on recruiting vassals. It was just in the last two years that the stingy Greatfather and the others suddenly got so generous.

Meng Hao was a bit taken aback. Before coming here, he had thought about the matter from a variety of angles, and had prepared a whole series

of explanations to ensure that he wouldn't blow his cover. Only after doing all of that had he actually come to the Crow Scout Tribe.

Now, though, it seemed that all of those preparations were pointless. Becoming a vassal of the Tribe was so easy that Meng Hao almost couldn't believe it.

It seemed all he had to do was nod, and he would become a vassal. It seemed almost too easy.

"Don't tell me the Crow Scout Tribe isn't worried that people might come with ill intent?" thought Meng Hao. "A half year probation, huh.... Well, that must be the key. Even still, it seems unbelievable." His first reaction was to hesitate. As far as he was concerned, the matter just seemed too simple, so simple, in fact, that he felt uneasy.

*

1. This is a play on words that can't be translated into English. In Chinese, parrot is 鹦鹉 yīng wǔ and the number five is 五 wǔ. As you can see, the pronunciation of 鹉 and 五 is both wǔ.
2. Wu Hai's name in Chinese is 乌海 wū hǎi. Wu means "crow" and is the same character from the name of the Tribe. Hai means "sea".

Chapter 392: The Great War of the Crow Divinity

This was completely different than what he had experienced in the Southern Domain and the Black Lands. It was almost like the people here... were somewhat naive.

“No way,” thought Meng Hao. “Aren’t the Western Desert Cultivators supposed to be cruel and ruthless? I thought that because the land is barren, everything existed in a state of chaos.” He really couldn’t figure it out. Even as he hesitated, he suddenly saw a streak of light off in the distance. It transformed into a middle-aged man who wore a haughty expression. He was tall and strapping, and after landing, he immediately expressed his desire to become a vassal.

Wu Hai seemed to have some apprehensions, but nonetheless, he handed the man a command medallion and then let him enter.

Seeing this happen caused even more disbelief to fill Meng Hao’s heart.

Seeing Meng Hao continuing to hesitate, Wu Hai laughed and then said, “Fellow Daoist, you still haven’t made up your mind? Come, join the Crow Scout Tribe! Glory awaits you!”

“Considering the level of my Cultivation base, what exactly will I have to do if I become a Crow Scout Tribe vassal?” asked Meng Hao, hesitation visible in his eyes.

“Fellow Daoist, your Cultivation base is excellent. Generally speaking, vassals of the Crow Scout Tribe have two options during their probationary period. The first is to become a Battle Cultivator and join the Vassal Corps. If you serve the Tribe well in that capacity, your probationary period may even be shortened.

“The other option is to raise low-level neo-demons. I personally think that you are more suitable for the latter. What do you say? There’s no danger involved in being a Neo-Demon Kennelist. Furthermore, you also have the option of lessening the probation period if you do a good job

raising the neo-demons. Besides, after officially becoming adults, all members of the Tribe need neo-demons, and will likely come to you for help.

“Brother,” he said loudly, slapping his chest, “listen to Wu Hai, and you can’t go wrong!”

An imperceptible flicker passed through Meng Hao’s eyes when he heard the word ‘neo-demon.’ He suddenly thought of the beasts and Dragoneers he had seen back in Holy Snow City. After a moment’s thought, he also recalled something from the jade slip with the introductions to the various Tribes.

In the Western Desert, the strength of a Tribe was determined by three factors. The first was its manpower, the second was the number of neo-demons it possessed, and the third was the level of Cultivation base of its powerful experts. Weakness in any of these areas would directly affect the overall power of the Tribe.

It also revealed the importance of neo-demons in the Western Desert.

After considering these points, Meng Hao made his decision. Regardless of how unbelievably easy it was to become a Crow Scout Tribe vassal, and even if there was some hidden secret lying therein, he was here. He had no real reason not to proceed.

Just as he was about to nod in agreement, a tremor ran through his mind and he looked up into the sky.

Simultaneously, four prismatic beams of light could be seen whistling toward them through the air. Inside were four Western Desert Cultivators who were all glaring at each other coldly, but were flying together nonetheless.

Wu Hai also saw the four beams of light, and his expression suddenly changed. His voice urgent, he said to Meng Hao, “What do you say, bro. You need to decide quickly whether or not you want to join the Crow Scout Tribe....” Before he could even finish speaking, the four beams of light had arrived.

“There’s no need to answer so quickly, Fellow Daoist! The Crow Soldier Tribe is the best decision for you!”

“Nonsense! The Crow Gloom Tribe is the most powerful!”

“Shut up, you two! The Crow Fighter Tribe is the true successor of the Crow Divinity Tribe!”

All four of the newly arrived Cultivators appeared to be roughly thirty years of age. Each one was in the Foundation Establishment stage, and they continued to talk incessantly.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. Smiling, he said nothing.

Wu Hai looked furiously at the four newcomers, his eyes beaming with ill will.

“Hey, do you want to start a Great War of the Crow Divinity today?” he said, taking a step forward and emanating power from his Cultivation base. The four newcomers laughed as they approached.

“Don’t blame me! The Crow Fighter Tribe found me first, and then we went around to the other Tribes. After making a big circle, we came around here.”

Wu Hai was furious, but there was nothing he could do. He had actually participated in similar affairs quite a few times recently. “Dammit,” he thought, “Whenever it comes time to recruit vassals, the Tribes will go to any lengths to snatch vassals away from the others. They’ll do anything, above board, sneaky, sometimes even both.”

One of the four once again spoke up. “Fellow Daoist, don’t listen to him. The Crow Flame Tribe is the most powerful of all the Tribes. If you become a vassal of the Crow Flame Tribe, you will receive much better compensation than you will get here.”

Based on his experiences, it was easy for Meng Hao to understand what was going on between the Tribes. With a slight smile on his face, he took two steps back, opting not to involve himself in the conversation.

“Fine,” said Wu Hai with a cold laugh. Emanating power from his

Cultivation base, he slowly said, “So, you do want to use a Great War of the Crow Divinity to decide which Tribe this Fellow Daoist chooses!”

The other four exchanged glances, serious expressions filling their faces.

Quite a few members of the Crow Scout Tribe had noticed what was happening, and approached, forming a ring around them. No one made any moves, but rather, had expressions of interest on their faces. It seemed this situation was not only something they were used to, but something they found amusing.

“Great War of the Crow Divinity?” thought Meng Hao. “Great, I can use this chance to see how these five particular Tribes differ from each other.” He once again backed up a few steps, curious as to why all of the surrounding Tribe members had such relaxed expressions on their faces.

The Cultivator from the Crow Soldier Tribe stepped forward suddenly and said, “The Crow Soldier Tribe will go first this time. The Crow Soldier Tribe was the first Tribe to form after the dissolution of the great Crow Divinity Tribe. Our totem is a Demonic Soldier, and we are the inheritors of the Western Desert! In all the Western Desert, if the Crow Soldier Tribe can’t accomplish something, then who can!?”

The Tribe member from the Crow Fighter Tribe stepped forward, his face filled with both determination and a bit of madness. “The Crow Fighter Tribe is the true successor of the great Crow Divinity Tribe!” he cried. “We hold the entire Western Desert in the palm of our hand! Who could possibly compete with us!”

Suddenly, some of the onlookers began to cry out curses.

“How brazen!”

“Too shameless! How could you possibly describe your Tribe in such terms!”

Meng Hao stood off to the side, his brow furrowed. It seemed this Great War of the Crow Divinity was not going at all how he had expected it would.

“Hmph! It doesn’t matter if you’re the true successors or not. All I know

is that before the Crow Divinity Tribe even began its rise, only Crow Flame Tribe existed. Our ancestor set the entire Western Desert aflame for a hundred thousand years!”

“You people are all nothing! The only reason the Western Desert is even called the Western Desert is because of the existence of the Crow Gloom Tribe. It wouldn’t be here without us!”

As they continued to talk, Meng Hao’s expression continued to grow stranger. Then, he began to sigh inwardly. He finally realized that the reason everyone was gathered around was because this so-called Great War of the Crow Divinity was nothing more than a bragging contest!

There was no use of magical techniques or Cultivation base. It was all boasting.

Whichever Tribe managed to brag good enough in front of the vassal...

Meng Hao coughed slightly. He had never seen any sort of competition like this before.

“You people are nothing! The Crow Scout Tribe is the inheritor of the Western Desert. We understand the Cosmos. Our totem is a magnificent tree that supports the sky above the Western Desert!” Wu Hai finished with a roar. In terms of both his wording and his style, he was obviously not equal to the others. As soon as the words left his mouth, sneers appeared in the eyes of the others.

Inwardly, Meng Hao was shaking his head. Wu Hai’s words showed that he didn’t really understand the basic tenets of bragging. After Wu Hai finished speaking, Meng Hao cleared his throat, then clasped hands toward the group.

“Many thanks for the honor you have shown me, Fellow Daoists,” he said. “Unfortunately, my final decision is to join the Crow Scout Tribe.” He smiled and bowed to them.

Wu Hai’s expression instantly lifted. However, the faces of the other four were unsightly.

“Don’t tell me you despise the Crow Flame Tribe, Fellow Daoist!”

“Yeah, are you looking down on us? If we hadn’t started the Great War of the Crow Divinity, it wouldn’t matter. But now that we have, if you pick a Tribe, you have to state the reason why!”

All four of the others were now staring at Meng Hao, looking annoyed.

A slightly bashful look appeared on Meng Hao’s face. He now felt obliged to help these people to understand what bragging truly was.

Bragging was something that was eternally a part of Heaven and Earth. It had existed for as long as life itself. No person could escape its talons; no Cultivator alive could resist its enticement.

It was omniscient; after all, its existence was eternal.

Meng Hao cleared his throat. The bashfulness on his face was now covered with a layer of something that looked like holiness.

“The reason I picked the Crow Scout Tribe, is because it supports the sky above the Western Desert. The great tree totem that they control, is actually the Spring and Autumn tree, the ancient World Tree, that great ancient bridge between the Heavens and the Earth!

“In its eyes, the Western Desert is nothing more than a wrinkle in the great stream of Time. In its heart, the entire world is nothing more than a blink during one of the countless times that it awakens and opens its eyes.

“The Crow Scout Tribe has mastered the eternity of Time, and controls the four seasons of Heaven and Earth!” Meng Hao’s voice echoed back and forth. The four Western Desert Cultivators stared in shock. It felt as if some great power were shaking their hearts, causing their scalps to go numb. They were looking at Meng Hao as if he were some kind of ghost.

“Shameless!!”

“Too brazen! I’ve never seen someone so shameless. You’re not even a member of the Crow Scout Tribe, how could you possibly describe them in such an exaggerated way!!”

“Dammit, according to his description, the Crow Scout Tribe is even more grand and unfathomable than the Crow Divinity Tribe! Completely

brazen!!”

As the four Cultivators cursed Meng Hao, Wu Hai looked at him with wide eyes. He suddenly started to feel a bit flushed. The surrounding members of the Crow Scout Tribe were all looking at him with expressions of disbelief.

His voice filled with emotion, Meng Hao continued, “The great tree of the Crow Scout Tribe has given birth to innumerable lives. The Great Tang in the Eastern Lands came into being because a spring was formed by a drop of water that fell off of a leaf of the great tree of the Crow Scout Tribe. The disconsolate call of the Qiang flute of the Northern Desert exists because of a single frowning glance from the great tree of the Crow Scout Tribe.

“All of the fertility in the Southern Domain is because the great tree of the Crow Scout Tribe bestowed it with a single grain of soil. And as for the Western Desert... it is the home of this great tree, and home of the Crow Scout Tribe!

“The Crow Scout Tribe is worthy of the greatest admiration, holy. It is the sky of the Western Desert, the clouds of the Southern Domain, the object of worship of the Northern Desert, and the saint of the Eastern Lands!” As Meng Hao’s voice echoed out, Wu Hai’s face grew red, and his expression somewhat blank. A single question filled his mind.

“Is he really talking about the Crow Scout Tribe?”

It wasn’t just him that was thinking this. It was all of the Crow Scout Tribe members. Each and every one had strange looks on their faces, and couldn’t help but feel a bit excited.

Chapter 393: The Path of the Dragoneer

Two old men stood at the peak of the mountain that belonged to the Crow Scout Tribe. They were currently looking down at the scene playing out below. Both had white hair, but radiated extraordinary vigour. Each had four glittering totem tattoos which stretched out over their bodies, to the point where even their faces were covered.

“Hahaha! What a genius! Well played, well played.”

“This kid really has a way with words. What a sharp tongue! After he becomes a vassal, we should give him the position of recruiting other vassals.”

The two old men exchanged a smile. Actually, Meng Hao’s performance wasn’t something they would remember deeply. Every year during vassal recruiting, members of the junior generation would participate in the so-called Great War of the Crow Divinity. Other Tribe members were always more than happy to observe the excitement.

Sometimes, listening to the members of the junior generation bragging and boasting was just pure entertainment.

Meanwhile, back down below....

“Too brazen!!” cried the Crow Flame Tribe member, unable to restrain himself. His words caused the onlookers to all suddenly look at him. Everyone else present was from the Crow Scout Tribe, and they didn’t look happy.

The Crow Flame Tribe member continued, “You claim that the Crow Scout Tribe’s tree of Heaven and Earth gave birth to the Eastern Lands, the Northern Desert, the Southern Domain and the Western Desert. Well, the Crow Flame Tribe is a flame of the Nine Heavens, a fire that can burn everything! It could turn all the lands into rubble, and transform all living things into ash!”

The Crow Gloom Tribe member didn’t seem to care that they were surrounded by a crowd. “The Crow Gloom Tribe is the moon of our

world! Its light shines over all life. All flames and even the sun itself exist merely to serve as foils to the radiance of the moon that is the Crow Gloom Tribe!”

They had obviously been inspired by Meng Hao’s words. Their arguments now were much different than they had been before.

Off to the side, Wu Hai was furious. In his view, they were acting with complete shamelessness to brag in this way. He wanted to offer up a retort, but wasn’t sure what to say. He looked over at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao was smiling, and his expression was one of coolness.

“It doesn’t matter if you’re talking about the Western Desert or the Eastern Lands,” he said, a pious expression on his face. “All are simply solitary fallen leaves. The grand tree of the Crow Scout Tribe contains millions upon millions of leaves. As for the flames of which you speak, and the moonlight, they, too, are simply leaves on the tree!

“The grand tree of the Crow Scout Tribe is an Immortal above all living things. It supervises Heaven and Earth, and oversees the millions upon millions of trees that exist in the entire world!

“It is our light when we are in the darkness.

“It is our strength when we feel weak.

“It is our comfort when we wish to grieve.

“It is our wisdom when we are perplexed.

“It is our hope when we feel despair.

“It is our shield when we face evil!

“It provides safety when we charge into war!”

Everything was quiet as all the onlookers stared blankly. Wu Hai, the surrounding Crow Scout Tribe members, as well as the four representatives from the other Tribes were all the same.

In fact, the two old men at the peak of the mountain were also stunned.

Everyone had strange expressions on their faces. The four Cultivators

from the opposing Tribes felt their brains spinning, and couldn't think of a single word to say.

Normally speaking, they counted themselves as experts in the Great War of the Crow Divinity. However, they were now astonished to discover that bragging... had realms beyond even them. They had been rendered utterly speechless.

"Therefore," continued Meng Hao, "I choose to join the Crow Scout Tribe. I will bow to the Immortal who oversees millions upon millions of leaves. I will bathe in his light, and then spread that light to every corner of the Western Desert.

"Let all people in the world call him Immortal! Let the Great Tree come! His Will shall be done on Earth as it is in Heaven!"

Meng Hao took a deep breath as his words echoed back and forth amidst the silence of the Tribe. Everyone around had looks of complete disbelief covering their faces. Wu Hai was trembling; it seemed he had discovered the path he wished to tread in the future. He would memorize the words he had heard just now. From now on, whenever he participated in the Great War of the Crow Divinity, he would be invincible! No one would be his match! He could even look down on the Crow Divinity!

His expression filled with piety, Wu Hai called out in a loud voice: "Let all people in the world call him Immortal! Let the Great Tree come! His Will shall be done on Earth as it is in Heaven!"

The faces of the four other Cultivators were extremely unsightly. They exchanged grim glances and then sighed. With final hateful looks at Meng Hao and Wu Hai, they turned, transforming into colorful beams of light that shot off into the distance.

As they left, the surrounding Crow Scout Tribe members looked over at Meng Hao with strange expressions. After a long moment, they began to disperse. Wu Hai grabbed Meng Hao's arm excitedly. This was the first time in his life that he had looked so excited.

"Brother, that was amazing. I think you were born to be a member of the Crow Scout Tribe. Listen, for now, forget about the Neo-Demon Kennelist

thing. You need to come with me to some of the other Tribes. We're going to start some Great Wars of the Crow Divinity. I truly believe that we can spread the Will of the Great Tree throughout all creation!" His eyes shone with an unprecedented glow, one of devoutness as well as indescribable stubbornness.

It actually bordered on madness.

Seeing this, Meng Hao felt incredibly strange. "He can't possibly actually believe it, can he...?" he thought to himself.

It was only after a multitude of explanations, along with solemn usage of the phrases regarding the Great Tree being an Immortal, that Meng Hao was able to extricate himself from Wu Hai. He went with some other Tribe members to perform a series of formalities that were required for new vassals. Finally, he was given a stone tablet and escorted to the area behind the mountain.

This area was actually quite large and was divided into many districts, all of which were separated by fences formed from branches. Without the proper identification medallion, it would be difficult to pass from one district into another.

The district in which the low-level neo-demons were raised was actually relatively remote in comparison to the other areas. As soon as he arrived, Meng Hao smelled an odd odor.

It was a strange, acrid smell that seemed to be a mixture of excrement and sweat. The Crow Scout Tribe member next to him frowned and squeezed his nose shut as he led Meng Hao forward. Obviously, were it not for the admiration he felt toward Meng Hao because of his performance earlier, he would never have personally escorted him here.

He could have called for someone to lead Meng Hao, but instead did it himself; the difference between the two was clear.

As they walked along, a variety of howls and shrieks could be heard; this was obviously a location where large numbers of neo-demons were reared.

Eventually, they reached a very out-of-the-way location, and a crude

courtyard. They stopped, and his escort called out. Moments later, the courtyard door opened and an old man emerged. He wore a long robe made of sackcloth and was somewhat dirty. As he looked them over, the Crow Scout Tribe member introduced Meng Hao. The old man nodded and eyed Meng Hao, noting that he had been personally escorted over.

Finally, it seemed the Crow Scout Tribe member couldn't take the smell anymore; he turned and left.

"This used to be my courtyard for raising Greenwood Wolves," said the old man lightly. "From now on, this place belongs to you. There are five wolves inside that you can take care of. In half a year, the results of your probation will be determined by how well you took care of them. Then you will become a full vassal." With that, he tossed a command medallion to Meng Hao and began to stroll away. Just as he passed Meng Hao, he stopped, suddenly remembering that Meng Hao had been escorted here. Throughout the years, that was something that didn't happen very often, which meant that Meng Hao must have some special connections.

With a lofty expression, he said, "I'm not sure if you have any experience raising neo-demons. Either way, don't forget that if the Greenwood Wolves die, you'll have to provide compensation. Also, the five Greenwood Wolves were just recently born. They can only eat fresh meat, which you can acquire from the beasts in the surrounding mountains. As for the water they drink, it can only be melted snow from the peaks of the snowy mountains outside.

"In addition, you must mix some Tree Nurturing Grass into their food. You can find that type of grass in the mountains also. Furthermore, you will need to give the Greenwood Wolves Tui Na massage treatment every day to help them grow. Finally, you are responsible for making sure they maintain their ferocity and don't become too domesticated."

With that, he paid Meng Hao no further heed and left.

Meng Hao looked at the courtyard. The place did have an odd odor, but it wasn't something that Meng Hao couldn't handle. Furthermore, its remote location meant that not many people would be around, which

suited him nicely.

After entering, he immediately heard some threatening yipping sounds. Looking around, he saw a row of small wooden kennels, standing in front of which were five little, green wolves. Each one was only about as big as his hand. They stood there glaring at him maliciously.

As soon as he saw the little wolves, Meng Hao smiled. It was a warm smile, because as soon as he saw the little buggers, it instantly made him think of the Blood Mastiff when it was small.

Their furriness made them incredibly cute.

As soon as he smiled at them, they turned into green blurs as they charged over. Meng Hao laughed and waved his hand. The green blurs instantly dissolved into the images of the tiny wolves, which he now held by the scruffs of their necks. Being held in this position, they tried to bite him, but couldn't. They only let out their threatening yips, which then turned into pleading whines.

Meng Hao tossed the little wolves back into their wooden kennels, and then examined his surroundings further. The echoing cries of various beasts could be heard in the air, but other than that, everything was relatively peaceful.

Within the courtyard were the wooden kennels as well as a simple wood cabin. He opened the door and, seeing the place was in quite a mess, waved his hand. A wind sprung up which cleansed everything in a matter of moments. Everything was gone; the only thing that remained was a wooden bed.

"The word 'neo-demon' is basically a general term that covers all the various beasts in the Western Desert," he thought as he sat down cross-legged on the bed. "In any case, they are very important to Western Desert Cultivators." It was midday now, and the sun shone brightly. However, this place was located in the deep mountains and surrounded by forest, which broke up the sunlight and made the whole area shady.

Meng Hao really liked the scenery. He took out a jade slip which contained Yan Song's introduction to the Western Desert. He focused on

the part regarding neo-demons and began to study it. Combined with the understanding he had gained in the Black Lands, it only took about half a day before he raised his head from the jade slip. He was now relatively familiar with neo-demons.

“Neo-demons are a very important part of Tribal culture in the Western Desert. The number of neo-demons a Tribe possesses determines how flourishing the Tribe is considered to be. To Western Desert Cultivators, neo-demons aren’t just partners in battle; they are used when transporting goods, when sealing agreements, or even when food is needed.” Meng Hao’s eyes gleamed with understanding.

If necessary, low-level neo-demons could even be used as food. That part Meng Hao understood immediately.

“Ordinary totem Cultivators can use totems to harness the power of neo-demons. However, when it comes to actually controlling neo-demons, that is something that can only be done by... Dragoneers! Only they can control large numbers of neo-demons. In fact, a low Cultivation base can be made up for in such a way. Of course, Dragoneers don’t just fight with neo-demons, they raise them. In fact, they also use a variety of different techniques when it comes to training, and even killing them.

“So that’s why the Western Desert Cultivators mistakenly thought that I was a Dragoneer when they saw my poison at work outside of Holy Snow City. Furthermore, they mistakenly took the illusory image of the Flying Rain-Dragon to be a Heavenly neo-demon!”

Meng Hao’s eyes continued to glitter with enlightenment.

Chapter 394: The Demon Nurturing Pill Causes a Furor!

Meng Hao continued to peruse the jade slip.

“Neo-demons are very unique. They’re initially broken up into nine levels. The first three are equivalent to the Qi Condensation stage. The middle three are similar to Foundation Establishment, whereas the final three are like Core Formation.... Neo-demons which possess power equivalent to Nascent Soul Cultivators are Earthly neo-demons!

“Earthly neo-demons are relatively uncommon. However, even rarer are neo-demons that are as powerful as Spirit Severing Cultivators. Those are Heavenly neo-demons!” Meng Hao thought back to the Flying Rain-Dragon, and how people had assumed it was a Heavenly neo-demon. Now it made more sense.

“Above Heavenly neo-demons is a twelfth level, as rarely seen as phoenix feathers and qilin horns. Neo-demons like that are totems, and are as powerful as the Dao Seeking stage, only a step away from being Immortal!

“Do totems really come from Immortals?” thought Meng Hao. He thought back to all the totems he had seen and studied, and also of the great tree in the Crow Scout Tribe. Suddenly an image appeared in his head of an ancient totem composed of the magical symbols of the Celestial soil. He shook his head.

“Maybe that’s only where some totems come from. In any case, when it comes to totems, there are weak and strong ones.” He suddenly looked up from the jade slip toward the five little Greenwood Wolves, who sat sitting trembling in their wooden kennels.

“Newborn wolves who have level 1 power. These Greenwood Wolves have pretty good latent talent; beasts like these would be relatively rare in the Southern Domain. It seems the Western Desert really is a suitable place for neo-demons to exist.” He closed his eyes to sink into

contemplative meditation.

Late in the night, Meng Hao suddenly began to hear various whimpering and crying sounds. They turned into howls that sounded almost like the tantrum of a child. They started out slowly, but by the time dawn lit the sky, the cries were continuous.

The sound of it was now mournful, as if filled with discontent at the most unjust thing in all Heaven and Earth which had occurred.

Meng Hao's brow was furrowed as he opened his eyes. The sky above was hazy as he looked out at the kennels in the courtyard. The five little green-colored wolves were currently scratching frantically at the door of the kennel area. They were even gnawing at the wood, their eyes shining green. They were... hungry!

They let out continuous anguished howls, and their bodies shivered weakly. Most melodramatic of all was that the door was half gnawed away!

"Oh shut up!" said Meng Hao, glaring at them.

The five little wolves instantly shrank back, looking anxiously at him with their huge, glittering eyes. They appeared to feel wronged, and also starving. From the moment they had been born until now, they had never gone hungry for an entire day! The feeling of hunger filled them with fright.

Meng Hao's scolding made them feel completely maltreated.

Five little wolves, and one person, looking at each other underneath the hazy sky.

After the space of about ten breaths had passed, however, the five little wolves once again began to let out mournful howls. They were being abused! They were hungry! They had never gone a day without eating before, and now they were being scolded by Meng Hao. Their high-pitched sobbing rose up into the sky, and their little bodies shivered as if with cold. Some of them even had wood chips on their mouths. Seeing this, Meng Hao rose to his feet and walked over. As he neared, the little Greenwood

Wolves pressed up against the door to their kennel area, staring anxiously at Meng Hao and wailing as loud as they could.

Meng Hao reached out and grabbed one of the little wolves. The others suddenly seemed to get extremely nervous, and shrank back into the corners of their kennels.

The little Greenwood Wolf that Meng Hao had grabbed had a white mark on its head. It wasn't very obvious at first, but if you looked closely, it was clearly visible.

After picking up the little wolf, it began to cry out miserably and tremble. Its wide eyes were filled with helplessness and fear.

"Still howling? I think you were howling the loudest just now." He glared commandingly down at the little wolf.

The little Greenwood Wolf with the white scar continued to let out victimized yips. Meng Hao could hear grumbling of its stomach. He reached out to touch it and found that its stomach really did seem to be completely empty.

He cleared his throat, abashedly. "It seems I forgot that they're not the Blood Mastiff. They actually need to eat...." It really had completely skipped his mind.

The Blood Mastiff didn't need to eat, and Meng Hao had long since reached the state where he abstained from food. The little wolf could sense that Meng Hao's attitude had changed, and instantly began to howl even louder. The pained expression in its eyes became even more obvious. Meng Hao suddenly felt a bit guilty.

"Okay, okay, stop crying," he said, stroking the little wolf's fur. "It's my fault, okay? Just hold on a bit, I'll get you something to eat." He put it back into the kennel and then immediately turned and hurried out of the courtyard. Recalling the words spoken by the old man as he left, he headed off toward the mountains.

He returned at midday, a forced smile on his face. After entering the courtyard, he saw the five little wolves laying there listlessly in their

hunger. He hurried over, going from kennel to kennel. After prodding each little wolf awake, he picked up their wooden feeding bowls and then produced some of the food he'd acquired that morning and put it inside for them to eat.

As soon as the little wolves smelled the fresh meat, all the latent power in their bodies seemed to explode out as they charged forward and began to gulp it down.

Meng Hao stood off to the side watching. He basically hadn't accomplished anything the entire morning other than searching around to find some food. This was going to be a problem.

"I'm not sure how the other Cultivators raise their neo-demons, but if I have to keep doing this, it's going to be really inconvenient...." Meng Hao frowned. However, thinking back to the plaintive howls of the little wolves, he realized that he couldn't possibly allow them to starve to death.

He watched as the little wolves quickly consumed the food that he had spent the morning acquiring. Then, they started to howl again. Suddenly he felt a headache coming on.

"You guys are all little Patriarchs...." he said with a sigh. He quickly produced some water to give them. After lapping it up, their expressions were that of content. They immediately ignored Meng Hao and started to play.

Meng Hao looked up at the afternoon sky, then went back to his wood cabin, where he sat down cross-legged to think. After a moment, his eyes suddenly opened wide, and were filled with a bright glow.

"Even though they're neo-demons, they still have Cultivation bases. Since they do... then I can start feeding them medicinal pills at any time! In the Western Desert, they view medicinal pills as precious treasures and don't use them often. Of course they wouldn't feed them to low-level neo-demons." It was at this point that he thought of the Demon Nurturing Pill of the Frigid Snow Clan. 1

The pill formula for the Demon Nurturing Pill was very strange. In fact, medicinal plants only made up a small portion of the formula. The rest of

the ingredients required refinement of the blood and flesh of various high-level neo-demons. Originally, Meng Hao had been a bit confused by this, but now it made sense.

“The Frigid Snow Clan used to be one of the most powerful Clans in the Western Desert. They produced generation after generation of Grand Dragoneer. The reason for that surely had to do with their secret Dragoneer technique along with some special medicinal pill formulas.

“The Demon Nurturing Pill uses the blood and flesh of various different neo-demons, and can actually be concocted to a variety of levels.” Meng Hao slapped his bag of holding to produce the enormous corpse of a Flood Dragon.

Back on the battlefield of Holy Snow City, Meng Hao had taken the opportunity to collect some bodies of various neo-demons with the intention of researching and using them in some way. This Flood Dragon had a cultivation base at the early Core Formation stage; according to the ranking system, that would make it level 7.

“Concoct some Demon Nurturing Pills and try out the secret Dragoneer technique on these little wolves, and they should be fine.” Meng Hao looked back at the kennels, and the little wolves play fighting with each other.

He waved his hand, and the Flood Dragon corpse began to shrink. A moment later, it had transformed into a collection of blood mist. At this point, Meng Hao produced his black pill furnace.

The face of the teenager that existed on the pill furnace looked listless. It glanced at Meng Hao, and this time, did not dare to display any rancor. It obediently faded away, allowing Meng Hao full use of the pill furnace and not obstructing him in any way. 2

He sent the blood into the pill furnace. As for the medicinal plants, he had quite a few, but not every single one that was required. If he was an ordinary alchemist, he would be at a loss. However, being a Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy, he was able to extract medicinal properties from other medicinal plants that he combined together to meet the

requirements of the formula.

Medicinal plants emerged, and Meng Hao continued to concoct until late in the night. He held the pill furnace in his right hand, heating it with the invisible Everburning Flame and staring into it as he made occasional adjustments.

This was his first time concocting a Demon Nurturing Pill, so time went by relatively slowly. The following morning at dawn, the five little wolves started to howl in hunger once again. Meng Hao's eyes glittered brightly as he slapped the pill furnace. It let out a booming sound, and then a red-colored medicinal pill shot out.

The instant it appeared, the image of a snarling Flood Dragon could also be seen inside it. It seemed as if the Flood Dragon wanted to take control of the medicinal pill and fly away with it. However, Meng Hao reached out and grabbed the pill. No matter how it struggled, it wasn't able to escape his grip.

"Eighty percent medicinal strength. There's still room for refinement!" Meng Hao tossed the pill back into the pill furnace and began to use the Alchemy Dao Transmutation Incantation to further refine it. After two hours passed, a deep red medicinal pill emerged that emitted no medicinal aroma.

However, as soon as it appeared, a smell began to waft out that Cultivators would not be able to detect, but that neo-demons could. They could clearly smell it, and as soon as the aroma appeared, the five little wolves stopped their howling and suddenly looked over. They pushed up against the kennel door, staring through the cracks at the pill in Meng Hao's hand. Their bodies trembled and they seemed to be on the verge of going crazy. They started bashing against the door, as if they were willing to die to get ahold of the pill.

At the same time, in all the surrounding areas of the Crow Scout Tribe that were devoted to raising neo-demons, which included roughly one hundred courtyards, roars began to sound up. All of the neo-demons from level 1 to 6 began to go crazy. Their howls lifted up to shake Heaven and

Earth. It seemed that the appearance of this medicinal pill was like some indescribable blessing in their eyes.

Hundreds of neo-demons were all roaring. The intensity of the sound immediately shocked all of the Neo-Demon Kennelists in the various courtyards. Looks of confusion appeared on their faces, and they began to cast various spells on the neo-demons in their unprecedented madness.

The old man who had acted so arrogantly to Meng Hao before was now panting, his eyes wide. He stared at the level 4 neo-demons he was raising, his face filled with astonishment at how crazy they were acting.

A multitude of voices rose up in the area.

“What’s going on...?”

“What happened?”

“Are the neo-demons rioting?”

*

1. Meng Hao bought the Demon Nurturing Pill formula with his battle achievements in chapter 370.
2. He acquired the black pill furnace during the Violet Furnace Lord trial by fire in chapter 281. The furnace initially resisted him, making it impossible for him to use. Later, he handed it over to the meat jelly in chapter 295. Eventually he forced it to capitulate when he concocted the Perfect Gold Core Pill in chapter 336.

Chapter 395: Really Set Something Off....

As the sound rose up into the air, Meng Hao's eyes glittered. He could sense the mania that had arisen because of the Demon Nurturing Pill. He glanced down at the pill and then looked over at the five little green-colored wolves. Then, he reached out his left hand and pushed it down onto the ground.

As he did, an invisible shield sprang into being that covered the several dozen meter area around him. It immediately cut off the strange Qi that the neo-demons could sense but the Cultivators couldn't.

However, his actions were a bit too late. Even as the shield appeared, seven or eight booms could be heard as nearly twenty different types of neo-demons suddenly appeared nearby, roaring. These were level 6 neo-demons, with power equivalent to the late Foundation Establishment stage. Their eyes were red and filled with madness as they flew back and forth in the sky.

However, they were unable to find the source of the Qi, which of course Meng Hao had covered over. In addition, the Neo-Demon Kennelist Cultivators immediately flew up to try to placate them. After a bit of time passed, things eventually grew quiet again.

By this time, it was getting late, and night had fallen over the land. Everything was growing dark. Meng Hao looked out at the calmness outside and then back at the little green-colored wolves in their kennels. Their eyes were bright red, and if the wooden door wasn't sturdy enough, they would have broken through it.

It seemed this medicinal pill he had concocted was incredibly enticing to them.

"Interesting. The Frigid Snow Clan... or should I call it the Agarwood Clan, must have produced so many Grand Dragoners not only because of their secret Dragoner technique, but because of this medicinal pill!

"Neo-demons.... That time ago back in the Black Lands, I absorbed Demonic Qi using the art of Righteous Bestowal. That's why that woman

from the Western Desert thought I was a Demon Lord. Demonic Qi really is bizarre. There must be some connection between all of these things.” After thinking about the matter for a while, he duplicated some Demon Nurturing Pills and then suddenly pointed down toward the ground. 1

“Righteous Bestowal!” Immediately, invisible Demonic Qi seethed up, although not too much. Meng Hao only stirred the Demonic Qi in a roughly three hundred meter wide area.

The Demonic Qi rushed over to swirl around Meng Hao’s finger. He looked over to find strange expressions on the faces of the five little wolves. It almost seemed as if the enticement they felt because of the Demon Nurturing Pill had lessened. They were all staring dead at Meng Hao.

His eyes flickered. Muttering to himself for a moment, he put the medicinal pills away and then dispelled the invisible shield that surrounded him. He silently sent the Spiritual Sense of his peak Perfect Gold Core out in all directions. There was no neo-demon or Cultivator who could possibly sense this Spiritual Sense.

With his Spiritual Sense, he could see all of the hundreds of neo-demons in the area. They seemed restless, but not crazy like they had been before.

“Interesting....” Meng Hao thought for a moment, whereupon a completely audacious plan sprung into his mind. He set up the shield again, then produced a Demon Nurturing Pill. His eyes glinting, he took the Demonic Qi that was swirling around his finger and tapped it onto the medicinal pill.

Doing this required no pill furnace. His invisible alchemic flame gradually fused the Demonic Qi into the medicinal pill. As soon as that happened, the silence of the night was broken as the hundred Neo-Demon Kennelist courtyards all erupted with roars. This was despite the shield that Meng Hao had put up!

The level of the frenzy vastly exceeded that from before. Roaring echoed out, an indescribable howling that shook everything.

This was not just a handful of neo-demons roaring; it was all of them! In

a split second, a shocking roar filled the entirety of the Crow Scout Tribe!

The sound of it vastly exceeded that of the riot caused by the first pill.

Wu Hai was there among his fellow Tribe members, a blank look on his face. He wasn't sure what was happening, nor did anyone else around him. What could possibly make all the neo-demons act in this way?

Within the Crow Scout Tribe, one Tribe member after another woke up and was instantly shocked.

"All of the neo-demons are roaring. What happened?"

"What's going on over in the Neo-Demon Kennelist district?"

"Something must have happened. This is impossible! This is.. hundreds of neo-demons all roaring together!"

However, even in the midst of their shock....

The tall mountain which separated the front area of the Tribe from the Neo-demon Kennelist district in the rear was suddenly split by one shockingly powerful roar after another.

In total there were five. The roars filled the air and echoed out as five beams of light shot up. Within each was a neo-demon dozens of meters long. Three were green wolves, one was a black turtle, and the last was a ferocious green-colored tiger.

The power emanating from these five neo-demons was shockingly equivalent to the late Core Formation stage; these were level 9 neo-demons! The roars they emitted mixed together with those of the hundreds of other neo-demons to create a massive sound that rose up to the Heavens.

If that were all there were to it, it wouldn't be a big deal. However, as the shocking roar lifted up into the sky, within the thousands of members of the Crow Scout Tribe, many Tribe members' faces suddenly filled with astonishment. At this very moment, the totem tattoos on their bodies began to burn. The neo-demons that had already been bonded to them suddenly magically appeared, roaring to the skies as they charged forward.

The sight of it was astonishing to the extreme. Nearly half of the thousands of Tribe members watched as their totem tattoos began to glow, and then neo-demons popped out, roaring.

“My Greenwood Wolf is out of control!!”

“Dammit, my Phoenix Hawk is going crazy!!”

“Just what is going on!? Is this a neo-demon revolt!?”

Buzzes of conversation filled the air. One by one, the Cultivators who had bonded neo-demons flew into the air.

As they did, a dozen or so powerful figures shot up from the mountain toward the neo-demons.

“It’s the Elders! Even they showed up!”

“The Elders are usually busy with Tribal affairs, they hardly ever come out. But here they are!”

The events of this night would be engraved in the hearts of the members of the Crow Scout Tribe for the rest of their lives. People began to cry out in alarm as a roaring sound suddenly emanated out from the top of the mountain, a sound which many of them hadn’t heard for a very, very long time.

As the roaring echoed out, the mountain shook and the earth around it quaked. Suddenly, a tree branch flew out; it was ancient and withered, and emanated a profoundly archaic Qi. The branch flew out, emanating a flickering green glow, which then transformed into a roughly nine-meter tall Treant!

The Treant’s face was ancient, and its body was formed from an incredibly thick tree branch which was covered with a vast quantity of dried leaves. It seemed to be in the decline of power. It hovered there in mid-air and then let out a massive roar.

The instant the roaring began, the faces of all the Crow Scout Tribe members filled with astonishment and disbelief. Panting, they dropped to their knees.

In addition to all of this, three more figures suddenly flew out from the mountain. Each one had a Cultivation base at the Nascent Soul stage, and one was in the mid Nascent Soul stage. They immediately shot toward the Treant, and as they did, the Crow Scout Tribe members below recognized them. One was the Greatfather of the Tribe and the other two were High Priests!

Priests and Greatfathers were the pinnacle of power in any Tribe!

“Greetings, oh Ancestor Greenwood!” said the Greatfather, an old man. As for the two High Priests, they wore long, enveloping green robes that hid their features. However, all three of these people emanated powerful Qi, and yet, looks of apprehension and fear could be seen in their eyes. It had been roughly two sixty-year cycles since they had seen the Greenwood Ancestor. It was with shocked hearts that they clasped hands and bowed toward the Treant.

“Demon. I sense a Demon....” said the enormous Treant. It let out a roar which echoed out, instigating even more roaring from the Crow Scout Tribe’s neo-demons.

The five Tribes that had once made up the Crow Divinity Tribe surrounded a restricted area in the centre of them all, almost like the five fingers of a hand. It was at this moment that in the next Tribe over, the Crow Soldier Tribe, all of the neo-demons lifted their heads up into a roar.

The Crow Soldier Tribe was a metal-type Tribe, so the vast majority of their neo-demons were also made from metal. Flying swords, magical treasures and even giant Metal Golems. All of them suddenly flew out of control, as did the other neo-demons that the Tribe members had branded to exercise control over. One by one, they flew up into the air.

Even more shocking, a golden light appeared at the top of the Crow Soldier Tribe’s mountain. It transformed into a gigantic gold trident that blazed with brilliant golden glow, along with a shocking Qi.

“Demonic Qi... I sense Demonic Qi!!”

Qi exploded out simultaneously as the neo-demons of the Crow Fighter Tribe, Crow Flame Tribe and the Crow Gloom Tribe began to roar. In the

Crow Fighter Tribe, Earth-type ripples appeared. Suddenly, mud fountained up like a volcano. It floated there in mid-air, a mud lake hundreds of meters in diameter.

Within the Crow Flame Tribe, a sea of flame shot through the air, within which was an enormous flaming black horse. It stared with scarlet eyes toward the Crow Scout Tribe.

Within the Crow Gloom Tribe, a vapor emanated out, turning into clouds and rain!

At this point, all of the Tribe members of the five Tribes, the Elders, Priests, Greatfathers, all stood there, their minds filled with unprecedented trembling. The Nascent Soul Patriarchs who had infiltrated these other Tribes also stood there in absolute shock, filled with various speculations about what was going on.

As the shock rippled through the various Tribes, Meng Hao's face was also surprised. He too had sensed how shocking the Qi was.

“Wow, I really set something off this time....” He had long since begun to attempt to seal the pill, but nothing was working. Not even putting it into his bag of holding did the trick. It was almost like the protective shield around him didn't even exist. He could clearly sense that he had at the most twenty breaths worth of time before all the fearsome things in the outside would be able to determine his exact location.

It was at this time that an even greater development occurred. An incredible pressure suddenly appeared!

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1. The woman called Meng Hao a Demon Lord in chapter 324.

Chapter 396: A Real Demon Nurturing Pill!

ROOAAARRR!!

A new sound could be heard from deep within the endless, forested mountains. The roar drifted out, seemingly filled with the power to rip everything into shreds!

It sounded like bolts of lightning fighting each other, which then coalesced into a howl, and then, a voice.

“Outlander!” The voice sounded like countless other voices combined together. The strangest thing was that anyone who heard it could tell that this was not the roar of a Cultivator. No... this voice was not human!

The instant the voice appeared, it echoed out in all directions, causing all other sounds within the mountains and forests to instantly cease.

The hearts and minds of the members of the five Tribes were instantly shaken. Their faces immediately revealed astonishment.

“That’s....”

“That’s the Outlander Beast! The Outlander Beast with the roar of an Immortal!!”

“I can’t believe the Outlander Beast with an Immortal roar is in this area! It was born as a level 7 great neo-demon, and then grew up into a level 11! Was it branded by a human, or is it actually a Greater Demon?”

In the Western Desert, if a creature was branded and sealed by humans, it was referred to as a neo-demon. Those which were not were Greater Demons!

As the members of the five Tribes of the Crow Divinity were all discussing the matter, the peak level neo-demons were trembling. The roar just now only served to further fuel their own roars. It was as if they wanted to proclaim to this Outlander Beast that the region it was passing through belonged to them!

Suddenly, the ground began to quake and tremble violently. Something that seemed like a giant was speeding through the forest. Among the shocked members of the five Tribes, people began to employ secret magical techniques to view what was happening in the mountains around them. Within the rugged mountains was a vast sea of beasts, madly charging toward them.

The beasts were made up of a variety of levels, and all of them had eyes red and filled with madness as they ran. Up in the sky was a vast collection of strange flying creatures. They, too, were shrieking. From a distance, it seemed as if a huge wave of beasts was surging toward the five Tribes from all direction.

They filled the sky and land in all directions, with the five Tribes in the center. They would obviously be completely crushed.

For the five Tribes, this was a monumental disaster, a calamity that had sprung up so suddenly that they didn't even have time to react.

Ripples spread out in the air as the flying beasts roared. The thunderous sound created an echo which suppressed everything as it neared.

All of this happened in the space of only fifteen breaths!

Meng Hao could feel the ground shaking, and could hear the roars from outside, including that of the Outlander Beast. Because of everything that was happening, it actually gave him a bit more time than before.

Shaking his head, he thought, "I never imagined that combining Demonic Qi with the Demon Nurturing Pill would cause such a shocking scene. This medicinal pill... will apparently drive any neo-demon completely crazy." With a bitter smile, he looked over at the five little wolves, who were frantically trying to break through the wooden planks to get at him. Cracking sounds suddenly rang out as they succeeded.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he waved his right hand. The medicinal pill shot toward the wooden kennel. The five little wolves emitted cute howls as they charged toward it. In recent days they had played a lot with each other, but there was no affection in them now. They nipped and bit at each other violently as they ran.

It was at this point that the little Greenwood Wolf with the white scar on its head gave full vent to its power and ferocity. It slashed at the other little wolves and then transformed into a green beam of light that shot forward. It directly swallowed the medicinal pill.

As soon as it did, the crowds of beasts outside the five Tribes began to emit mournful howls. A collection of black clouds seethed up above in the sky, and then suddenly shot forward. As they did, the roar of the Outlander Beast shook everything.

All the Cultivators in the five Tribes had pale faces. That was because....

Located in the center of the five Tribes was their Holy Land, the former location of the Crow Divinity Tribe. Suddenly a beam of light shot out into the dark night from that very place!

It was a five-colored beam that spread out to cover over all five Tribes. From within the light emerged a black crow.

The crow raised its head and let out a shrill screech that was like a violent tempest. Ripples spread out in all directions, seemingly filled with the power to crush everything.

As the ripples seethed out, many of the huge trees in the forest were ripped up by the roots. The land heaved, and great boulders were ripped up from the earth. It was like an unspeakably powerful tempest had risen up around the five Tribes.

It quickly transformed into a vortex which swept across everything.

Meng Hao was panting as he looked off toward the former location of the Crow Divinity Tribe, and his eyes glowed brightly.

By this point, he wasn't worried anymore. All traces of the medicinal pill that had instigated the disturbance had disappeared as soon as the little wolf consumed it. Meng Hao was quite sensitive to Demonic Qi, so he was able to confirm that this was the case.

Apparently, the Demonic Qi had already been absorbed by the little wolf with the white scar, who by this time had lapsed into unconsciousness.

Despite being unconscious, though, its life force was soaring up vigorously.

The tempest outside covered everything, making the only thing visible the five-colored light. The sight of it caused Meng Hao to think of his own Five-Colored Tribulation.

Two days ago, when Meng Hao had come to the Crow Scout Tribe, he'd sent the parrot and the meat jelly away. It was impossible to say what they were up to in the surrounding mountains.

Thinking of them being in the tempest caused Meng Hao to feel a bit nervous. However, after considering the parrot's eccentricities and the meat jelly's indestructibility, he realized he didn't need to worry.

"Even if this entire place were completely destroyed, they would be happy and healthy." Meng Hao was certain of this point.

The tempest lasted for about two hours. When it subsided, much of the surrounded forest was gone. Vast quantities of neo-demon corpses could be seen. As for the Outlander Beast, there was no sign of it.

The crow was gone, and the five-colored light had faded away. This was the first time Meng Hao had experienced the true mystery and power of Western Desert Cultivators and their totems.

The members of the five Tribes gradually spread out around in their respective areas to collect the neo-demon corpses.

As for the Neo-Demon Kennelist district, it was searched several times with Divine Sense, but nothing out of the ordinary was found.

Meng Hao also came under investigation. However, the treasured magical item of Patriarch Transmutation Li Tian proved to be extremely useful. Nobody noticed anything even slightly unusual about Meng Hao.

For the five Tribes, the fact that they had narrowly escaped disaster meant that a simple investigation would most likely not uncover the truth of the matter. Secret probing continued for the next month. Whenever Meng Hao went out into the mountains, he would be questioned.

However, even after a month, no information had been uncovered. Gradually people began to come to the conclusion that some strange object had appeared that attracted the neo-demons and then the wave of beasts. As for who had finally acquired this object, no one knew for sure, but all the five Tribes were now suspicious of each other.

During the month, Meng Hao focused on taking good care of the little Greenwood Wolves. He mixed meat with Demon Nurturing Pills, which caused the little wolves to continuously grow bigger and stronger. However, Meng Hao was also careful to control their growth so that it wasn't too fast.

As for the little wolf who had consumed the Demonic Qi Pill, externally he didn't seem very different. However, he was now more fierce, and his eyes shone with a cold glow. He seemed more bloodthirsty, and the other little wolves clearly revered him. All he had to do was let out a growl, and the other little wolves would start to tremble.

The changes in him continued to manifest, and Meng Hao couldn't come up with any method to suppress them. In any case, as the Ninth Generation Demon Sealer, Meng Hao's ability to sense Demonic Qi was incomparable.

After the month passed, all of the investigations, both the public and the secret ones, ceased. Everything around Meng Hao once again grew calm, and he began to use his own methods to raise the neo-demons.

Time passed by. Soon, Meng Hao had been in the Crow Scout Tribe for five months.

Currently, he sat cross-legged in his courtyard. Suddenly, a threatening howl filled his ears, and he opened his eyes. There in the courtyard, one of the Greenwood Wolves was facing off against the other four. It looked somewhat thin and weak, but the threatening howl it emitted caused the other Greenwood Wolves to tremble in fear.

"Big Hairy," said Meng Hao coolly. As soon as the words left his mouth, the weak-looking Greenwood Wolf turned to look at Meng Hao. There on its forehead, the white scar was clearly visible.

When it looked at Meng Hao, the coldness in its eyes vanished and turned into a charming expression of cleverness. It transformed into a green beam that shot like lightning over to Meng Hao. It lay down next to him, sticking its tongue out to lick Meng Hao's leg, just like the mastiff used to do.

"Hairys #2, #3, #4, and #5, all of you come over here," Meng Hao said with a laugh. The other four Greenwood Wolves cautiously trotted over.

Meng Hao's Greenwood Wolves could now no longer be called little. Each of them was roughly two meters long and looked very intimidating. Their eyes glowed with cold savagery, and their bodies were covered with green fur. The speed with which they moved was like lightning, and their personalities exuded cold-bloodedness. Everything about them seemed incredibly powerful.

They were no longer level 1 neo-demons, but level 2. Despite that, they were strong enough to slaughter level 3 neo-demons, and even hold their own against level 4.

Most shocking was Big Hairy. Though he looked skinny and weak, and was only level 2, he was actually stronger than other level 4 Greenwood Wolves. He could easily defeat any that he faced up against, and unless Meng Hao stopped him, would kill them.

With the exception of the big hubbub at the beginning, Meng Hao didn't cause any problems in the Tribe. He didn't have much contact with others, and few people other than Wu Hai had anything to do with him.

As for Wu Hai, he thoroughly admired Meng Hao, and would come often to ask him for advice. Each time, he left feeling enlightened. Gradually, a friendship formed between the two.

Wu Hai wasn't sure exactly what techniques Meng Hao used to raise the Greenwood Wolves, but he could see that they were different from normal Greenwood Wolves. He didn't understand, but in his eyes, it was amazing, and only served to cause him to further approve of Meng Hao.

Chapter 397: Wu Chen

Meng Hao learned a lot about the Crow Scout Tribe from Wu Hai. He now knew that the Tribe had a rank 7 Dragoneer, which was a very high and respected position. Even the Greatfather and the Priests were polite to him.

He also learned that the Crow Soldier Tribe had recently recruited a rank 7 Dragoneer who was accompanied by a Wild Giant. This new Dragoneer immediately occupied a position of extreme honor in the Tribe, and caused quite a sensation in the other Tribes.

When he heard this news, a strange expression appeared on Meng Hao's face and he thought of Gu La, who had disappeared during the teleportation here.

It was in this way that the half year finally passed. Meng Hao felt quite at peace in the Crow Scout Tribe. It reminded him of back when he had first joined the Violet Fate Sect.

Similar to that time, no one bothered him and nothing extraordinary happened. His secrets were his own to keep, and he could pursue his own plans with no one the wiser.

Suddenly, Meng Hao laughed as he looked down at the five Greenwood Wolves. One of his greatest accomplishments in the past half year was that he had a much deeper understanding of what it meant to be a Demon Sealer.

This understanding came both from his personal perceptions and his experiences with sealing and Righteous Bestowal!

He knew that if he wanted to, he could seal Big Hairy in the blink of an eye. The Qi inside of Big Hairy was Demonic Qi, which lay within the realm of what he could seal.

Similarly, if he wanted to, he could cause the other Greenwood Wolves to be just like Big Hairy.

Regarding the art of Righteous Bestowal, Meng Hao thought a lot about

it during the half year. By now, he was certain that as far as all neo-demons were concerned, Righteous Bestowal truly was a type of approval and luck.

It was almost like bestowing them with a title!

The higher the level of a neo-demon, the more it would thirst for Righteous Bestowal. Anything that did not crave Righteous Bestowal, was not truly a Demon!

In addition to gaining a deeper understanding of Demon Sealers during the half year, Meng Hao also managed to fill his courtyard with lotuses. Soon it became very much similar to his courtyard back in Holy Snow City.

Outsiders didn't pay much attention to this. Cultivators in general command a certain level of freedom that others wouldn't interfere with. In any case, no one had any idea the significance of lotuses to Meng Hao.

Of course, they were critical to his understanding and enlightenment regarding the Lotus Sword Formation. From the moment he had acquired the sword formation until now, he had constantly been studying how lotuses bloomed and withered. As of now, lotuses were firmly planted within Meng Hao's mind.

The feeling he experienced because of this was hard to describe. If he closed his eyes, it was as if lotuses were blossoming inside his head. He hadn't employed the sword formation since reaching this state, but he was convinced that if he did, the result would be very different than from before.

Meng Hao did no further research regarding totems. However, he continued to make more profound speculations about them.

At the moment, it was dark outside. Looking out, it was hard to tell whether it was night, or if the sky was just obscured by dark clouds. However, he could sense moisture in the air.

"It's starting to rain again," he murmured. Recently, it had been raining a lot. Sometimes it came down so hard that it pooled up on the ground and created streams and rivulets. The sound of the pouring rain made it seem

as if it were fighting against Heaven and Earth.

Sometimes it hit the ground with so much force that the water shot back up into the air, as if it wished to return to the Heavens above. Instead, it simply turned into water vapor.

However, it seemed as if the mist retained the same stubbornness that the rain showed.

Meng Hao looked outside at the shattering raindrops and was able to faintly sense the unyielding will of the rain. Even after being turned into a mist, it still wished to fly back up into the Heavens.

“Entombed on the Earth, but desirous of a return to life in the Heavens...” Meng Hao looked up at the dark clouds which obscured the Heavens. After a long, long time passed, he closed his eyes.

“Perhaps that is also the path of a Demon Sealer,” he murmured. Having achieved the level of Cultivation base that he had, Meng Hao was now able to sense some of the truths that existed in Heaven and Earth. Each bit of enlightenment represented a development in his psyche. It became cognition that would later be power to be used in Spirit Severing.

“But which is better... sealing all the Demons under Heaven? Or approving them with Righteous Bestowal?” Meng Hao sat there lost in thought. His five Greenwood Wolves lay around him, silently accompanying him as he watched the rain.

It wasn't until dawn that the rain finally began to lessen. At that early hour, the Neo-Demon Kennelist district was quiet. There were no cries of neo-demons; everything was silent.

It was at this time that footsteps rang out to break the silence. The sound of water splashing in the puddles could be heard, and an unfamiliar smell arrived that caused the silence to end.

It was a young man of a little over twenty years of age. He wore clothing that only elite members of the Tribe could wear, a long green leather robe, trimmed with what looked like silk or satin. It gleamed beneath the morning sunlight, causing the young man to look quite extraordinary

despite his relatively low Cultivation base.

At the moment, he was frowning as he endured the unpleasant odor in the area. He held an umbrella in his hand as he hurried toward a distant courtyard.

“Wu Ali has gone too far this time. When my father was alive, people of his bloodline would always be completely courteous and respectful when they saw me. But now....” The young man clenched his jaw in fury as he walked along.

This was Wu Chen¹ of the Crow Scout Tribe, a member of one of the Tribe’s three great bloodlines. The three great bloodlines were where the successive generations of Greatfathers came from. Barring unforeseen circumstances, the future Greatfathers would be selected from such descendants.

Wu Chen, of course, was just such a person. His father’s name had rocked the five Tribes of the Crow Divinity years ago. Unfortunately, he had died a few years ago while outside of the Tribe, and the resulting legal matters had still not been settled. As a result, his bloodline lost its position as the most powerful. As for Wu Chen, his previous prestige was now nothing but an illusion; it was impossible to conceal the sore straits he was in.

Because of the law of the jungle in the Cultivation world, any bloodlines without a powerful expert, no matter how prestigious, would become a target. This was the truth even in the Crow Scout Tribe.

Over the past years, Wu Chen had fallen far from his previously high position. This was something he couldn’t accept in his pride, but really, there was little he could do about it. He was forced to endure the scoffing of his rivals and the increasing level of disrespect shown to him by fellow Tribe members. There was no way for him to do anything about it except to follow the wishes of his older sister and lower his head.

However, he could not remain reconciled to such a situation. In his mind, his sister’s choice was the wrong one. He had just made a breakthrough in his Cultivation base, and was now in the eighth level of

Qi Condensation. He was now willing to pay any price to acquire a level 3 neo-demon, even secretly borrow large amounts of Spirit Crystals from other Tribes.

“With a level 3 neo-demon, all the members of my generation in the Tribe will have no choice but to pay attention to me. All the rest of them have rank 3s, I can’t be left behind!” He clenched his jaw and ignored the pain in his heart. Choosing not to think about how he would possibly pay back his debt, he strode forward.

His plan was to find rank 3 Dragoneer Shui Mu, which was the only way he would be able to acquire a cheap, level 3 neo-demon.

All members of the Crow Scout Tribe would receive a level 1 neo-demon after reaching a certain level of Cultivation base and making a contribution to the Tribe. The higher one’s Cultivation base, and the better the contribution, then the greater the compensation would be.

Members of the three great bloodlines were even more special. They could acquire a level 1 neo-demon at no cost. Furthermore, the higher their Cultivation base climbed, the better neo-demons they could get, all for free.

The key was to be powerful; there really was no limitation. However, if one wanted to acquire a very expensive neo-demon, then, of course, a contribution would have to be made.

As for Wu Chen, he could acquire level 2 neo-demons for free. If he wanted a level 3, he would have to pay some Spirit Crystals.

All of the Neo-Demon Kennelists, including Meng Hao, were part of the Crow Scout Tribe. Their job in the Tribe was to raise the neo-demons; that didn’t mean they actually owned them.

In principle, anyone could come with a command medallion and take the neo-demons away. That was just in principle, though. In actuality, there was an unwritten rule that prevented that from happening. Neo-Demon Kennelists were actually low-level Dragoneers whose rank was determined by the highest level neo-demon they could raise.

Because of that, and because of the respect for Dragoneers, who were not to be offended, all Tribes in the Western Desert ended up having the same custom. Dragoneers had the right to decide whether or not to give the neo-demons they raised to others.

Furthermore, Dragoneers also had the first right to buy any of the neo-demons they raised.

Grim-faced Wu Chen hurried along toward the courtyard that was his destination. The aroma that drifted about in the early morning air left him feeling uncomfortable. Because he had disturbed the peace by coming here just now, the howls of neo-demons began to rise up from the various courtyards in the area.

This caused Wu Chen to feel a bit annoyed. He hurried along through the area occupied mostly by level 1 and 2 neo-demons and then entered the area where many level 3 neo-demons could be found. It was at this point that he walked past the entrance of Meng Hao's courtyard.

Just as he was about to continue on, Meng Hao's Greenwood Wolves joined the other neo-demons in their howling.

The sound of it seemed ordinary, but as soon as Wu Chen heard it, his heart and mind trembled, and his facial expression changed to one of shock. The howling of the Greenwood Wolves wasn't very high-pitched, but he was very close, and the sound of it sent his head spinning. He suddenly felt himself trembling, as if there were some great pressure weighing down on him.

He gasped, turning to look toward Meng Hao's courtyard. He had heard the howls of level 2 neo-demons before, and never before had they shook him in such a way. Without hesitation, he pushed open the door and looked inside. He saw a gentle, scholarly youth sitting there cross-legged, looking back at him with eyes as clear as the night sky.

The youth was surrounded by five Greenwood Wolves who were also staring back at Wu Chen with eyes cold and filled with ferocity. There was one in particular who looked somewhat skinny; when he looked over, Wu Chen's body began to tremble uncontrollably, and his face filled with

shock. An intense pressure bore down on him, and he began to pant. His heart pounded as if he were about to die.

Wu Chen was almost incapable of handling the pressure exuded by the Greenwood Wolves in the courtyard. It felt like he was going to explode.

“How can I help you, Fellow Daoist?” asked Meng Hao, his tone cool.

As soon as his lightly spoken words rang out, the pressure suddenly vanished. Wu Chen felt his body go limp, and he almost fell down onto the ground. His face was pale, but he lifted his chin sanctimoniously, and an arrogant expression covered his face.

“I am Wu Chen, Tribe member of one of the three great bloodlines. Your level 2 Greenwood Wolf over there now belongs to me!” He was actually a bit nervous and excited. He’d already abandoned thoughts of level 3 neo-demons. He was going virtually wild with joy, because he could see that these Greenwood Wolves were far beyond ordinary. From what he could sense, they probably couldn’t match up to level 3, but were definitely the absolute highest quality of level 2.

He was just about to reach his hand out to point at skinny Big Hairy, but then hesitated for a moment and instead pointed to one of the other Greenwood Wolves that looked a bit more impressive.

*

1. Wu Chen’s name in Chinese is 乌尘 wū chén – Wu means “crow.” Chen means “dust” or “earth.”

Chapter 398: Branch of the Demon Sealers

Wu Chen pointed at Hairy #4.

Hairy #4 was conspicuously larger than the other Greenwood wolves by a little bit. This had been the case since the wolves were small. However, Meng Hao had named the wolves based on their strength, with #5 being the weakest.

Hairy #4 was neither the most nor the least powerful. Being pointed at by Wu Chen caused his eyes to shine with a fierce, cold glow, and he let out a threatening growl. In his limited consciousness, only his master could point at him in such a way. Nothing else in existence qualified to do so.

“Your Cultivation base isn’t sufficient,” said Meng Hao coolly. “You can’t control him. Go pick something from another courtyard.” He stroked Hairy #4’s furry head. Hairy #4 lowered his head obediently in a very charming fashion. If Meng Hao weren’t here right now, he would have immediately charged forward and ripped Wu Chen to pieces.

“You!” cried Wu Chen, his face twisted. Looking at Meng Hao, he had the feeling his Cultivation base was profound. However, he was a member of the Crow Scout Tribe, and a descendant of one of the three great bloodlines. Considering his identity, it didn’t matter if he was a bit down on his luck, he was still above virtually any vassal in the Tribe.

“I’m already in the eighth level of Qi Condensation! I can control any level 2 neo-demon. Greenwood Wolves are known for their speed, not for their close-quarters fighting. What the hell makes you think I couldn’t control it!” Wu Chen ground his teeth as he glared at Meng Hao.

Almost the moment he finished speaking, Hairy #4’s cold eyes flickered. Suddenly, a green blur appeared, and in the blink of an eye, Hairy #4 was standing directly in front of Wu Chen. His mouth was wide open, and right in front of Wu Chen’s nose, almost touching it. Wu Chen’s face

instantly filled with shock; he let out a cry of alarm and backed up.

Cold sweat had broken out all over his body, and his face was as pale as death. Breathing ragged, pupils constricted, he stood there, his mind spinning. Just now he had felt an intense sensation of imminent death. It was a feeling he had never experienced before, and it caused his entire body to tremble. Lingering fear continued to fill him.

Meng Hao gave a reprimanding harumph, which Hairy #4 heard, causing him to immediately go limp. He lowered his head, unwilling to even look at Meng Hao.

Wu Chen took in a deep breath. A bright light shone in his eyes as he stared fixedly at Hairy #4. He was breathing even more heavily now. His heart began to thump as he looked at Hairy #4's more than three meter long frame, his green fur and mighty disposition.

"I've seen a lot of level 2 Greenwood Wolves," he thought to himself, "even ones belonging to other bloodline Clan members. None of them were even close to being this fast. This... is definitely a mutant Greenwood Wolf.

"It must be! The only way it could be so fast is if it were mutated! It could have killed me in the blink of an eye!!" At this point, he looked over at Meng Hao.

"According to the rules, this Greenwood Wolf belongs to the Crow Scout Tribe. I have the right to take it away!" His words sounded stalwart, but in reality, his heart was trembling. If it wasn't for the fact that the wolf frightened him so much, he wouldn't speak in such a way, quoting the Tribe rules to get his way.

Meng Hao laughed inwardly and shook his head. Considering the level of his Cultivation base, he wouldn't stoop to arguing with a mere eighth level Qi Condensation Cultivator.

"If you're capable of taking him, go ahead," he said, then closed his eyes and paid no more heed to the goings on.

"Fine, it was your suggestion!" replied Wu Chen, unable to conceal the

wild joy which filled his heart. Other than being a descendant of the three great bloodlines Wu Chen wasn't too extraordinary. However, his particular bloodline excelled in neo-demon branding techniques, which he had been studying since a young age. He actually had mastered dozens of various branding techniques.

Therefore, he was supremely confident that he could succeed even with level 3 neo-demons, not to mention level 2. Even though this was a mutant neo-demon, it was still only level 2, and Wu Chen didn't have even the slightest doubt in his mind.

Laughing out loud, he slowly approached Hairy #4, anticipation gleaming in his eyes. He cautiously began to perform an incantation with his right hand, which created a bizarre branding mark that looked like a wolf's head.

When the branding mark appeared, a look of confusion appeared in Hairy #4's eyes. Seeing this caused Wu Chen to grow even more confident. The branding mark flickered and then transformed into a beam of light that shot toward Hairy #4.

In the blink of an eye, it disappeared into Hairy #4's forehead.

"It worked!" cried Wu Chen exuberantly. The first part of the process was done, after which there was another procedure. When that was finished, this neo-demon would become his totem beast.

Meng Hao still had his eyes closed, and wasn't paying attention at all to what was happening. He did nothing to stop Wu Chen from approaching Hairy #4. Wu Chen lifted his hand up to touch him, but even as he did, Hairy #4 suddenly lifted up his enormous head. His face was filled with ferocity, and his eyes glowed with a cold, cruel light.

His gaze instantly caused Wu Chen's face to fall. His heart began to pound, and he immediately backed up, his eyes filled with disbelief.

"No way, how could it have failed...?" He immediately decided to switch branding techniques. Soon, an hour had passed. Wu Chen tried seven or eight different brands, but in the end, none were successful.

The ferocity in the eyes of Hairy #4 continued to grow thicker. Finally, Wu Chen sagged, his face pale and filled with disbelief. Hairy #4 let out a howl and then shot forward. His mouth opened wide, heading directly toward Wu Chen's neck.

Intense killing intent and ferocious cruelty emanated out. He moved with such speed that Wu Chen had no way to dodge. A green glow filled his eyes, which then began to grow dark. There wasn't even time for a sense of danger to well up in him.

In this critical moment, Meng Hao opened his eyes and said, "Get back here, Hairy #4."

Hairy #4 let out a yelp and then began to tremble. The razor sharp teeth in his mouth had been just about to latch onto Wu Chen's neck.

Instead, Hairy #4 moved backward, returning to lay down next to Meng Hao, his face cute and charming.

Wu Chen's face was completely devoid of blood, his entire body was shaking, and his mind was in chaos. After coming to this terrifying courtyard, he had nearly died twice. Then he experienced the unthinkable situation of all his brands failing; the only thing he could do was stare at Meng Hao. As of this moment, Meng Hao had become completely unfathomable in his mind.

The image of Meng Hao sitting there, surrounded by his five Greenwood Wolves, was something that Wu Chen would never be able to forget. It was branded permanently into his brain.

"Senior.... I...." Wu Chen wasn't sure what to say. He stared at Meng Hao and the Greenwood Wolves for a moment. Trembling, he clasped hands and bowed deeply, then hurried out of the courtyard. He closed the door on his way out, and then stood outside and bowed again a few times. Feeling both perturbed and amazed, he turned to leave.

"A master! A true master who can raise mutant neo-demons! He's definitely a real Dragoneer!! There must be a reason why he's hiding out here.... I can't tell anybody. Maybe if I run into some real problems in the future, he'll... give me some good advice!!" Having made his decision, Wu

Chen took a deep breath and rushed off into the distance.

Meng Hao watched the young man leave, his expression the same as ever. It was impossible to hide the fantastic qualities of his Greenwood Wolves, nor did he plan to. In his opinion, being known as a Dragoneer wasn't a bad thing.

Actually, Meng Hao's methods of controlling the neo-demons actually far exceeded that of Dragoneers. That was because he was no Dragoneer, but actually... a Demon Sealer!

A Demon Sealer masquerading as a Dragoneer was like a Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy pretending to be an average alchemist. They were two completely different levels that were vastly separated.

Of course it wasn't very difficult to pull off something like that. Everything that Dragoneers could do, Demon Sealers could also do. However, it absolutely didn't work the other way around.

"I've always thought there are a lot of similarities between Dragoneers and Demon sealers. The former are much lower, though." His half a year of study regarding this matter left him even more certain of his conclusion.

"The secret techniques of Dragoneers allow them to rapidly raise neo-demons. They speed through youth and grow up very quickly. The average person would be amazed by such a thing. However, regardless of the method used to accomplish this, a neo-demon can only grow within the confines of its normal lifespan. That can't be exceeded.

"However, Righteous Bestowal using Demonic Qi vastly exceeds Dragoneer arts. It can break through those normal confines. It can actually transmogrify the fundamental nature of a neo-demon." Thinking about this, Meng Hao couldn't help but smile.

The more he researched this matter, the more he got the feeling that Dragoneers were like Demon Sealers who were on a different path, and were doing their best to imitate true Demon Sealers.

"I wonder if back in the days of the Eighth Generation Demon Sealer,

someone left behind some collateral legacy that spawned the Dragoneers?” It was an interesting idea. Unfortunately, there was a big gap between himself, the Ninth Generation Demon Sealer, and the Eighth Demon Sealer. He was missing a lot of legacies, and suffered from quite a lack of understanding of the previous Demon Sealers.

“I wonder if traces of the Demon Sealers can be found in the Western Desert....” His expression was tranquil as he considered this. “In any case, I need to take every chance I get to get noticed within the Crow Scout Tribe. I need to make sure I get into the Crow Divinity Tribe’s Holy Land.”

The Crow Scout Tribe had three Nascent Soul Cultivators, but Meng Hao was pretty sure that if he put on the blood-colored mask, only the Treant from the mountaintop could pose any threat to his life.

Therefore, he was being cautious about his actions, but wasn’t expending too much effort to conceal anything.

“In the past, whenever I encountered something that has to do with the Demon sealers, it would provoke a reaction from the Demon Sealing Jade. However, after entering the Western Desert, there was nothing whatsoever. Perhaps... I just haven’t been to the right places here.” He slapped his bag of holding and produced the Demon Sealing Jade. He held it in his hand and examined it closely.

It felt warm and smooth in his hand, as if it were actually a part of him. Looking at it made him feel calm, and he slowly slipped into a strange state.

After a long time passed, he put the ancient piece of jade away and closed his eyes to meditate.

Chapter 399: Senior, Save Me

Several days later....

On the mountain in the middle of the Crow Scout Tribe was a string of extravagant houses. Although they were constructed from wood, the wood came from Spirit Trees in the surrounding forests that had grown for hundreds of years. Eventually, they built up a certain amount of spiritual energy, and when they were used to build houses, could provide quite a few benefits when it came to practicing cultivation.

The only people who could live here were descendants of the three great bloodlines of the Tribe.

This, of course, was where Wu Chen resided. At the moment, he was lividly throwing a ceramic jar onto the ground, where it shattered into pieces. Wu Chen's infuriated voice roared out throughout the house.

"Wu Ali, you've gone too far!!" Wu Chen's hair was in disarray, and his eyes radiated venomous madness. His body was shaking and he oozed killing intent. He slammed his fist into the wooden wall next to him, causing the entire house to shake. Ripples of spiritual energy appeared, resisting the power of his Cultivation base and even rebounding back into him. Wu Chen's hand was now injured and dripped blood.

Ignoring the blood, he clenched his fists and continued to vent: "That totem medallion was awarded to my father years ago because of his service to the Tribe. Why the hell are they giving it to you now!?"

Despite his venting, his heart filled with helplessness. A bitter smile appeared on his face as he looked at the sky outside. As far as he was concerned the entire world was filled with darkness.

It was at this point that the front door opened. Sunlight spilled in, piercing into his eyes. A woman entered, someone very familiar to Wu Chen.

"Sis...." he said, his voice filled with pain.

The woman was tall and had long black hair. The clothing she wore was

utilitarian, but it was impossible to conceal her natural beauty. However, the constant furrow in her brow made it seem like she was in a state of perpetual thought.

“I’ve already arranged everything for you,” she said, her voice gentle. “You and Wu Ali will have a fair neo-demon duel. Whoever wins will receive the totem medallion.”

She looked down at the fragments of pottery on the ground and then back up at Wu Chen.

“WHAT?!?!” cried Wu Chen, his eyes bloodshot. “That medallion was given to father for his meritorious service!” His expression filled with savagery. His dissatisfaction with the Crow Scout Tribe couldn’t be greater. For the past few years, he had done everything his sister asked him to do. He had endured it all. But now, even his father’s totem medallion was being taken away. He truly valued the totem medallion, which made it much easier to congeal totems. It was actually a precious treasure that even had the ability to pass on some legacy power from the Tribal Ancestor.

Seeing Wu Chen in virtual hysterics, his sister soothingly said, “The whole matter was set by the Tribe Greatfather, so you have to comply. Listen, I’m going to go find Grandmaster Shui Mu, the rank 3 Dragoneer. I’ll buy a level 2 neo-demon for you, that way the duel will be fair.”

“Wu Ali’s neo-demon is a level 2 Flying Bat. It was personally raised by a rank 5 Dragoneer. An ordinary level 2 neo-demon couldn’t possibly beat it! Neo-demon duel.... Some ‘fair’ duel this is going to be!” Wu Chen felt like he just couldn’t accept it. It was at this point that an idea flashed like lightning in his head.

“Neo-demon duel.... Neo-demon.... Greenwood Wolves!” His eyes suddenly filled with an intense glow, as if suddenly he had risen from the depths of despair.

“If I beg that senior, maybe he’ll help me,” he thought. “Trifling Wu Ali will be defeated for sure! Then I can get the totem medallion that is rightfully mine, and begin my rise to prominence.” Wu Chen began to

pant, and the glow in his eyes grew brighter. Filled with intense hope, he stood up and left, intent on seeking out that mysterious figure whom he found completely unfathomable. Of course, it was none other than the person he viewed as a master of the senior generation, Meng Hao.

Wu Chen's sister frowned as she watched him walk off. She did nothing to stop him, but instead followed along behind him.

Wu Chen didn't hesitate at all. Ignoring the fact that his sister was following him, he sped down the mountain toward the Neo-Demon Kennelist district. As he looked at the rows of courtyards, and smelled the strange odor in the air, his mind filled with worries regarding the potential losses and gains.

It didn't take long for him to reach Meng Hao's courtyard. He stood outside, his beautiful sister behind him, frowning. His sister didn't understand why Wu Chen had suddenly rushed here as soon as she mentioned neo-demons.

"Wu Chen...." she said softly.

He completely ignored her as he looked at the closed door leading into the courtyard. Gritting his teeth, he stepped forward and, putting his most respectful expression on, clasped hands and bowed, making no move to open the door.

"Wu Chen is here to pay respects, senior," he said.

His voice was loud, and echoed about. His sister's eyes narrowed immediately. She knew her younger brother well, and was used to how aggressive he usually acted because of the grievances he felt. There were few people he would actually treat courteously.

She hadn't seen him act as respectfully as this in a long time. Actually... she could clearly see that the respect he was showing was not an act, but existed deep in his heart.

"This place...." She looked closely at the courtyard and the shut door.

A long moment passed. Wu Chen gritted his teeth and continued loudly, "Wu Chen of the junior generation pays respects to the senior generation.

Senior, I would like to request an audience.” His voice echoed out, immediately attracting the attention of other nearby Neo-Demon Kennelists. Quite a few opened the doors of their courtyards to look over.

When they saw Wu Chen and his beautiful sister, it only took a moment’s thought to recognize who they were.

Wu Chen’s sister was starting to feel a little irritated. From her perspective, Wu Chen was a descendant of the three great bloodlines. Vassals weren’t even members of the Tribe, so there was no need to show them such veneration. And yet, Wu Chen had bowed twice in greeting to the owner of this courtyard. She frowned and let out a cold harumph. She was just about to push the door open to see how skilled this Cultivator was, who her brother showed such politeness to.

However, as soon as she stepped forward, her brother moved to block her, an imploring look on his face.

When she saw his expression, her heart softened. With an inward sigh, she stepped back. Deep in her heart, her irritation at whoever was in the courtyard continued to grow.

More Cultivators were looking at them now, and some of them were discussing the proceedings in low tones.

“Those are descendants of the three great bloodlines. I’ve heard of the two of them. Why would they possibly come here to pay respects to a mere Neo-Demon Kennelist?”

“If they were going to pay respects to anyone, it should be Grandmaster Shui Mu. The Cultivator in that courtyard is surnamed Meng, and there’s nothing special at all about him.”

“Maybe Grandmaster Shui Mu isn’t as polite as he seems, and refused to part with a neo-demon. Then, they had no choice but to lower their standards. Even still, why would they pick a Neo-Demon Kennelist with absolutely no reputation?”

Wu Chen and his sister could hear what people were saying. As for Wu Chen, it didn’t change his mind at all. His sister, however, was looking

grimmer and grimmer.

She had already endured about as much as she could when the courtyard door slowly opened without a sound. From within, a pleasant voice could be heard: "Enter."

Wu Chen immediately got excited. He took a deep breath and then organized his garments. Bowing once more, he cautiously entered the courtyard. His sister followed, her face dark.

Meng Hao was sitting there cross-legged, surrounded by his five, napping Greenwood Wolves.

When she saw the wolves, Wu Chen's sister's eyes went wide. With the exception of one, the entire group seemed to be high quality level 2 neo-demons. Now, she understood why her brother was being so polite.

"But there are a lot of Cultivators in the Western Desert who are skilled in raising neo-demons," she thought. "Wu Chen isn't very experienced, so he mistakenly assumes that this guy is special. I wonder what this guy did to fool Wu Chen so well." Her eyes glittered coldly, and in her heart she snorted coldly.

As soon as he entered the courtyard, Wu Chen dropped to his knees. "Senior, I beg of you to save me...."

This caused his sister to frown even more deeply.

Meng Hao opened his eyes. He looked over Wu Chen and his sister, taking note of her antagonistic bearing. Ignoring her, he focused on Wu Chen.

"You really aren't capable of controlling these Greenwood Wolves," he said calmly.

"Sir, I'm not here to request control of the Greenwood Wolves," he said, his voice filled with cordiality and entreaty. "I need your help. Wu Ali is being an intolerable bully. I have to engage in a neo-demon duel with him. Sir, I have no neo-demons that are capable of standing up to him. Senior, please save me! I beg of you to stand at my side as a Dragoneer. I'll do anything you want, even pledge my life to you!!"

“Wu Chen, get up!” said his sister, her voice harsh.

Wu Chen ignored her and continued to stare fixedly at Meng Hao, his eyes pleading.

Meng Hao looked at him silently for a moment, his eyes glittering.

“I want the totem branding technique of the Crow Scout Tribe,” he said.

Hearing his words, Wu Chen’s sister immediately replied, “Impossible! You’re just a vassal! Such a request is preposterous!” Two totem tattoos glittered on her, indicating that her Cultivation base was at the Foundation Establishment stage.

Meng Hao ignored her, continuing to look at Wu Chen as he waited for him to respond.

Wu Chen hesitated for a moment. A totem branding technique was a Conclave magic of a Tribe. It would normally be very difficult for a vassal to acquire such a technique. According to custom, Wu Chen shouldn’t reveal such a technique to an outsider. Unless he was willing, the technique could not be extracted from him even by Spirit Searching. Every Conclave Tribe member was blessed with a totem, which was branded onto their very soul.

However, when he considered all the injustice he had experienced in the past years, Wu Chen gritted his teeth. A look of madness filled his face.

Chapter 400: Neo-Demon Duel

“I agree!” said Wu Chen, clenching his jaw.

Ignoring his sister, Wu Chen reached up to tap his forehead. Immediately, a glob of blood emerged from his mouth, which then transformed into a red leaf. The veins of the leaf were clearly visible and emitted a strange glow. Wood-type Qi emanated off it. As soon as Meng Hao saw it, his eyes flickered with a barely perceptible glittering.

“So, it has something to do with the bloodline...” he thought. “No, that’s not it. It’s that object. So it has to be fused with the body?” The leaf shot over from Wu Chen to Meng Hao.

Wu Chen’s sister’s face immediately darkened and she took a step forward.

“Sis, this is my decision!” said Wu Chen, setting his jaw.

His sister looked over at him. Seeing the expression on her younger brother’s face, she thought about all the hardships they had endured. Finally, she sighed inwardly and closed her eyes.

The leaf hovered in front of Meng Hao. He reached out and touched it, whereupon the leaf disappeared. It transformed into a red Qi that merged into his hand and then appeared as an image in his mind.

The image contained the technique necessary to plant the leaf firmly within his body. The description was very detailed, and could be considered a secret magic. People not of the three great bloodlines would never be able to figure it out.

After a long moment passed, Meng Hao’s eyes began to shine, and he nodded. He rose to his feet.

“Okay, let’s go.”

Wu Chen took a deep breath, then rose to his feet and bowed deeply to Meng Hao. Giving over his Tribe’s secret magic had been a huge price to pay. Wu Chen didn’t even dare to think what would have happened if Meng Hao had suddenly refused to help him afterwards.

To Wu Chen, all of this was... a huge gamble!

Taking this risk required him to suppress everything and go all out!

“Senior, this is my older sister, Wu Ling.” Wu Chen actually didn’t even dare to look at her at the moment. 1

Wu Ling glared at Meng Hao and then, one word at a time, said, “It’s a violation of Tribe rules for Wu Chen to give you that secret magic. If you’re cheating him in any way, then I, Wu Ling, swear on the Tribe totem that I will not rest until you are dead!” She still believed Wu Chen to have been deceived, and radiated a strong killing intent toward Meng Hao.

In her opinion, Meng Hao’s evil intentions had been revealed the instant he mentioned his desire to have the secret magical technique. People like this couldn’t be allowed to live. Besides, if any news spread that he had acquired the technique from Wu Chen, it wouldn’t matter that Wu Chen was a descendant of the three great bloodlines, it would be impossible for him to escape punishment.

The reason she hadn’t prevented him from doing so just now was to protect his sense of self-respect. Secretly, though, she was thinking of various ways that she could kill Meng Hao to shut up him up.

“If you want to blame someone,” she thought, “blame yourself for being so greedy!” She gave him a deep look. In her mind, he was already dead.

Meng Hao gave a slight smile but didn’t respond. Clasp his hands behind his back, he strode off. As he did, his five Greenwood Wolves lazily got to their feet to follow.

Wu Chen led the way. As for Wu Ling, seeing how Meng Hao ignored her caused her to snort inwardly. Her eyes flashed with killing intent as she followed.

Eventually, they passed the courtyard of rank 3 Dragoneer Grandmaster Shui Mu. Wu Ling called out to Wu Chen, then entered the courtyard. Moments later she emerged, followed by an old man.

The old man wore a haughty expression; this was the same person who had instructed Meng Hao regarding how to raise neo-demons. He was

quite famous in this stretch of courtyards, and was in charge of all the Neo-Demon Kennelist vassals. Of course, he was rank 3 Dragoneer Grandmaster Shui Mu.

A bright green snake rested on his shoulders. It almost looked like it was made of crystal; however, its forked tongue flicked in and out of its mouth, and its eyes shone with a cold glow.

“Many thanks, Grandmaster Shui Mu! I, Wu Ling, will never forget this kindness!” An expression of veneration filled Wu Ling’s face. Even though she was a descendant of one of the three great bloodlines, she still would not dare to do anything to offend a rank 3 Dragoneer. Furthermore, she had paid quite a high price to get his help, all for the sake of Wu Chen.

The arrogance was plain on the old man’s face as he responded, “Considering you came with a command medallion, and since I owe you a favor, I might as well help out. It will only be this one time, though. Don’t think it will happen again. Also, I make no guarantees regarding victory or defeat.”

Old man Shui Mu’s gaze suddenly came to rest on Meng Hao and he suddenly appeared to be annoyed. Then he looked at Meng Hao’s Greenwood Wolves, and his eyes glittered. This wasn’t his first time seeing them; he had noticed long ago they seemed extraordinary. However, they weren’t enough for him to truly care about.

Shui Mu looked over at Wu Ling and frowned. “What’s he doing here?”

Wu Ling hesitated. “He was invited by my younger brother,” she said softly. “Grandmaster Shui Mu....”

Shui Mu’s annoyed expression grew even more obvious and he let out a cold harumph. “Considering that you’ve invited others, then I’m afraid I won’t be participating.” His expression dark, he flicked his sleeve, turned, and walked back into his courtyard. In his mind, it was inconceivable that he, a Dragoneer, could possibly participate in any activity with a mere Neo-Demon Kennelist.

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered slightly as he watched Shui Mu turning to stalk off. He said nothing, but rather waited to see how Wu Chen and Wu

Ling would handle the situation.

Wu Ling was starting to get really nervous. She had spent a lot in her efforts to get help from Grandmaster Shui Mu. Glaring hatefully at Meng Hao, she followed after Shui Mu, her face filled with an expression of entreaty. She rattled off an endless stream of words as she tried to convince him to come back. Eventually, she gritted her beautiful teeth and offered even more compensation. Shui Mu eventually gave a begrudging nod, then returned, walking past Meng Hao without giving him a passing glance.

Wu Ling breathed a sigh of relief. However, the bitterness she felt in her heart only deepened. She gave Wu Chen a meaningful look, and then shook her head slowly. She was disappointed, she really did feel that it had been a big mistake on Wu Chen's part not to listen to her advice from the beginning.

Sighing, Wu Ling followed behind Grandmaster Shui Mu as he walked off. Meng Hao smiled indifferently as he followed. As for Wu Chen, he looked thoughtful as he walked. The small group left the Neo-Demon Kennelist district and made their way up the mountain to an open square which was cut into the side of the mountain. Its surface was smooth granite.

Meng Hao looked around as they walked, whereas Wu Chen was lost in thought. Up ahead, Wu Ling took out a branch, which she waved out in front of her. A green beam of light appeared that shot up into the sky and then exploded.

The resulting boom seemed to shake Wu Chen out of his reverie. He took a deep breath and then looked up toward the explosion. Ten beams of light immediately shot out from ten different houses located on the mountain. Moments later, ten people emerged. In addition, various other Crow Scout Tribe members from down below the mountain began to make their way up. Wu Chen turned toward Meng Hao, a look of determination in his eyes. He clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Grandmaster, please, help me.”

Meng Hao smiled and gave a slight nod. His impression of Wu Chen was growing. The young man was a bit impulsive, but his determination and perseverance were admirable.

People began to arrive, the first being from the group of ten.

One of their number was an old man dressed in a long white robe. His white hair floated in the wind, and his body was festooned with tattoos. One of the tattoos was that of a tree.

He seemed to be the most powerful in the group, the rest of whom emanated thick totemic power. Their Cultivation bases were extraordinary, most of them being around the early Core Formation stage.

As for the old man, he emanated power equivalent to the mid Nascent Soul stage.

Standing next to the old man was a smiling middle-aged man with grayish hair. His body was also festooned with totem tattoos, and emanated shocking power. He seemed to be slightly weaker than the old man; his power was analogous to the early Nascent Soul stage.

Wu Ling stepped forward and clasped hands toward the old man. "Wu Ling, descendant of the three great bloodlines, extends greetings to the Earth Priest. The command of the Greatfather stated that any time during this three day period, my younger brother Wu Chen could initiate his neo-demon duel with Wu Ali. The winner will receive the totem medallion!"

Shui Mu stood next to her looking proud as he clasped hands in greeting to the old man.

Wu Chen looked nervous as he stepped forward to stand next to Wu Ling, head bowed.

This old man of the mid Nascent Soul stage was none other than one of the two High Priests of the Crow Scout Tribe, who spent most of his time handling Tribal affairs. He looked Wu Ling over, glanced at Wu Chen, and then sighed inwardly. On an emotional level, he felt sorry for the two of them. However, whatever decisions were made by the Greatfather had to be complied with. The Earth Priest would never argue with him unless it

was some matter of great importance. He gave them slight nods, then looked over at Meng Hao. As for the Greenwood Wolves that were gathered behind him, his eyes flickered as he studied them. However, he said nothing. Instead, he turned to Shui Mu.

“Thank you for your assistance, Dragoneer Shui Mu.”

Hearing this caused Shui Mu to suddenly feel a bit excited. He quickly clasped hands and bowed.

“To be able to assist descendants of the three great bloodlines is an incredible honor for someone as lowly as me.”

As these words were being exchanged, the rest of the ten people arrived. One of them was a young man wearing clothes very similar to those worn by Wu Chen. He was tall and strapping, with handsome features and a somewhat proud expression. As he neared, Meng Hao could sense coldness emanating from Wu Chen’s eyes.

The young newcomer gave a cold snort and then said, “Wu Chen, that totem medallion belongs to me, Wu Ali. However, since the Greatfather decreed it, I have no choice but to defeat you and settle the matter once and for all!” After this he clasped hands and bowed in greeting to the Earth Priest, as well as the middle-aged man standing next to him.

The middle-aged man smiled approvingly and nodded. He was the Grand Elder of the Crow Scout Tribe, a position below that of High Priest, but one of great power nonetheless. He was also a powerful expert of the same bloodline as Wu Ali. It was because of him that Wu Ali had become so aggressive recently, and attempted to take the totem medallion that belonged to Wu Chen.

It was at this point that a small crowd of other Crow Scout Tribe members arrived from below the mountain. There weren’t too many, so it didn’t take long for a group of close to one hundred people to surround the square.

Wu Chen was nervous. He took a deep breath as he stared over at Wu Ali. He was about to say something when Wu Ali gave a cold laugh and then waved his hand. A green light shot out to circle around in mid-air.

Piercing cries rang out.

Suddenly, the light stopped moving and transformed into a little green-colored bat the size of a human hand. It had sharp fangs, and its eyes glowed with a cold light. All in all, it looked quite fierce, and caused the eyes of all the onlookers to glow.

“This is my level 2 neo-demon, a Greenwood Bat!” said Wu Ali arrogantly. “Wu Chen, produce your neo-demon. If you don’t have one, then go ahead and ask your Dragoneer to help you.

*

1. Wu Ling’s name in Chinese is 乌灵 wū líng. Her surname of course means “crow.” Ling means “spirit”.

Chapter 401: Same Level Fatality!

Conversations immediately broke out.

“Greenwood Bat! Of the three Greenwood totems, none are technically stronger than the others. What’s most important is the Cultivator’s connection with the neo-demon. In my opinion, Wu Ali has more potential than anyone else in his generation. It’s said that his Greenwood Bat was raised personally by rank 5 Dragoneer Mo Fang!” 1

“I’ve got my eye on Wu Ali too. Normal Tribe members can acquire Greenleaf totems, but only the three great bloodlines have access to the special totems, the Greenwood Wolves, Greenwood Bats and Greenwood Snakes! The Greatfather and the Priests can combine all three totems into a totem of the Ancestor Tree. It seems to me that Wu Ali is definitely going to grow up to be a Chosen.”

“There’s no need to even mention Priests. They appear without any sign or indication. Whenever a Priest dies, his consciousness will return to Ancestor Greenwood Tree to be reincarnated. In any case, that Greenwood Bat sure does look extraordinary. Any neo-demon raised by rank 5 Dragoneer Mo Fang will definitely be the most powerful in its level. Probably the only thing that could be most powerful would be something raised by Mo Fang’s father. He’s the most powerful Dragoneer in the Tribe, level seven Grandmaster Mo Zi....” 2

Hearing all the discussions made Wu Chen feel as if all the blood in his body was rushing into his head. He took a step forward and was about to say something when Wu Ling suddenly called out.

“Grandmaster Shui Mu, your assistance is requested!”

Wu Ling truly did not believe Meng Hao to be capable of securing victory. In order to prevent any loss of face, she spoke before Wu Chen could. As soon as she did, all gazes fell upon old man Shui Mu.

Shui Mu gave a dry cough. Actually, this was his first time to engage in a neo-demon duel with someone of the three great bloodlines. Although he talked a big game, inwardly he was very focused on the opportunity

present here. He had a chance now to increase his reputation, as well as gain other benefits, especially if he won.

He waved his right hand, causing the Greenwood Snake on his shoulder to fly into the air. It was like a green bolt of lightning that shot out to hover in front of the Greenwood Bat, its forked tongue flicking, its eyes radiating coldness.

The Greenwood Bat's expression didn't change at all, although the coldness in its eyes grew more intense.

"I am Shui Mu. Presumably you all are familiar with my name, Fellow Daoists. I have been raising this Greenwood Snake for an entire year. The reason it took so long with this particular neo-demon is that I tested out a special technique on it to bring forth some mutations!" Shui Mu pointed with his right hand, causing the Greenwood Snake to begin to tremble. Suddenly, a horn emerged from the middle of the snake's flat, glossy forehead.

This instantly caused a small commotion among the surrounding Cultivators, even the High Priest, who did a double take.

Meng Hao's eyes flashed as he examined the snake. Then, he began to laugh inwardly. Obviously, the horn was no mutation, but rather, a simple transplant. It was hard to say what beast it had been taken from, but it obviously had simply added it onto the snake. There were some people in the audience who realized this and paid the thing little heed. However, most of the onlookers appeared to be very interested in matter.

Seeing the looks of interest caused Shui Mu to get even more excited. It was at this point that the High Priest cleared his throat. "Very well. Let's begin," he said.

Immediately, Shui Mu waved his finger, causing the Greenwood Snake to fly at top speed toward the Greenwood Bat.

Wu Ali was feeling a bit nervous. Before, he had never paid the slightest attention to Shui Mu, but considering the man had raised a neo-demon that had a horn, it suddenly made him feel uneasy. Focusing his thoughts, he caused the Greenwood Bat's eyes to shine with coldness and then shoot

forward.

In the blink of an eye, the two green beams of light slammed into each other. Booming sounds echoed out, along with a sharp shriek. Green-colored ripples spread out in all directions.

Wu Chen looked up, his face filled with anxiety, and his fists clenched tightly. He had been a bit irritated that his sister cut him off earlier, but now he had little time to consider it. His eyes were fixed on the two green beams of light in mid-air.

Wu Ling stood off to the side, feeling extremely anxious. Although she constantly told Wu Chen to endure the suffering silently, she was actually extremely furious. It was only to keep the both of them safe that she counselled him to show restraint. As for this neo-demon duel, she had fought hard to earn the right to have it. All her hope rested on Grandmaster Shui Mu. Hopefully, a victory here would ensure that the totem medallion stayed safely in their bloodline.

Meng Hao looked up at the Greenwood Snake and its horn. It was currently radiating reddish light that increased its speed. He nodded. "So it is somewhat useful after all."

It was at this time that a miserable shriek suddenly filled the air as one of the green beams of light suddenly split into two, and a shower of blood filled the air.

The green beam was none other than the Greenwood Snake. Part of its body fell toward the ground, which the Greenwood Bat snatched up and ripped into shreds with its sharp teeth. It then looked back up at the Greenwood Snake in the air above, which currently only had half a body left.

The Greenwood Bat let out a cry as it charged up. The Greenwood Snake tried to avoid it. Unfortunately, even with the aid of the glow emitted by the red horn on its head, it was unable to dodge. In the blink of an eye, the Greenwood Bat was right at its side. It bit into the snake, which let out a miserable shriek. Its body began to wither, and within the space of a few breaths, had turned into a shrivelled corpse, its essence absorbed by the

Greenwood Bat.

Wu Chen's face fell, and he staggered backward as if the weight of an entire mountain had just slammed into him. He laughed bitterly.

Wu Ling's eyes filled with grief as she looked around helplessly.

Conversations immediately broke out among the audience.

"This defeat was destined to occur. There wasn't even a need to have a duel between Wu Chen and Wu Ali!"

"One is useless trash, the other is a Chosen! What's there to compare!?"

"Wu Ali controlled his neo-demon with as much skill as a Dragoneer, and took the upper hand. You can see from this that Wu Chen doesn't even have the confidence to control neo-demons."

Of course, all of these various conversations could be heard by Wu Chen and Wu Ling.

As for Grandmaster Shui Mu, his expression was calm. He shook his head and said, "It seems I still need to work on my Greenwood Snakes," he said coolly. "However, as you can all see, the changes I made to the snake increased its speed quite a bit. It may have been defeated by the Greenwood Bat, but the main reason would be that the Greenwood Bat was raised personally by rank 5 Dragoneer Mo Fang. How could my Greenwood Snake have possibly defeated it?" He smiled as looked around at the audience, many of whom still had looks of interest on their faces. He had accomplished his goal, and was now certain that it wouldn't be long before more people began to seek out his services.

Seeing the ashen look on Wu Chen's face tore at Wu Ling's heart. She turned toward Shui Mu and angrily said, "Grandmaster Shui Mu, you told me you were eighty percent certain you could achieve victory! If you had told me before what you said just now, then I wouldn't have gone to the Greatfather to beg for permission to hold this neo-demon duel!"

"So childish!" said Shui Mu with an annoyed flick of a sleeve. "Neo-demon duels are filled with countless unpredictability. Even if I said I was ninety percent certain, that's just my opinion based on my judgement.

After all your years practicing Cultivation, do you really not understand something so simple?”

“You!!” she cried, glaring at Shui Mu. However, a bitter smile slowly appeared on her face. Shui Mu was a level 3 Dragoneer, and an official vassal. Despite her being a descendant of the three great bloodlines, she was currently in a very poor position. She knew she had been used, but there was really nothing she could do about the situation except laugh bitterly.

“Definitely a bit childish,” said Meng Hao with a light cough.

As soon as his voice rang out, Shui Mu gave a cold harumph. Wu Chen’s pale face suddenly flushed with blood as he looked over at Meng Hao. The look in his eyes was like that of a drowning man who suddenly saw a piece of wood floating in front of him.

Panting, Wu Chen walked forward. Bowing deeply, he said, “Grandmaster, I beg for your assistance!”

Wu Ling looked over at him, flames of rage dancing in her eyes. One word at a time, she said, “How certain are you that you can win?”

“About eighty,” replied Meng Hao with a smile. He looked over at his Greenwood Wolves and then pointed at Hairy #5.

Hairy #5 suddenly looked up. His eyes radiating a cold glow, he shot forward. He performed no flashy moves, but instead transformed into a green beam of light that sped directly toward the Greenwood Bat.

Wu Ali’s eyes filled with scorn. Of the three great bloodline totems, Greenwood Wolves were the largest and also excelled in speed. However, in his mind, they couldn’t compare to Greenwood Bats at all, and he felt absolutely confident that his Greenwood Bat could sweep across all over level 2 totems. He sent his will out, already able to visualize the desiccated corpse of the wolf.

He laughed coldly. Moments before, he had been a bit nervous facing up against Grandmaster Shui Mu. However, Meng Hao was nothing but a random stranger who he didn’t care a bit about.

As he sent his will out, the Greenwood Bat let out a piercing cry and shot toward Hairy #5.

However, before it could barely even move, Hairy #5 increased his speed. This was not an increase of double or triple, but rather a multiple of ten!

He blurred into something that looked like a ghost, a speed which shouldn't be possible for level 2 neo-demons. A screaming sound like that of a thunderstorm filled the air. Amidst the roaring, and before the Greenwood Bat could even react, Hairy #5 was directly in front of it. His eyes radiated coldness as he bit down.

A bloodcurdling shriek poured out of the mouth of the Greenwood Bat. The sound only lasted for a moment before suddenly stopped. Hairy #5 swallowed down the hand-sized bat in a single gulp.

There was a green blur, and then Hairy #5 was back at Meng Hao's side. From the time he had left Meng Hao's side until the time he returned, only a single breath of time had passed!

This was a complete fatality of the same level!!

Everything was deathly silent. The surrounding audience's eyes were wide, and they looked like they couldn't even breathe. Their minds spun with unprecedented shock.

Wu Chen stood there in a daze, and Wu Ling's dainty mouth was wide open. Her expression was one of shock and blankness, as if she were dreaming.

Wu Ali stared blankly. The Greenwood Bat had died too quickly for him to even react.

Wu Hai was also in the crowd. Moments ago when he'd seen Meng Hao getting ready to make a move, he had been worried. Now, however, he was staring wide-eyed, his mind a complete blank.

Wu Ali and the rest of the members of his bloodline stared, stupefied, their minds spinning. Things had happened so quickly they didn't even have a chance to tremble.

As for the Grand Elder, his eyes instantly filled with an unprecedented glow as he stared at Hairy #5. The Earth Priest took a deep breath and looked over at Meng Hao, his gaze glowing as brightly as the sun.

A long moment passed before a buzz filled the air.

“Instant... instant fatality? An instant fatality of the same level!!”

“That’s a mutated Greenwood Wolf! Heavens, that’s a mutated Greenwood Wolf!!”

“It was so fast! Its speed... is even greater than that of a level 3 neo-demon! This wasn’t a neo-demon duel, it was an absolute slaughter!!”

“The only people who can raise neo-demons like this... are high level Dragoneers!!”

It was at this moment during the reactions that all eyes came to rest... on Meng Hao.

*

1. Mo Fang’s name in Chinese is 墨方 mò fāng – Mo is a surname which also means “black” or “ink.” Fang means “square”.
2. Mo Zi’s name in Chinese is 墨子 mò zǐ. This name is exactly the same as a famous Chinese philosopher.

Chapter 402: You Predicted That Too?

Wu Chen had the sudden urge to cry out. Moments ago he had been the object of ridicule; a breath later it was the exact opposite. He couldn't speak, and in fact, tears welled up in his eyes and began to flow down his face. He started to laugh. This laughter was a release of all the pressure that he had felt over the past years.

At the moment, he didn't even care about the totem medallion. All he cared about was this feeling of finally rising up, the feeling of no longer being below others.

Disbelief filled the eyes of Wu Ling, and her brain felt as if it were being struck by a hundred thousand lightning bolts. What had happened just now didn't seem possible, and all she could do was stare with wide eyes at Meng Hao.

Her mind was a complete blank; the only thing she could think about was how staunchly Wu Chen had insisted on asking Meng Hao for help.

Slowly, her face grew pale as she thought of all the things she had said. Then she thought about the things she hadn't spoken out but only thought, and of her plans to kill Meng Hao.

All of these things filled her with complex emotions, as if everything she had said and done up to now was one big joke.

Conversations continued among the audience.

"The strangest thing is that Wu Ling asked for help from Grandmaster Shui Mu when there was a powerful expert like this in the Crow Scout Tribe."

"Even more strange is how the brother and sister looked so hopeless after Grandmaster Shui Mu was defeated...."

Hearing these conversations caused Wu Ling's beautiful face to begin to redden. It wasn't a flush of bashfulness, but rather, deep shame.

She wasn't sure what she should say. All her words and actions were exactly as Meng Hao had said, childish. There really was no other words

that could describe them.

Wu Ali's face was deathly pale, as if it didn't contain even a single tiny drop of blood. He had been branded to the neo-demon at the time of its death, and it seemed he had been injured as a result. His Cultivation base was even unstable and on the verge of suffering injury.

The Crow Scout Tribe's Grand Elder, the middle-aged man, gave a cold harumph. Immediately, other members of his bloodline stepped forward to settle the shaking of Wu Ali's Cultivation base. All of them looked at Meng Hao with killing intent.

Off to the side, Shui Mu was panting, his eyes filled with disbelief. What had happened just now filled his mind with buzzing. Then he heard what people were saying around him, and it was as if a viper were inside of him biting into his heart. His eyes instantly became bloodshot.

Being defeated by the neo-demon of a rank 5 Dragoneer wasn't too bad. In fact, it was almost an honor. But the fact that the neo-demon he had raised didn't measure up at all to Meng Hao's filled him with intense jealousy and hatred.

"That's only one of the five neo-demons you've raised!" he said through gritted teeth. "I predicted such extraordinariness when they were young and I was raising them. Although I didn't know it would mutate, and I could see that it was extraordinary!" His words caused the expressions of the surrounding Crow Scout Tribe members to change.

"Don't tell me it was all just a coincidence?"

"That would certainly explain why this guy isn't famous. He really just struck it lucky and got a mutated neo-demon."

As the discussions continued, Wu Ali glared at Meng Hao. His voice hoarse, he said, "I refuse to admit defeat!! If you really have what it takes, then switch to another neo-demon and we'll have another duel!"

As he spoke, he slapped his chest and then stretched out his hand. Immediately, a black skull appeared in his palm. He threw it out, whereupon it exploded with a boom, transforming into a black bone dust

which spread out in all directions. The bone dust emitted a strange and unique Qi.

As soon as the Qi appeared, a roaring could be heard from further up on the mountain. Next, a black beam descended. It took only the space of a few breaths for it to arrive in the square. As it did, the black beam of light transformed into a black bat!

The bat was black, but green veins could be seen all over its body. Wisps of black Qi drifted off of it, and its eyes were bright red. It emanated a malevolent aura, and emanated the pressure of a level 3 neo-demon.

The appearance of the bat caused quite a commotion among the audience, which immediately buzzed with conversation.

“A level 3 Greenwood Bat!! And it’s mutated! If it weren’t, it wouldn’t be black!”

“I recognize that bat! It’s a venomous Greenwood Bat raised by Grandmaster Mo Fang! It’s actually only level 2, but because it’s mutated, it emanates the pressure of a level 3 neo-demon.”

“I remember some people offering an exorbitant price for that bat a few years ago, but Grandmaster Mo Fang wasn’t willing to give it up....”

The bat floated there in mid-air, gazing around with its crimson eyes, which came to rest on the five Greenwood Wolves next to Meng Hao. The bat opened its mouth to reveal a set of sharp black teeth. It let out a howl, then flickered as it shot toward Meng Hao.

The speed with which it approached seemed comparable to the Greenwood Wolf from moments ago.

“Hairy #4,” said Meng Hao coolly, standing there as if he didn’t even see the incoming black bat. Moments ago, Hairy #4 had been standing there looking bored, but as soon as he heard Meng Hao’s command, he suddenly lifted his head up and howled.

Immediately, ripples spread out in all directions. The instant the ripples touched the bat, it began to tremble. Whereas moments ago it had been speeding forward, it now involuntarily stopped.

As soon as it stopped moving, Hairy #4 shot forward with explosive speed that exceeded that of Hairy #5 by double. In the blink of an eye, it was upon the black bat, whereupon it slashed out with its claws.

A boom filled the air, along with a miserable shriek. Just now, everyone had taken this black bat to be beyond ordinary. It was even mutated! Now, though, it took only a moment for its entire body to explode. Under the claws of Hairy #4, it died in an instant.

The entire fight lasted for only the space of one breath.

This was another... instant fatality!

Hairy #4 turned into a green blur as he returned to Meng Hao's side. The surrounding Crow Scout Tribe members were all breathing raggedly, and their eyes were wide. The scene just now left them in complete silence for a moment, after which a great commotion exploded out.

"That one's also mutated!!"

"He... he has five Greenwood Wolves. Don't tell me they're all mutated!?!?"

"The way he's raising those Greenwood Wolves... just what rank of Dragoneer is he?!?!"

Amidst the commotion, Wu Chen and Wu Ling stared in astonishment. Wu Ali's face was pale white, and without even thinking about it, he backed up a few paces. These two neo-demon duels far exceeded his capacity for thought; they left his mind a spinning blank.

The Crow Scout Tribe Earth Priest once again gazed thoughtfully at Meng Hao. Next to him, the Grand Elder was frowning as he glared at Meng Hao.

As for old man Shui Mu, his jaw had dropped and he was staring blankly at Meng Hao's Greenwood Wolves, his mind a complete blank. After a moment of mental struggle, he cried, "So, it wasn't just one mutated Greenwood Wolf, but two. Just as predicted...." Inwardly he was gnashing his teeth, but on the surface, he put on a profound and mysterious air.

“You predicted that too?” said Meng Hao, a cold light gleaming in his eyes. He was starting to get annoyed at this old man’s arrogance.

“Hairy #3!” As soon as Hairy #3 heard Meng Hao’s voice, he lifted his head up and emitted an astonishing howl. As it echoed out, the faces of the Crow Scout Tribe members immediately filled with shock. In addition, all of the Tribe members of the Foundation Establishment stage or lower were shaken.

Beneath the power of Hairy #3’s howl, all Cultivation bases of Foundation Establishment and lower began to involuntarily rotate. The totems tattoos of those Cultivators began to shine brightly, and they felt an enormous pressure.

The power of the howl shook everything. In the blink of an eye, this scene, coupled with the actions of Hairys #4 and #5 just now, caused an even greater commotion.

“That’s... that’s another mutant!!”

“Three mutants! That guy has a total of three mutant Greenwood Wolves!”

“Each one is more powerful than the one before it! This Greenwood Wolf is even more powerful than the peak of a level 3. It’s almost the same as level 4!!”

As the commotion broke out, Shui Mu’s face flickered with various emotions. He felt as if someone were violently smashing at his heart with a hammer. He staggered back a few paces.

Before he could say anything, Meng Hao’s voice could be heard. “So, did you predict that too?” he asked coolly. Shui Mu felt his mind reeling. Gnashing his teeth, he was about to respond that he had, when Meng Hao patted Hairy #2 on the back.

Hairy #2 slowly looked up. He did not fly forward, nor howl. All he did was emit a green glow from his body. The glow turned into a pillar of light that shot up into the sky. Up above, it transformed into an illusory body that lifted its head up to howl....

This howl caused all of the level 3 neo-demons in the Crow Scout Tribe to tremble. They couldn't stop themselves from prostrating and emitting simultaneous howls of reverence.

The sound caused everyone's hearts to tremble violently. No one spoke even a single word!

People could accept one mutant. Two was shocking. But three.... It was almost impossible to believe. And four.... The members of the Crow Scout Tribe seemed to have lost their ability to even think. They stared blankly at the four Greenwood Wolves standing next to Meng Hao.

"Rank 3 Dragoneer Grandmaster Shui Mu, was this another thing that you predicted?" asked Meng Hao, his voice cold. His words caused all eyes to shift onto the old man.

Shui Mu's face twisted and he coughed up a mouthful of blood. Then, he pitched over and fell unconscious onto the ground. There was nothing else he could do in response to Meng Hao's incisive words. As shameless as he was, it was impossible for him to actually say that he had predicted that all four of the Greenwood Wolves would be so incredible.

The moment Shui Mu fell onto the ground, a cold voice suddenly drifted down from the lofty position high up on the mountain from which the black bat had flown from.

"Those four Greenwood Wolves will be given to me, Mo Fang."

*

Note from Er Gen: Today a huge hornet got into the house and my daughter screamed. Apparently she was thinking of a scene from a cartoon, because she immediately put on a Balala Fairy costume, grabbed a magic wand, and dragged me into battle with her. It took about half an hour, but the father-daughter team eventually won the battle against the evil hornet!

Chapter 403: My Pill....

As soon as the sound echoed out from the mountain peak, a figure could be seen descending. A middle-aged man strode forth, wearing a black robe. His features were handsome and filled with a certain grimness. He came to a stop next to Wu Ali, his hands clasped behind his back.

The surrounding Crow Scout Tribe members instantly recognized him.

“It’s Grandmaster Mo Fang!”

Wu Ali took a deep breath as he clasped hands and bowed deeply to the man. At the same time, the faces of the surrounding Crow Scout Tribe members filled with veneration as they also clasped hands in greeting.

A smile covered the face of the Earth Priest as he nodded slightly toward the black-robed man. Next to him, the smile on the face of the Grand Elder was even more exuberant.

This black-robed man was none other than the Crow Scout Tribe’s rank 5 Dragoner Mo Fang, who occupied a very high position within the Tribe. He looked over at Meng Hao, then back at the Earth Priest and the Grand Elder.

“These four mutated Greenwood Wolves appear to be excellent. My horde currently lacks some good attack neo-demons. If I raise those Greenwood Wolves for a while, they should meet my requirements. Could I prevail upon the Earth Priest and the Grand Elder to fulfill my desire?”

The entire time he spoke, it was obvious that his words were not directed toward Meng Hao. The arrogance with which he spoke made it clear that he took no note whatsoever of Meng Hao. This was the disregard of a highly ranked Dragoner.

It didn’t matter that it was Meng Hao who had raised the four mutated Greenwood Wolves. In his opinion, Meng Hao was nothing but an insect. Such an attitude was something Meng Hao had seen quite a bit of in the past. He gave a faint smile in response to Mo Fang’s disregard, an expression much similar to the one he had directed toward Wu Ling

earlier.

The Crow Scout Tribe's Grand Elder gave a slight smile in response to Mo Fang's words, but didn't say anything. He simply looked over at the Earth Priest.

The Earth Priest's expression was thoughtful. According to Tribe rules, neo-demons were usually raised by only one person, unless they were taken by a Tribe member.

Mo Fang's request put him in somewhat of a difficult position. Were it some other Dragoner, he would tactfully decline the request. But Mo Fang was different. He was only rank 5, but his father was the number one vassal in the entire Tribe, rank 7 Dragoner Mo Zi.

Because of that, the Earth Priest really had no choice but to make some sort of compromise.

But then he looked over at Meng Hao, and especially his right hand, and smiled.

"I'm not authorized to make such a decision. These four neo-demons were raised by this Grandmaster here. You'll have to see if he's willing."

The words of the Earth Priest caused the Grand Elder's eyes to flicker and narrow imperceptibly. He looked at Meng Hao. Mo Fang turned his head to truly look at Meng Hao for the first time, and his expression was one of shock.

The Earth Priest's words caused the surrounding Cultivators to think a variety of things. Their eyes flickered as they all looked at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao smiled. "If you can get these Greenwood Wolves to follow you, then I won't stop them. But if you can't, then according to the rules, I, Meng Hao, will have to select a few neo-demons to take from your horde." As far as Meng Hao was concerned, this was his opportunity to make his mark in the Crow Scout Tribe. Mo Fang had appeared, looking to make a fool of himself; Meng Hao would naturally accommodate him.

Mo Fang glared superciliously at Meng Hao and said, "You'll never get a chance to select a single one of my neo-demons. As a Dragoner, I will

help you to understand the meaning of controlling neo-demons!”

With that, he flicked his sleeve and strode in Meng Hao’s direction. Smiling, Meng Hao took a few steps back, allowing him full access to the Greenwood Wolves.

Mo Fang was getting excited. As a rank 5 Dragoner, he had a variety of techniques to use to control neo-demons. This was especially true of his particular bloodline, which had produced a rank 9 Dragoner in the past; that was one step away from Grand Dragoner. In the end, he had perished, but before doing so, had passed down his secret techniques as a legacy for successive generations.

It might not compare to some of the other Western Desert Dragoner legacies, but here in the five Crow Divinity Tribes, it was quite outstanding.

“Greenwood Wolves are Wood-type neo-demons that are born at level 1 and can grow to level 7. Within the lists of Western Desert neo-demons, they are in the 891st position. Their original ancestor was born beneath the ancient Greenwood Tree, thus the reason they are called Greenwood Wolves.

“They move with blinding speed and have sharp fangs. They also enjoy the fragrant smell of forest leaves. The thrice refined Green Incense of a rank 5 Dragoner can cause all masterless Greenwood Wolves under level 5 to submit.” The surrounding Cultivators’ eyes were filled with looks of reverence as Mo Fang arrogantly explained himself.

Meng Hao’s face was covered with his usual slight smile. He said nothing, but merely watched as Mo Fang produced a green incense stick. The incense stick seemed to have been created using various plant and vegetation materials. As soon as it appeared, a faint, fragrant aroma drifted out.

However, the aroma seemed to have absolutely no effect on the five Greenwood Wolves. They continued to laze about on the ground, not paying it the slightest heed.

“Not bad,” said Mo Fang. “The fact that they can stand up to this high

level Green Incense shows that these neo-demons are beyond ordinary. However, it will be a much different story after I light the incense with my secret Dragoneer kindling magic! Fellow Daoists, please observe!” Setting his chin, he suddenly flashed an incantation with his right hand. Soon, ripples of magic could be seen which spread out toward the Green Incense that he held in his other hand.

An intangible flame appeared, causing the Green Incense stick to begin to smolder. The aroma was immediately ten times thicker than before as it emanated out in all directions. All of the surrounding Cultivators who had Greenwood Wolf totem tattoos were shocked to find the totems within their bodies surging involuntarily. The Cultivators backed up away from the horrifying fragrance.

However, the five Greenwood Wolves who lay directly in the middle of the aroma didn’t react even the slightest bit, except for Hairy #5, who lifted his head and yawned lazily.

Everything was quiet. Quite a few people were looking at Mo Fang, whose face was flickering slightly. He’d never imagined that something like this could happen. With a cold snort, he suddenly snapped his fingers, causing the Green Incense to collapse. The aroma of the incense then grew several time stronger and thicker as it emanated out.

And yet... Big Hairy and Hairy #2 didn’t even bat an eyelid. As for Hairy #5, he actually nudged Hairy #4 playfully, completely ignoring Mo Fang.

Meng Hao coughed dryly. The aroma was completely ineffective because of their mutation; previous flaws that existed within ordinary Greenwood Wolves were now gone.

“Not bad,” said Mo Fang, clearing his throat. “These Greenwood Wolves are very good at resisting this incense. But that doesn’t matter. I, Mo Fang, have many techniques. If the simplest doesn’t work, who cares?” Suddenly, he waved his right hand, causing a red glow to appear in front of him, within which could be seen a huge lump of meat.

The fresh meat dripped with blood, the smell of which spread out to fill the area. Hairy #5 suddenly looked up. Hairys #4 and #3 also looked over.

The surrounding audience members who had Greenwood Wolf totem tattoos backed up, their faces filled with fear. They could feel the Greenwood Wolf totems inside of them moving about in agitation. It seemed like they might go completely out of control and burst forth at any moment.

Mo Fang laughed. "The blood and meat of the Searchtree Deer is irresistible to Greenwood Wolves. That is especially true of this lump of meat, which I, Mo Fang, have been refining for eight months!" Hairy #5 had an odd expression on his face as he looked over. He sniffed the air a few times, then turned back to play with Hairy #4. Hairy #3 studied the lump of meat for a moment, then seemed to find it boring and looked away.

Meng Hao chuckled. During his training of these wolves, Meng Hao had only fed them meat like this once, that first time in the beginning. Afterward, he only fed them meat when he secretly took them out into the mountains and let them kill and eat live beasts. To them, it was somewhat of a habit. When it came to meat that wasn't fresh, they wouldn't find it interesting at all. The only reason Hairy #5 had looked over earlier was because of curiosity.

Mo Fang's eyes went wide. However, the surrounding Crow Scout Tribe members were all looking at him, so he merely coughed and covered his face with an expression of praise.

"So, it seems I'll actually have to use something really powerful!" he said through gritted teeth. He waved his hand, causing a green liquid to appear. This provoked no reaction from Big Hairy and the others.

Mo Fang was starting to get anxious. He quickly performed an incantation with both hands, employing a magical technique that caused glowing bands of light to shoot out toward the five Greenwood Wolves. The wolves, however, didn't even so much as glance at the bands of light. They continued to play around, except for Big Hairy, who had closed his eyes to nap.

The surrounding Crow Scout Tribe members had strange expressions on

their faces. They had seen Mo Fang use incense, meat, water and even magic. He was using so many methods that he had started to sweat.... However, none of them provoked any reaction at all on the part of the Greenwood Wolves. They continued to ignore him.

Wu Chen, Wu Ling and the others all watched on with odd expressions. Even the Grand Elder was frowning. As for the Earth Priest, a thoughtful smile could be seen on his face as he looked again at Meng Hao's right hand.

"As of now, I think I can confirm his identity," thought the Earth Priest. He was beginning to grow very happy.

Mo Fang glared at the five Greenwood Wolves, his eyes a bit bloodshot. Gritting his teeth, he slapped his bag of holding, which caused a bloody glow to emerge. It came to rest on his hand in the form of a blood-colored medicinal pill.

The instant the medicinal pill appeared, the surrounding Crow Scout Tribe members' faces lit with shock. Their totem tattoos began to glow as one neo-demon after another appeared. They lifted their heads up to the sky and howled, then stared fixedly at the blood-colored pill in Mo Fang's hand. If their masters weren't holding them back, it seemed as if these neo-demons would charge forward in attack.

The Grand Elder's eyes narrowed. "That's...."

Even the Earth Priest narrowed his eyes.

Holding the pill out, Mo Fang arrogantly said, "I have been refining this pill from the day I became a rank 1 Dragoneer. This is a Demon Nurturing Pill!"

This was his trump card as a Dragoneer, a method specifically targeting neo-demons.

"Demon Nurturing Pill!!"

"So it's a legendary Demon Nurturing Pill! It's said that this type of pill has long since vanished from the face of the Earth. And yet Grandmaster Mo is holding one right there!"

Everyone was completely shocked.

His voice filled with pride, Mo Fang said, “Although this is not a real Demon Nurturing Pill of legend, it has been handed down from my ancestors. True, it might not measure up to the pill of the Frigid Snow Clan. However, their formula was actually flawed. My pill can definitely outdo any other pill in the Western Desert. It can cause all neo-demons within a three hundred meter area to go crazy!!”

As far as Mo Fang was concerned, now that he had produced this pill, there was nothing to worry about. If it wasn't for the fact that he was in a bind, and everyone had watched him pull off a string of failures, he would never have dared to pull it out.

All of the neo-demons in the area were howling. Meng Hao's Greenwood Wolves looked over at the pill, strange expressions in their eyes.

Chapter 404: Shamed Into Rage

Mo Fang held out the Demon Nurturing Pill, his expression aloof. As far as he was concerned, there was now nothing to worry about. He had never heard of any neo-demon capable of resisting a Demon Nurturing Pill.

However, it took only a moment for his expression to fill with shock. It wasn't just him; all of the surrounding members of the Crow Scout Tribe were all staring with wide eyes at the five Greenwood Wolves. They simply couldn't believe it.

Big Hairy hadn't even opened his eyes, and was still napping. Hairy #2 and the others had odd expressions on their faces. They sniffed the air and then looked with confusion over at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao didn't say anything. All of the wolves, except for Big Hairy, resumed their playing. As for Mo Fang and his Demon Nurturing Pill, they were completely ignored.

The neo-demons of the surrounding Tribe members were going crazy, whereas the Greenwood Wolves were completely calm. The sight of it caused Mo Fang's brain to be filled with what seemed like the explosion of thunder.

Nobody spoke. Nearly a hundred people all seemed as if they couldn't even breathe.

"Impossible...." said Mo Fang. "How could this be? This... this is a Demon Nurturing Pill. There's not a single neo-demon that could possibly resist it...." His face was pale; what was happening was a huge blow to him. He staggered backward, muttering to himself and staring at his most precious, treasured Demon Nurturing Pill. Then he looked back at the five Greenwood Wolves.

His felt his mind reeling, and a look of confusion filled his eyes. Suddenly, he began to doubt himself.

Meng Hao gave a dry cough. He felt a bit bad for Mo Fang. If the man had pulled out some other item, perhaps it could have attracted the

attention of Big Hairy and the other wolves. But to the wolves, this supposedly precious Demon Nurturing Pill was absolutely valueless.

From the time they were small, they had been raised on the Frigid Snow Clan's Demon Nurturing Pill. Most importantly, even the Frigid Snow Clan couldn't concoct a Demon Nurturing Pill of the same quality as Meng Hao, unless they had a Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy like him.

By way of analogy, it was as if these Greenwood Wolves had been raised on gold and silver, only to have someone pull out a chunk of copper or iron to try to get their attention. How could they possibly care about something like that...?

That was especially true of Big Hairy, who had eaten a real Demon Nurturing Pill!

Actually, the pill formula from the Frigid Snow Clan was not flawed. However, they were not capable of using it to create a true Demon Nurturing Pill, because they were not Demon Sealers!

Only Demon Sealers could use the Demonic Qi of Heaven and Earth, merge it into the medicinal pill, and thus, concoct a real Demon Nurturing Pill.

That was the type of pill that Big Hairy had consumed. The changes to him had been earth shattering, beyond that which exists in the mortal world.

"If Grandmaster Mo has no other methods to try out, then I think it's time for me to select some of his neo-demons. Earth Priest, could I bother you to bear witness?" Meng Hao smiled at Mo Fang, then turned to bow toward the Earth Priest with clasped hands.

How could Meng Hao not have noticed the man studying the totem tattoo on his right hand earlier? That had been his plan from the very beginning, and also the identity he had chosen to assume.

A descendant of the Frigid Snow Clan!

The totem tattoo on Meng Hao's right hand was none other than the Eyeless Larva, which looked very similar to the Frigid Snow Larva. People

who didn't know the difference would naturally confuse the two. Of course, Tribes who uses larvae as totems were not very common in the Western Desert, but Meng Hao was sure that, if he showed off the talents of a Dragoneer, people would be able to put two and two together.

Earlier, this was exactly what had happened in the mind of the Earth Priest.

The Earth Priest thought for a moment and then looked over at Mo Fang. He didn't need to actually say anything. Not just his gaze, but the gazes of all the surrounding Crow Scout Tribe members all fell onto Mo Fang. It is difficult to get off a tiger once you start riding it, and that is just the situation Mo Fang was in right now.

He glared over at Meng Hao. As of now, the hostility he felt had reached an incredible level. After a long moment, he ground his teeth. He couldn't possibly violate Dragoneer custom in front of all these people. At the same time that he'd had received approval to attempt to take Meng Hao's neo-demons, he had agreed to the possibility of Meng Hao taking his.

Mo Fang gave a cold harumph as he thought to himself, "His neo-demons are just too bizarre. However, even though I have no way to make them follow me, if he thinks he's going to take my neo-demons away, he'll be sadly mistaken!" Thinking of the strength of his own neo-demon horde, he felt quite confident. With that, he waved his right hand, causing a special bag of holding to appear. This bag of holding appeared to be constructed from the skin of beasts. It began to tremble, and suddenly multiple beams of light flew out, accompanied by powerful cries.

In total, there were 23 Greenwood Wolves, 19 Greenwood Snakes and 13 Greenwood Bats. They flew out to surround around him, emanating shocking power. The observing Crow Scout Tribe members all had looks of profound veneration on their faces.

That caused some of Mo Fang's embarrassment to lessen. His eyes glittered as he produced another bag of holding, which he waved in front of him. Three deafening cries suddenly shook everything as three thirty meter long neo-demons emerged. One was a burly Greenwood Python and

another was an Greenwood Wolf whose body crackled with lightning.

The final of the three caused the entire horde of neo-demons to tremble. It was a gigantic bat!

This bat emanated an ancient Qi, as if it had been alive for a very, very long time. Although it floated there in mid air, its wings were actually folded up, and it stood upright like a person. It glared about, its eyes cold and piercing. Anyone upon whom it gazed wouldn't be able to stop from trembling.

The surrounding Crow Scout Tribe members couldn't help but stare at Mo Fang with deep veneration.

"Three level 5 neo-demons! All three of them are mutated! And look at that Black Bat.... It's as strong as the late Foundation Establishment stage!"

"There are even a lot of level 4s, although most of them are level 3. Not a single one is level 2!"

In the Western Desert, a level 5 Dragoner could be considered a powerful expert. For example, this Mo Fang actually only had a Cultivation base at the mid Foundation Establishment stage. However, when it came to his fighting prowess, he would be able to cause quite a headache even for someone of the late Foundation Establishment stage.

"This is my neo-demon horde! If you think you have the skill, just try to take them away!" Mo Fang's voice echoed about, filled with self-confidence. His expression was one of pride. He was sure that at the very most, Meng Hao would take away some of the weaker level 3 neo-demons. After acquiring these neo-demons, he had expended virtually all of his resources to raise them. They had been with him for years, giving him supreme confidence that they would not capitulate to Meng Hao.

Meng Hao gave a slight smile. Considering his own Cultivation base and identity, he didn't find it inappropriate to teach a lesson to this trifling little Cultivator. His gaze swept across the neo-demons.

"To become one of Meng Hao's neo-demons can only be described as luck and good fortune. I'll give you the space of three breaths to decide. If

you want to follow me, come over to me.” He spoke the words indifferently, but as he did, he caused Demonic Qi to begin to emanate out.

Even this small amount of Demonic Qi immediately caused a dozen or so of the neo-demons to begin to tremble and look over. It also caused the totemic neo-demons of the Crow Scout Tribe members to begin to howl. The sound of it filled the air as almost all of them left the sides of their masters to fly in the air, howling with hope.

The face of the Tribe’s Grand Elder fell as the totem tattoo on his body began to glow and then the Greenwood Snake within charged out, howling.

The face of the Earth Priest also fell as his own totem tattoo began to emit a glow. Gasping, he waved his hand, causing the power of his Cultivation base to explode out. Invisible shields suddenly sprang up everywhere, preventing the totemic neo-demons of the Tribe members from charging forward.

Mo Fang’s face was filled with thorough disbelief, and he was breathing rapidly. He stared at the neo-demon horde which had moments ago been obediently standing at his side. Now, they were howling crazily and charging toward Meng Hao. In the blink of an eye, only the three level 5 neo-demons were left behind struggling.

After the space of one breath passed, the Greenwood Wolf and the black Greenwood Snake shot over toward Meng Hao. Now, only the bat remained, staring fixedly at Meng Hao with its cold eyes. However, within those eyes could be seen both intelligence and shock.

“Come here,” said Meng Hao, staring back at the bat. He could tell that the bat was suffering from some hidden injury that others would find it difficult to be able to detect. Meng Hao was also able to sense a faint Demonic Qi emanating out from it.

The feel of it was very similar to that of Big Hairy.

However, the Demonic Qi was in disorder, which was why Meng Hao was able to detect the strange injury.

As soon as Meng Hao spoke to the bat, the gigantic creature's eyes flashed with a glow of intelligence. Suddenly, its body shot into the air and it flew to stand next to Meng Hao.

"Impossible!" shouted Mo Fang, blood spraying from his mouth as he staggered backward several paces. He felt like he was on the verge of going insane.

All of this was simply impossible to accept. His eyes were bright red and his hair was completely disheveled. Even as he roared, his eyes filled with intense killing intent. How could he possibly accept that in front of all these people, some completely unknown Dragoneer would defeat him in this way? Killing intent flared in his eyes and he suddenly lifted up his right hand.

There on his wrist was a black bone bracelet. The bracelet shattered into pieces, which exploded out into a bone ash mist.

The bone ash mist then began to congeal. As it did, it started to glow brightly and emit the light of teleportation. Roaring sounds could suddenly be heard within the teleportation spell; at the same time, streams of ash-colored light appeared, which then transformed into a gray Giant Ape, roughly twenty-five meters long.

The ape's eyes were bright red, and its fur was long and luxuriant. The instant it appeared, it let out a frightening roar, along with a Qi equivalent to the Core Formation stage, that filled the area. The faces of the surrounding Crow Scout Tribe members were instantly filled with shock.

"A level 6 neo-demon!!"

"That's a level 6 neo-demon!!"

His voice filled with rage, Mo Fang cried, "Kill all his neo-demons, and kill him!!"

Immediately, the Giant Ape rose up and let out a shocking roar. Then, it charged directly toward Meng Hao.

Its face was filled with ruthlessness, as if there was no living thing that it couldn't rip to shreds.

Meng Hao's eyes grew cold.

"Big Hairy," he said coolly.

As soon as the words left his mouth, Big Hairy, who had been napping the entire time, lifted his head. His body looked skinny and weak, but then suddenly exploded with shocking power. His cold eyes filled with brutality and madness that soared to the Heavens.

His savagery was usually kept suppressed by Meng Hao. Without a direct command, it would never appear. Now, it exploded out, and as it did, a bloody Qi swirled out from his body. It was in this moment that his green-colored fur suddenly...

Turned white!

Chapter 405: White Wolf!

A white streak of light shot forward at incredible, indescribable speed. In a split second, it was directly in front of the Giant Ape. A boom rattled out, shaking Heaven and Earth, and waves of ripples spread out in all directions, kicking up dust and causing a howling wind to sweep about.

A howl followed by a groan could be heard from the Giant Ape's mouth. It was as if its enormous body had suddenly slammed directly into a mountain. It fell back, blood spraying from its mouth as its shrill cry echoed out around it. Its chest was now awash with blood; an enormous chunk of flesh had been violently ripped out of it.

The white light flickered, and Big Hairy was standing off to the side, holding the chunk of meat in his mouth. He swallowed the meat down and then licked the blood from his lips.

His expression was one of pride, coupled with cold ruthlessness. He looked at the Giant Ape for a moment, then raised his head to the sky and howled. Suddenly, a field of illusory shadows appeared around him, within which the image of an enormous tree could be seen.

The tree began to twist, its branches intertwining with each other to change into the image of a huge wolf's head. As Big Hairy leaped forward, the Giant Ape looked terrified. Nonetheless, it let out a roar, causing its body to expand as it shot to meet him.

Big Hairy's body flickered as he once again neared the Giant Ape. His ghastly mouth opened wide and then clamped down onto the ape's neck. This time, the Giant Ape's shrieks couldn't be any more miserable.

A bloodcurdling scream echoed out, along with a cracking sound....

Blood shot out of the Giant Ape's head as Big Hairy ripped it clean off the body. Holding the head in his mouth, he turned and flickered back to Meng Hao. Dropping the head to the ground, he licked some blood off of it and then looked around with coldness and savagery at the surrounding onlookers. Of course, he would only attack if Meng Hao uttered another command.

The other neo-demons surrounding Big Hairy backed away from him, trembling, not daring to be near him. Even Hairy #2 and the other Greenwood Wolves did so. As for the level 5 Lightning Greenwood Wolf and the python, they also slowly backed up, their expressions filled with vigilance and reverence.

It was only the enormous Black Bat that looked coldly at Big Hairy. Big Hairy looked back, savagery dancing in his eyes.

The two neo-demons faced off, sizing each other up.

Further away in the square, Mo Fang stood there with a blank look on his pale face, his body trembling.

The Giant Ape was now only a headless body. Blood surged out from the neck, filling the entire square with its smell.

After a long moment, people finally started to breathe again. Everyone's eyes were glued onto Big Hairy; their expressions were that of astonishment, shock and excitement.

"White Wolf!!"

"It turns out that it's a White Wolf! The Crow Scout Tribe's ancient records mention a Crow Divinity White Wolf!! According to the legend, that's the same color as the ancestor of all Greenwood Wolves. Don't tell that this is... the reincarnation of the ancestor?"

"A mutated, reincarnated ancestor! That's something you rarely see even in a hundred years! In ten thousand Greenwood Wolves, you might only find one!! The Crow Scout Tribe hasn't had a White Wolf appear in ages!!"

The Crow Scout Tribe members were in an uproar. The minds of each and every person was filled with shock, to a level far exceeding that caused by anything that had happened earlier.

As for the Tribe's Grand Elder, he was breathing heavily, and his eyes filled with a bright glow of greed that he couldn't suppress.

The Earth Priest's body trembled and his eyes glowed with astounding brightness as he stared at Big Hairy and the white fur that covered his

body. He panted for a moment before recovering his composure.

“Earth Priest,” said Meng Hao coolly, “I asked you to bear witness, so I’m afraid I’ll need an explanation regarding this Giant Ape neo-demon. Otherwise, you can’t blame me for handling the matter myself.” He waved his hand, causing a handful of neo-demons to shoot forward, latch onto the Giant Ape’s corpse with their sharp teeth, and drag it back to Meng Hao.

Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed, then, in front of all the surrounding Cultivators, turned and began to walk down the mountain. As he did, the Tribe members who stood in his way moved off to either side to make room, their faces filled with veneration. Quite a few even bowed their heads to him.

In the Cultivation world, respect is shown toward the powerful. Such was the case no matter where one went. In fact, in the vast lands of the Western Desert, this was even more the case.

As for old man Shui Mu, he had regained consciousness by this point. He looked at Meng Hao as he walked off, and the dozens of neo-demons that were following, and his eyes filled with awe. No longer was he jealous or envious. He knew that the difference between them was far too vast, to the point where he no longer felt any rancor. Instead, there was only fear inside him.

The Crow Scout Tribe Grand Elder watched Meng Hao leaving with all the neo-demons, and his eyes flickered coldly. “You’re going to leave just like that?” he said coolly.

As soon as the words left his mouth, ripples of pressure emanated out, enveloping the area Meng Hao stood in. The Grand Elder’s body flickered, and a moment later, he was standing directly in front of Meng Hao, blocking his way. “That White Wolf is a sacred relic of ours. Leave it behind, and then you may depart.” The Grand Elder’s eyes flickered across Big Hairy, and his heart started to pound with eagerness. It was impossible to prevent some of that eagerness from showing on his face.

“I’m sorry, I didn’t hear you clearly. Could you say that again?” As he

spoke the words, Meng Hao's eyes looked the same as they usually did. However, there was just a hint of coldness as well. Immediately, killing intent from the surrounding neo-demons filled the air. This was especially true of Big Hairy, whose pupils suddenly turned completely white.

As for the Black Bat, it floated there in mid-air, its eyes red. It too was emanating killing intent.

If that was all there was to it, it wouldn't be a big deal. However, totemic light suddenly flashed up from the back of Meng Hao's right hand. The Qi of the Eyeless Larva emanated out. The Eyeless Larva lived because it had plundered a breath from every living thing in the world. Its existence was shocking to the extreme, and the instant its Qi emanated out, the Grand Elder's face fell.

Even more shocking to the Grand Elder was that he could sense two more hidden types of profound Qi within Meng Hao. He wasn't sure which if any of them was Meng Hao's. One was a like a sea of blood that rose to the heavens. The other was like the disdain of a sovereign of the sky.

"High level Dragoneer!" thought the Grand Elder, his face flickering with emotion. "He has at least a few incredibly powerful, horrifying neo-demons!" He might be able to look down on Meng Hao himself, but could not look down on his status as a high-level Dragoneer.

Dragoneer Cultivators were not inherently strong, but their neo-demons were!

The Grand Elder was now hesitating inwardly. It was at this time that the Crow Scout Tribe's Earth Priest suddenly coughed.

"Grandmaster Meng, please, stay here with us in the Crow Scout Tribe. Everything that happened just now was a misunderstanding. As for the matter of that ape, Grandmaster, I can offer you an explanation."

The Earth Priest's wording was polite, which instantly caused the Grand Elder's eyes to narrow. It seemed to him that there was something fishy about the way the man had been acting today. Eyes flickering, the Grand Elder said nothing, and actually stepped to the side to make way.

Meng Hao turned to look back at the Earth Priest, then clasped hands and bowed. Then, he continued on his way down the mountain. Slowly, the crowd in the square dispersed, included ashen-faced Mo Fang. The Grand Elder could not settle the doubts he felt in his heart as he turned toward the Earth Priest.

“Fellow Daoist Wu Han, just now that Dragoneer named Meng was certainly extraordinary. However, Mo Fang is the son of Grandmaster Mo Zi. Weren’t our actions just now a bit inappropriate?”

“How were they inappropriate?” replied the Earth Priest indifferently. “You saw the totem tattoo on the back hand of Dragoneer Meng. Could you really not put two and two together?” He chuckled, looking at the Grand Elder.

“Totem tattoo? It was a larva....” The Grand Elder’s eyes glittered, then filled with a thoughtful expression. Suddenly, he looked toward the Earth Priest with an expression of disbelief.

“Don’t tell me....”

The Earth Priest smiled slightly. “If my speculations are correct, he is none other than a descendant of the Frigid Snow Clan. I received some news recently that Holy Snow City in the Black Lands has fallen, and the Frigid Snow Clan has left for the Southern Domain. From the look of things, some of the Clan members have instead decided to return to the Western Desert.

“This also explains why we have been unable to uncover any information about him during his six months as a vassal. He just recently fled the Black Lands, and is fearful of being followed. Therefore, he has been unusually cautious, and chose the Crow Scout Tribe as a place of refuge.”

“Well that’s just....” The Grand Elder was now palpitating with eagerness. He clearly remembered some rumors he had heard of a fearsome Dragoneer named Fang Mu in the Frigid Snow Clan.

“I’ll discuss the matter with the Greatfather,” said the Earth Priest. “However... even though the Crow Scout Tribe is small, I think we can still

offer protection to a descendant of the Frigid Snow Clan! The main thing to worry about is not what enemies he might have, but rather, how to convince him to continue as a vassal of the Crow Scout Tribe. As a descendant of the Frigid Snow Clan, he possesses the innate skills of a Dragoneer. With enough resources and luck, it wouldn't be impossible for him to become a level 9 Dragoneer!

“In fact, perhaps he will gain a chance to receive enlightenment from the Tree Ancestor. Grandmaster Mo Zi was the first to do so that year, which rose him to rank 6 Dragoneer.” His eyes thoughtful, the Earth Priest flicked his sleeve and then transformed into a beam of light that shot toward the top of the mountain.

Even as they were discussing Meng Hao's identity, Meng Hao arrived back in his courtyard in the Neo-Demon Kennelist district behind the mountain. The entire way, he was followed by his scores of neo-demons, which of course caused quite a stir among all of the Cultivators in the area. They looked over with blank expressions of shock as Meng Hao walked past them.

When Meng Hao finally entered his courtyard, the shocked spectators began to discuss the matter in low tones. Soon, news of the neo-demon duel between Meng Hao and level 5 Dragoneer Mo Fang spread throughout the entire Tribe. Everyone learned that Meng Hao had five mutated Greenwood Wolves. Everyone gasped after hearing this, and their expressions were those of astonishment.

Back in his courtyard, Meng Hao ignored the neo-demon horde. Instead, his gaze came to focus on the Black Bat. His eyes flickered slightly as he closely examined the Demonic Qi within it.

Suddenly, Meng Hao's heart began to tremble, and a strange look appeared in his eyes. As he looked closer, he gradually was able to make out something within the Black Bat's body.

It was a wooden sword!

The instant he sensed the wooden sword, Meng Hao's eyes began to glitter brightly. Shock welled up in his heart. Whereas he had been sitting

there cross legged, he suddenly rose to his feet.

Chapter 406: Chapter title is spoilerish and located at the end of the chapter

The instant he stood up, it was as if the whole world grew smaller. Everything was replaced by Meng Hao. His rising up caused a tempest to spring into being. His rise even caused thunderbolts to shoot up to the Heavens.

Meng Hao's mind reeled and his heart shook. Qi immediately exploded out of him, enveloping the courtyard, causing the entire neo-demon horde to begin to shake and stare at him in fear. They began to whimper and prostrate themselves on the ground, not daring to move a muscle.

Even Big Hairy was shaking and his head was bowed. The Black Bat also shook as it hovered there in mid-air. There was definitely something extraordinary about it, but Meng Hao was in the late Gold Core stage and was also a Demon Sealer. Because of these two things, a simple thought from him could annihilate it and transform it into nothing but floating dust.

For the Black Bat, this made Meng Hao completely different than its previous master.

Currently, lightning was crackling in the air above the courtyard, multiple bolts which danced back and forth. The Qi in the courtyard had been thrown into absolute chaos, as if the whole area had been carved away from the world, and now existed on its own, as part of Meng Hao.

Golden light began to emanate out from him. When this happened, there was absolutely no scholarly aura remaining in him, not even a scrap. It was instead replaced by the soaring will of a powerful expert of Heaven and Earth. In this moment, he was no longer a scholar, but an almighty expert of the late Gold Core stage, someone who could stand toe to toe with a Nascent Soul Cultivator.

All of this... could not be seen from the outside world. On the outside, the breeze blew gently and the clouds floated about. Only on the inside of

the courtyard, however, was the will of a powerful expert emanating out from Meng Hao.

He gazed fixedly at the trembling Black Bat for a moment, then closed his eyes. It lasted only a moment, though. Then his eyes snapped back open. The lightning disappeared without a trace, and the tempest was gone. Meng Hao's body returned to normal. No longer was he a stalwart, powerful expert. Instead, he once again looked like a gentle scholar.

"A wooden sword...." he breathed lightly. His right hand reached out into the air, and suddenly the Black Bat began to tremble, unable to resist. It shot toward Meng Hao, who then grabbed ahold of it.

Intense fear floated within the Black Bat, terror of Meng Hao emanating from its eyes. As far as it was concerned, the seemingly Heavenly might, along with Meng Hao's faint Demonic Qi, transformed into an unmatchable pressure that bore down onto it.

Meng Hao held onto the bat, his eyes thoughtful. After a moment passed, he lifted his left hand and then stabbed it into the body of the Black Bat. The wounded bat began to squirm; its life force was already beginning to slip away. However, at the same time, Demonic Qi began to pour from Meng Hao's left hand, restoring the very life that the Black Bat was losing as he ripped it apart.

His hand gradually shoved deeper into the bat's body. Eventually, deep within the blood and flesh, Meng Hao's hand closed around the hilt of a wooden sword. The instant it did, he wrenched the sword out of the bat's body.

Blood showered out, and the Black Bat let out a bloodcurdling shriek as it backed up and struggled to fly into the air. Instead, it flopped to the ground, panting, on the verge of death. At the same time, a look of gratitude appeared in its eyes. Although its body was trembling, its majestic life force was now soaring upward.

It seemed that the sword had actually been blocking its life force and obstructing the bat's cultivation. Now that Meng Hao had removed it, its Cultivation base was immediately restored, and its life force exploded out.

This, coupled with the Demonic Qi from Meng Hao, caused the bat's life force to become even stronger.

It appeared weak at the moment. However, its wound was rapidly healing, and an increasingly powerful Qi billowed up from it.

The gratefulness in its eyes gradually faded, replaced with coldness as it stared at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's expression was indifferent, and he completely ignored the bat. Apparently its sudden mightiness wasn't of the least bit interest to him.

Instead, Meng Hao gazed at the wooden sword he had just pulled out from within the bat. He flicked it, causing the blood and gore that had covered it to disappear. The sword now looked as it normally did. It appeared ordinary, as if there were nothing unusual or special about it. However, the spiritual energy in the area suddenly began to suck in toward the sword. The sword quickly became what looked like a vortex of spiritual energy, all of which ended up being consumed by the sword itself.

Meng Hao looked at the sword, a strange expression on his face. He slapped his bag of holding, and instantly, two black beams shot out, which then transformed into two swords identical to the one he was holding in his hand.

Three wooden swords now hovered in front of Meng Hao. His eyes shone with a strange glow.

"I found a wooden sword in the body of the Flying Rain-Dragon all those years ago. Now, I find another wooden sword in the body of this Black Bat. These wooden swords must have some incredible origin...." His gaze passed over the three of them. Unless you knew that one was a duplicate, it would be impossible to tell them apart.

"It's too bad I spent so many Spirit Stones making this duplicate. Although, if I had enough more, I could use them to create the first form of the Lotus Sword Formation!

"I wonder how powerful such a sword formation would be.... Probably

not any weaker than the Time Sword Formation. After all, the wooden swords that absorb spiritual energy cost a vast amount of Spirit Stones to duplicate. This sword... is terrifying!”

His eyes glittered as he waved his right hand, causing the three wooden swords to fly back into his bag of holding. He looked back at the Black Bat.

The Black Bat’s wound was now mostly recovered. Its Qi was also much more powerful than before. Now, it was no longer at the late Foundation Establishment stage, but rather the early Core Formation stage. It seemed clear that after some time passed, it would continue to recover and become even stronger.

“Beasts slain by wooden swords such as this couldn’t possibly be ordinary. Take the Flying Rain-Dragon for example.... Given that, one can only imagine how powerful this bat was.... Who knows how many years it was plagued by the sword until it finally fell to its current level. After it recovers and reaches its peak, how powerful will it be....” Meng Hao smiled. It didn’t really matter how powerful the bat became; as long as it had Demonic Qi, Meng Hao would be able to control it.

That was especially true considering... the Demonic Qi Meng Hao had just given it to absorb had been kept intentionally weak. After all, Demonic Qi was his primary method with which to control it.

As Meng Hao studied the Black Bat, it looked back at him with flickering eyes. After a moment, it lowered its head, signalling its compliance. It was impossible to tell how much of this was genuine and how much was false, but as of this moment, it had chosen to capitulate.

A few days passed. News of the Dragoneer duel between Meng Hao and Mo Fang had spread throughout the entire Crow Scout Tribe. In the blink of an eye, Meng Hao’s name had risen to prominence. He was now completely famous within the Tribe.

On one particular evening, the Earth Priest personally came to Meng Hao to deliver him a command medallion. This indicated that Meng Hao was now an official vassal of the Crow Scout Tribe.

In addition to the command medallion, Meng Hao was also to be given a

chance to gain enlightenment from the Crow Scout Tribe's sacred tree. This sacred tree had a name: the Greenwood Tree....

Meng Hao thought about this totemic life force which could create a magical force to protect the entire Tribe. He also thought about the enormous Treant he'd seen. He needed a Wood-type totem, and although any would do... when it came to the five totem tattoos relating to the five elements, obviously, the stronger the totems, the stronger he would be when it came time to concoct his Five-Colored Nascent Soul.

His chance at gaining enlightenment of the holy Greenwood Tree would come in seven days.

During those seven days, the Crow Scout Tribe carried out various grand ceremonies. They were not related to Meng Hao becoming a vassal, but rather, to offer sacrifices to the ancestors and to prepare a Greenwood brand. It was only in this manner that Meng Hao could enter into the enlightenment state.

To any Tribe member, such enlightenment was very important. Every adult Tribe member went through the process, which refined their very life force. Obviously, it was also considered luck for any vassal.

On the seventh day, a whole series of complicated rites were performed. Several thousand Crow Scout Tribe members gathered to sit cross-legged atop the mountain peak. They sat in concentric circles, softly chanting a strange incantation. The sound of it filled Heaven and Earth, and caused roiling layers of clouds to fill the previously clear skies. It felt as if Time itself were passing by. Meng Hao wore a long green robe as he walked up the stairs up the mountain leading to the altar.

The Earth Priest stood there, flanked by an old woman, who was the Crow Scout Tribe's Sky Priest. They both smiled as Meng Hao approached.

"The Crow Scout Tribe treats people with sincerity," said the Earth Priest, his voice soft. "In all matters, one must pay a price before receiving gain. Fellow Daoist Meng is not an ordinary person, and can surely sense the good faith of the Crow Scout Tribe."

"Many thanks," replied Meng Hao with clasped hands.

“Let’s begin!” said the Sky Priest. The old woman waved her arm; a rumbling sound filled the air and a rift opened up in the middle of the altar. Immediately, a green beam of light shot up into the air, from within which emanated dense Demonic Qi.

The appearance of this Demonic Qi instantly caused Meng Hao’s pupils to constrict. Also within the green light rose up an enormous Treant. Its color was an archaic green, and it stood several dozen meters tall. Wilted leaves covered its body, and it emanated a profound ancientness....

It was as if it had existed within the flow of time for very, very long time. It was as if traces of the passage of time could be seen within its eyes. As it floated up, its body radiated a boundless life force.

The intensity of its life force was such that all Wood-type life forms would instantly prostrate before it and call it ancestor. However... within the flourishing life force, Meng Hao could sense decline and decay. It was as if the life force was reaching the end of its path.

The Treant’s body was also covered with countless scars. It emanated a powerful Qi that caused the color of Heaven and Earth to change, the clouds to seethe, and the surrounding forest to sigh.

Its eyes were filled with wisdom as it looked at Meng Hao.

The instant it appeared, the chanting of the surrounding thousands of Tribe Members grew louder, and they began to kneel and bow.

The Earth Priest and the Sky Priest clasped hands and bowed to the Treant.

Meng Hao was unable to take his eyes off of the enormous creature. His heart trembled; he was now certain that this Treant was a great Demon of Heaven and Earth. It was similar to the North Sea; a true Demon!

The giant Treant suddenly began to speak. “Foreigner.... Thou hast received the approval of the Tribe which I protect. Thus, I... shall bestow luck upon thee. I shall take thee to experience some of my memories, from an eternity ago....” The Treant slowly raised its right hand up and placed it in front of Meng Hao.

It held its hand there, waiting for Meng Hao to step into it. Even as this happened, the Demon Sealing Jade within Meng Hao's bag of holding finally reacted, the first time it had done so in the Western Desert.

The archaic voice of the jade sounded out within Meng Hao's mind.

“Ancient Dao; Tenacious Desire to Seal the Heavens; Benefaction for All in the Mountains; Inevitable Dao Tribulation of the Nine Mountains and Seas; Perennial Will!” 1

Chapter 406: The Third Wooden Sword!

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1. These are the same words from the Demon Sealing Jade that were mentioned previously in chapters 89, 90, 95 and 101. I've significantly changed the translation. This passage is very vague and complex in Chinese, and could have multiple interpretations; I may adjust it in the future. I tried to keep the meaning as (vaguely) close to the Chinese as possible. Many thanks to anonpuffs for working with me on this!

Chapter 407: Fifth Generation Demon Sealer!

“Ancient Dao; Tenacious Desire to Seal the Heavens; Benefaction for All in the Mountains; Inevitable Dao Tribulation of the Nine Mountains and Seas; Perennial Will!

“Ancient Dao; Study Demons of Myriad Variations; Tread not the Path of Immortals; Face the Tribulation of the Nine Mountains and Seas; My Dao is Eternal; The Masses Have Erred but My Dao is True; Perennial Will!

The ancient voice reverberated in Meng Hao's mind like thunder, booming and echoing. Meng Hao's eyes glittered and he took in a deep breath. He looked at the enormous Treant hand extended in front of him, and then his eyes filled with determination. He strode forward, directly onto the creature's palm.

As soon as he stepped onto the hand, the Treant lifted its head up toward the sky and roared. The roar shook Heaven and Earth, causing the clouds which filled the sky to scatter and disperse. Blue sky appeared overhead, along with a vortex, where another world was visible.

Simultaneously, the Treant closed its hand in a way that did not hurt Meng Hao in the slightest. Next its body turned into a green beam of light that shot up into the sky. In the blink of an eye, it had entered the vortex. Its body began to expand. Meng Hao watched on as the gigantic Treant grew larger and larger. In the blink of an eye, it had transformed into a massive tree of Heaven and Earth.

The instant the tree appeared, Meng Hao's mind filled with a rumbling sound. His consciousness seemed to expand; Time flowed and the Heavens shattered. The stars rushed toward him.

As he looked up, he saw that the sky was no longer the sky, but rather stars. Down below, he could see the vast lands of the Western Desert. However, they were not split from the Southern Domain. On the other side of the azure Milky Way Sea, the Eastern Lands were quaking, and a great

tempest roiled between them and the Northern Desert.

These were the lands of Planet South Heaven, a scene from who knew how many years ago.

The vast lands below were not flat, but rather, spherical, a planet.

The echoing, archaic voice of the Treant suddenly filled his mind.

“This is... Planet South Heaven!

“Adjacent to the Ninth Mountain and Sea are four eternal planets. South Heaven. East Victory. North Furnace. West Ox. According to primordial will, they orbit eternally around the Ninth Mountain....

“As for me, I come from an island in the Ninth Sea called Lightgreen. I am Doyen of the Greenwood from Lightgreen Island!”

Meng Hao took a deep breath. As the Treant spoke, he saw the lands below shrinking into the form of a planet. At the same time, off in the starry distance, he saw....

An immeasurably immense, endlessly tall mountain!!

The size of this mountain vastly exceeded that of Planet South Heaven. It was like the difference between a giant and a bug! The instant Meng Hao saw it, his mind began to reel. It felt as if his consciousness were being ripped apart. Roaring filled his heart and mind.

Although he didn't completely understand the Ninth Mountain and Sea, or Planet South Heaven, he wasn't completely ignorant. At this moment, though, he was actually looking at... the majesty of the Ninth Mountain!

He gazed up at the Ninth Mountain, as well as the four planets that circled around it, including Planet South Heaven. On either side of the Ninth Mountain, stretching out seemingly forever into the stars, were... two enormous seas!

Perhaps these seas weren't made of seawater, but great waves were visible crashing on their surface, waves that seemed large enough to crush even the planets.

This scene caused Meng Hao's mind and heart to tremble with

unprecedented intensity.

At the same time, he saw a green beam of light flying out from within one of the seas. Inside the green beam, he saw an enormous green tree that seemed capable of fighting against the Heavens themselves.

The tree shot out from the great sea, crossing through the firmament toward South Heaven. However, as it neared, a rumbling sound could be heard in Meng Hao's mind. Suddenly, an enormous face appeared upon Planet South Heaven.

The face bore the semblance of an old man with his eyes closed. It was as if Planet South Heaven was his body, whereas his head was illusory, and superimposed upon the planet. Suddenly, his mouth opened, and he said something to the incoming green tree. Meng Hao wasn't quite able to make out exactly what he said.

As soon as the word left his mouth, the Greenwood Tree within the beam of light began to crumble apart and disintegrate. The resulting fragments began to fall down toward Planet South Heaven.

Most of the pieces were transformed into ash as they neared. But one small piece survived. It shot through Meng Hao, causing his body to shatter. It then fused with him and they both fell down into the Western Desert. Next, a root appeared.

Meng Hao was a bit confused. He felt no pain; rather, he was filled with the sensation that he had turned into that tree. Countless years passed, and he eventually became a Greenwood Tree.

As the years came and went, a white wolf, a colorful snake, and a tiny bat all made their homes beneath the tree. Years passed. Finally, one rainy evening, a person approached.

It was a middle-aged man carrying an umbrella. He came to a stop in front of the tree and looked at it.

"So, yet another being come to South Heaven to confirm their Dao. Body and spirit destroyed, but a seed of the soul left behind, striving to prove itself on South Heaven....

“Very well. Since we’re in the Western Desert of South Heaven, I will use the power of my League to bless you all with the ability to pass down totems. Just like the Demonic Dao Pill of the Southern Domain.... The path of an ancient Dao, Perennial Will.” The man sighed, lifted his hand up, and placed it on the tree. After a long time had passed, he turned and walked off into the distance.

As he did, countless shimmering strands emanated out from him. They were dim and faint, but each one seemed to be connected to his body. They circled out and disappeared into the air. These strands seemed to be nothing other than Karma threads.

“I am the Fifth Generation of my League, the Fifth Generation Demon Sealing Daoist Master. My Dao is different from that of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. With different Daos, accords cannot be reached. Whether they are right or wrong doesn’t matter. My Dao will exist forever!

“I shall face the Tribulation of the Nine Mountains and Seas.” The man looked back and gazed at the Greenwood Tree. As he did, it seemed to Meng Hao almost as if he were looking directly at him. His mind suddenly began to buzz. The man continued, “To meet you before I depart... is fate. It seems our destinies shall become a point of enlightenment for one of my successors in the future.

“It’s not that the line of the League of Demon Sealers can’t be broken. If the younger generation can gain enlightenment, it will continue on. If not, then the Dao Tribulation of the Nine Mountains and Seas will arrive, and then the people will remember the will of the Demon Sealers.”

The buzzing in Meng Hao’s mind lasted for a long time. When it finally disappeared, everything that he had seen was fading.

He... was standing upon the palm of the Treant. The sky was filled with clouds as it had been before, and the air echoed with the chants of the Crow Scout Tribe members. Everything that he had just experienced seemed to have happened in only an instant. However, Meng Hao had experienced an eternity.

His eyes were filled with a blank expression. Tuning out everything

around him, he stepped off of the Treant's hand and then sat down cross-legged onto the altar. He closed his eyes.

A green glow gradually began to rise up from his body. Within the green glow, branches could be seen. They burrowed into the stone surface of the altar; Meng Hao almost looked as if he were becoming a Treant himself.

When the surrounding Crow Scout Tribe members saw this, their hearts and minds began to shake, and they stared mutely. The Earth Priest and the Sky Priest began to pant, and their eyes filled with disbelief.

It was at this point that a beam of light approached from off in the distance. It transformed into an ancient old man. The ripples of his Cultivation base placed him at the mid Nascent Soul stage. The instant the old man appeared, his gaze fell upon Meng Hao, and his expression flickered.

After a long moment passed, the old man said, "Ancestor Greenwood is bestowing a totem...." The two Crow Scout Tribe High Priests looked at the man. Serious expressions filled their faces, and they nodded.

"Considering that he is receiving a totem from Ancestor Greenwood, cancel all investigations into him. It doesn't matter where he is from, nor how much of what he has said is true or false. He is now an eternal vassal of the Crow Scout Tribe!"

Time passed by slowly. By the time Meng Hao's eyes opened again, it was seven days later.

He saw that the surrounding Crow Scout Tribe members had dispersed. It was evening, and not a single person was in sight. He was alone on the altar atop the mountain's highest peak.

His eyes were filled with confusion. He looked down at his body and could see countless branches attached to it, spreading out in every direction, as if he was now a tree.

After a long moment, he took a deep breath. The tree branches slowly retracted, fusing back into his body. Eventually, he rose to his feet.

His expression was one of calm as he looked up into the sky and let out

an absentminded sigh.

“There are 3,000 Daos. The Dao of Alchemy. The path of Demons. Totems. Various techniques and methods. All are great Daos. Be it totems or Demon sealing, even the Celestial talisman that made the Black Lands....

“It’s like the three pages of secret arts I acquired. The first is regarding catalyzing and the concocting of medicinal pills. The second, the crafting of Time treasures. The third, the Dragoneer arts, which can transform Demons. All three connect to each other on various levels, but in reality, they all stem from the same source!

“They all have something to do with the sealing of Demons!” Meng Hao’s eyes shone with a strange light. As he gained enlightenment, he realized that it didn’t matter if you were talking about the Southern Domain or the Western Desert, when it came to Heaven and Earth, it was all about Immortals and Demons!

If one wanted a clear example of Immortals, there could be none better than the supercilious Ji Clan of Planet South Heaven. If one wanted a good example of Demons... the best would be the mysterious and multifarious Demon Sealers!

“The unusual thing is, Demons are characterized by variations.... Therefore, in the great lands of South Heaven, they are represented by the Dao of alchemy in the Southern Domain. They are the talismanic symbols in the Black Lands, and totems in the Western Desert. Certainly the Eastern Lands and the Northern Desert have their own Demon variations.

“In the end, all are Demons!

“They are different from Immortals. Immortals have their dignity, but Demons have their variations. With Immortals there is only one path, any of the other myriad paths are Demonic!” Meng Hao’s mind buzzed as if lightning were striking around inside as he suddenly received this unprecedented enlightenment.

His thoughts having reached this point, although his body was on this mountain peak in the Crow Scout Tribe, his consciousness expanded out,

soaring up to the highest Heavens. The thoughts which had begun to circulate in his mind when he first entered the Black Lands, suddenly coalesced into a single conclusion.

“Everything has to do with the Qi of the Nine Mountains and Seas. Immortals call this Qi the Essence. However, the League of Demon Sealers calls it Demonic Qi. In that case... perhaps the Ninth Mountain and Sea is in actuality an indescribably powerful, massive Demon of the Heavens!” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered brightly.

“If the Ninth Mountain and Sea are collectively a Demon, then its Qi would fill the planets which surround the Mountain. Regardless of the Ji Clan or some other powerful experts, all such Immortals would desire to acquire the Essence of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and thus become its Lord.

“On the other side of the coin, Demon Sealing is just another path of cultivation, and has nothing to do with acquiring the Qi of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. If it’s a Demon, it can be sealed or approved based on my whim!”

Chapter 408: Greenwood Tree Totem!

“Or it could be that long, long ago people did not understand the the truth of the natural mechanisms of the Nine Mountains and Seas, of this entire starry realm. They thought that the Nine Mountains and Seas were the key to developing the body. After feeding upon the Mountains and Seas, they grew stronger, and stronger, and eventually broke through to the next level of life. Their lives fused with that of the Mountains and Seas, and they became Immortals!

“People who viewed matters in such a way eventually came to be the majority. However, there was always a small group who believed that the Nine Mountains and Seas were Heavenly Demons whom they could either seal or approve. Seal them as a path to power, or approve them and become their masters.

“That group of people were... the earliest Demon Sealers!

“These two groups of people had different philosophies, and strode different paths to power, but were not at odds.” Meng Hao took a deep breath as he gained this enlightenment.

After acquiring the Demon Sealing Jade and becoming the Ninth Generation Demon Sealer, Meng Hao’s path had always been one of confusion. This was especially true when it came to Demon Sealing. The puzzlement he had felt in the steady attempts to uncover the truth, finally led to understanding.

“I came to the Western Desert because of the Five-Colored Nascent Soul. I will fuse the five elements totems with my pill concocting technique. I will use my body as the pill furnace, and totems as the pill recipe. I will concoct my own Perfect Nascent Soul!

“This is my main purpose in coming to the Western Desert!

“My life has been one of treading the path of the multifarious Demons. The concept of myriad variations is the path of the Demon Sealer! The end of this path is that of sealing both the great Demons of Heaven, and Immortals!

“Similarly, it is a path of conferring Demonism upon the countless living things in creation as well as... Bestowing mortals so that they can achieve Immortal Ascension!”

Meng Hao’s mind buzzed. His Cultivation base seethed in accompaniment with this enlightenment. It rose up from the late Gold Core Stage into the great circle of the Gold Core.

He was now even closer to the Nascent Soul stage. If it weren’t for the fact that he pursued the Five-Colored Nascent Soul, he would already have begun his attempt to congeal a Nascent Soul. However, such a checkpoint was one that countless Cultivators had never stepped past.

Although Meng Hao had not experienced the difficulty of congealing a Nascent Soul, he had read about it in the ancient records of the Violet Fate Sect. He knew that only people who possessed immense luck and latent talent could be like the proverbial carp who leaped over the dragon’s gate, and step into that profound and refined stage.

Nascent Soul.... It was a stage vastly beyond that of Core Formation. Nascent Soul Cultivators possess magical techniques that far exceed the ordinary; their mastery of the principles of Heaven and Earth made them nearly divine abilities.

The most obvious example was their art of minor teleportation. This magical technique could even be referred to as almighty. Because of it, any Nascent Soul Cultivator who wished to retreat could easily do so. Unless they were restrained by a restrictive spell formation, it would be very difficult to surround or kill them.

Another key aspect was that after reaching the Nascent Soul stage, Cultivators could almost instinctively use a certain divine ability called... possession!

The Nascent Soul could emerge, because the body was only secondary. Cultivation was focused on the Nascent Soul itself; if the body perished, it could be abandoned, and a new body could be seized. Because of this, tangling with a Nascent Soul Cultivator was much more difficult than battling the Gold Core stage. In the Nascent Soul stage, confidence in

being able to stay alive on the great path of the Dao was much more assured.

These were just some of the many advantages the divine abilities manifested in the Nascent Soul stage, the tip of the iceberg really. According to the popular understanding, only people who were actually in the Nascent Soul stage could possibly truly understand how powerful they were!

Meng Hao's eyes filled with bright glow that swept about. His body suddenly flickered and he transformed into a beam of light that shot off toward his courtyard behind the mountain. As he whistled through the air, several streams of Divine Sense emerged. After sensing Meng Hao, they stopped, and merely observed him leaving.

"It seems that this particular bit of enlightenment from Ancestor Greenwood Tree, and the resulting changes, put me in a somewhat special position here...." Meng Hao was able to speculate quite a bit after noticing that the streams of Divine Sense did nothing more than watch him leave. Although he couldn't be for sure, he was able to make quite a few correct guesses.

After arriving back in his courtyard, his neo-demon horde was fairly leaping with excitement. Big Hairy charged toward him and then ran around him in circles, howling happily. Meng Hao laughed and patted him on the head. After the neo-demon horde quieted down, he sat down cross-legged, his eyes glittering. After a moment of thoughtfulness, his eyes began to shine.

"When I woke up earlier, a vast collection of Wood-type branches were spreading out from my body...." Meng Hao closed his eyes and rotated his Cultivation base. After the space of a few breaths passed, his body began to shake. Veins bulged out of his skin and tiny, tentacle-like branches began to poke out. The branches twisted down to burrow into the ground, then spread out in all directions. As of this moment, Meng Hao was emanating a very dense Wood-type Qi. He also shone with a bright green glow as if he himself were about to transform into the ancient Greenwood Tree.

All the neo-demons in the courtyard looked at Meng Hao in shock. Their eyes were also filled with confusion. However, all of a sudden, they had the feeling that this Master of theirs was now much more familiar than he had been before. They began to run in circles around this Greenwood Meng Hao, leaping and carousing playfully.

Time passed. On dawn of the second day, Meng Hao opened his eyes. It seemed as if he was awakening from some sort of trance. The instant he opened his eyes, the green glow surrounding him flickered and glowed with boundless radiance.

“According to the information given me by Wu Chen regarding Wood-type totem branding, it seems that I... have already passed the first critical juncture. I am now merged fully with Wood. There’s no separation....” Meng Hao looked at his Greenwood body; this was obviously the luck with which he had been gifted by the Treant, the personification of the ancient Greenwood Tree.

Perhaps this also had something to do with that Fifth Generation Demon Sealing Patriarch. In any case, Meng Hao was now fully focused on this matter, and this matter alone.

The main reason he had come to the Crow Scout Tribe was to acquire a Wood-type totem. Now, he had managed to acquire, not an ordinary Wood-type totem, but the ancient Greenwood Tree. To Meng Hao, this was an excellent first step on his path to the Five-Colored Nascent Soul.

He took a deep breath and closed his eyes. According to the steps and techniques in the information given to him by Wu Chen, he rotated his Cultivation base slowly and began to complete the last step with the Wood-type totem... the actual tattoo branding.

Time passed. An hour later, the green glow emanating out from Meng Hao began to flicker. As it did, his hands rose up to perform an incantation. He suddenly pushed his hands out, and his eyes snapped open, filled with a brilliant glow.

The moment he pushed his hands out, a rumbling sound filled him. Green light rose up to slowly congeal overhead; at the same time, the

branches attached to him began to twitch and grow even longer. It was at this time that the ghost image of a tree appeared around Meng Hao. At the moment, what Meng Hao needed to do was to separate this illusory tree from himself.

First melt it, then separate it, finally, brand it. Different Tribes will use different methods, but the basic concept is the same throughout the Western Desert. Totem branding is always accomplished in this fashion.

As the green light slowly began to separate from Meng Hao's body, the branches also began to disappear. As they did, the image of the tree began to coalesce within the green glow. It began to grow more and more tangible, as if an enormous green tree were actually coming into being.

Despite the fact that it was illusory, the tree emanated a thick Wood-type Qi. It spread out in all directions, churning, causing all of the neo-demons in the area surrounding Meng Hao's courtyard to grow silent. Simultaneously, the grass in the ground and the trees in the surrounding forest suddenly began to wriggle and grow. A thick, indescribable life force began to billow out from the illusory tree in front of Meng Hao.

This Qi was enough to shake Heaven and Earth. Quite a few nearby Cultivators noticed and began to look around with serious expressions.

Meng Hao took a deep breath. Actually, even if everything around him started to shake even more violently, he wouldn't pay it any heed. He was completely focused on the first step of his Five-Colored Nascent Soul, the Wood-type totem branding.

"Congeal!" His eyes glittered as both hands flashed incantation gestures. He then pointed toward the green tree in front of him; immediately, it began to shrink.

The shrinking process was very slow; it happened one inch at a time. At the same time, the shocking changes to the surrounding land grew even more intense. Soon the effect spread out even wider, until all the members of the Crow Scout Tribe noticed and were shocked.

They could clearly see the green glow rising up into the sky. At the same time, a huge, green tree had magically appeared, filled with dense life force

that caused the surrounding vegetation to grow wildly.

It was at this moment that four beams of light shot down from the mountain. In the lead was none other than the Greatfather of the Crow Scout Tribe, the white-haired old man. His expression was serious as he rushed toward Meng Hao's courtyard and then hovered in mid-air up above.

"Fellow Daoist Meng, please don't get the wrong impression! I am the Crow Scout Greatfather, I will stay here to stand guard over you!"

Even as his words rang out, two of the incoming beams of light transformed into none other than the Earth Priest and the Sky Priest. They, too, hovered cross-legged in mid-air to stand guard over Meng Hao.

The final person was the Grand Elder. Although he was rather reluctant, he also hovered cross-legged, facing a fourth direction to stand guard while Meng Hao was completing his totem branding.

Actually, from the moment Meng Hao had acquired the Greenwood Tree totem, they had been preparing for the moment when he awoke and began the totem branding, whereupon they would stand guard.

The Greenwood Tree totem was no ordinary tree. A totem branding like this would surely cause a variety of shocking changes in Heaven and Earth. In fact, it would likely even cause various neo-demons to come investigate. As such, it was necessary to have people stand guard to ensure nothing would go wrong.

Meng Hao looked up at the four Crow Scout Tribe Nascent Soul Cultivators facing out in the four different directions. He was silent for a moment before letting out a soft sigh. Regardless of whether or not the Crow Scout Tribe had any hidden agendas, everything they had done in the past days showed an incredible amount of good faith. Meng Hao could clearly see this.

He took a deep breath. Ignoring everything up above, he focused completely on completing the branding of the Greenwood Tree totem tattoo. As his Cultivation base flickered, he continued to perform incantations. The enormous illusory tree in front of him continued to

shrink, and as it did, the Qi grew stronger. Soon, the Greenwood Tree was only about twenty or twenty-five meters tall. The life force it emanated was intense enough to shake everything around. By now, it had attracted the attention of the other Tribes in this mountain range.

Chapter 409: I Really Haven't Tried This Before!

Several streams of Divine Sense suddenly rose up from within the Crow Flame Tribe. They gathered together in mid-air to observe the Crow Scout Tribe. "For a Greenwood Tree totem like that to appear in the Crow Scout Tribe means... perhaps someone is forming a totemic Nascent Soul?"

Similar scenes played out in the other Tribes. The Crow Soldier Tribe seemed to be especially affected; five beams of prismatic light shot out toward the Crow Scout Tribe.

Although these five tribes were all connected by blood, there were certain conflicts between them that were impossible to dispel. As it turned out, the Crow Soldier Tribe hated the Crow Scout Tribe more than any of the other Tribes.

The five beams of light from the Crow Soldier Tribe whistled through the air as they shot toward the Crow Scout Tribe. As they neared, even before they could be seen clearly, an enormous shield of light suddenly appeared from within the Crow Scout Tribe. It enveloped the entire Tribe, covering it over and blocking the Crow Soldier Tribe.

The awe-inspiring voice of the Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather rang out: "The Crow Scout Tribe is busy at the moment. Other Tribes are prohibited from entering. Any who does... will be shown no mercy."

The Crow Soldier Tribe members outside the shield exchanged glances. There was nothing they could do but laugh coldly; passing through the shield was not an option.

Meng Hao was aware of everything that was happening on the outside. However, the majority of his energy was being spent on the totem branding and the Greenwood Tree in front of him, which was slowly growing smaller and smaller. Soon it was only three meters tall. Everything was shaking, and up above in the sky, lightning suddenly appeared, dancing back and forth. The life force emanating out caused the

vegetation in and around Meng Hao's courtyard to burst out wildly.

In fact, it was even affecting the vegetation on the mountain, the front district of the Crow Scout Tribe, and the forest that surrounded them all. The plants and vegetation everywhere grew rapidly, which of course caused even more shock on the parts of the other Tribes. Black clouds churned up above, and howling sounds began to echo out within the forests. The surrounding neo-demons could sense the life force and were beginning to feel greedy.

It was at this moment that suddenly a thunderous roar sounded out that shook Heaven and Earth: "Outlander!"

The faces of the Crow Soldier Tribe members suddenly flickered. Without hesitation, they shot backward in retreat, gloating expressions filling their faces.

On the other side of the shield, the face of the Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather suddenly filled with anxiety. He looked up into the sky at a collection of black clouds that was heading toward them at high speed.

"Dammit, the Outlander Beast was injured by the Crow Divinity half a year ago, but it didn't actually leave. It's been hiding in the area this whole time!! Unless we join forces with the other four Tribes to summon the Crow Divinity ancestor, we can't possibly be a match for the Outlander Beast!

"This Grandmaster Meng's Greenwood Tree totem has reached an incredible level. Could it be that Ancestor Greenwood actually bestowed him with some of its essence?!?!"

The four powerful Crow Scout Tribe experts who hovered there in mid-air were all filled with shock.

The Grand Elder looked up at the approaching black clouds and said, "Greatfather, if the Outlander Beast is here for this vassal surnamed Meng, and we are incapable of fighting back against it, wouldn't it be best to just hand him over and alleviate...."

Before he could finish speaking, the white-haired Greatfather

interrupted him with a cold snort.

“Don’t mention anything like that ever again. This person was selected by Ancestor Greenwood. If we can’t protect him, how could we ever have the face to offer worship to the ancestor? Our Crow Scout Tribe might not be classified as a great Tribe, but we keep our promises. I already said that we would offer protection. Only if we are absolutely certain that we cannot resist it will I renege! Unleash the full power of the mountain protection spell formation!”

The Greatfather flicked his sleeve, causing a beam of green light to shoot out toward the mountain peak. The mountain trembled as a green light rose up to merge with the existing shield. The light rose up higher and higher into the sky, forming the image of a gargantuan tree!

The Crow Scout Tribe was contained inside of this tree, which would protect it from anything on the outside.

Meng Hao’s face was pale. He had never imagined that branding the Greenwood Tree totem would be so difficult. The Greenwood Tree in front of him was now about three meters tall. However, each time Meng Hao rotated his Cultivation base, it only shrank one inch.

“When it comes to branding totems, the optimal size is one inch....” Meng Hao wasn’t an expert when it came to totems, but he knew all the fundamentals. His eyes filled with determination. Golden light erupted out from him and he pointed his finger toward the ground, suddenly utilizing Righteous Bestowal. Imperceptible ripples flowed out across the ground as strands of Demonic Qi arose. They merged into Meng Hao, assisting in the branding of the Greenwood Tree.

Three meters. Two and a half meters.... Soon it was only two meters tall. Then one.... Meng Hao let out a roar, followed by a mouthful of blood. The blood contained Demonic Qi, and as soon as it splashed onto the Greenwood Tree, the tree trembled and then shrank down to the size of roughly half a meter.

Meng Hao was panting, and stubbornness radiated from his eyes. It was at this exact moment that the Crow Scout Tribe’s shield shook under the

force of a mighty blow. An enormous roaring sound filled the air. Meng Hao looked up to see a patch of black clouds slamming into the shield.

A roar sounded out from within the clouds: "Outlander!"

Heaven and Earth shook as ripples spread out. Cracking sounds could be heard as the clouds once again slammed into the shield.

The Greatfather, the High Priests and the Grand Elder all looked shocked. Their bodies shook, and they coughed up blood. They were the ones supporting the shield, and would bear the effect of any blows levelled against it.

Suddenly, the fearsome pressure of Spirit Severing spread out from within the clouds. This was the terrifying power of the Outlander Beast!

It takes some time to describe, but the black clouds moved with incredible speed as they struck again. An enormous roaring filled the air. Cracking sounds turned into the rumbling of an explosion as the enormous shield tree formed by the Crow Scout Tribe's defensive spell formation collapsed into pieces. As the spell dispersed, the Greatfather and the others coughed up blood and were sent tumbling backward, their faces unsightly.

The black cloud patch hovering in mid-air shot directly toward Meng Hao.

As it shot forward, two glowing, red eyes could be seen within. They were filled with avarice and insanity. As it shot through the air, the black clouds dissipated, revealing the Outlander Beast's luxuriantly furred body.

It was like a giant ball covered with thick, dense fur that draped off of it. As it shot forward, the fur rippled in the wind, almost like a tail. The whole image made the Outlander Beast look like a long, furry comet.

At a glance, it was obvious that no one would be able to move to block the thing. The Greatfather and the others could only watch wide-eyed as the Outlander Beast approached. The powerful experts from the other Tribes watched the scene playing out, clearly taking joy in the calamity that was befalling the Crow Scout Tribe.

Meanwhile, Meng Hao's body was shining with golden light. The Greenwood Tree in front of him was only half a foot tall. Even as the Outlander Beast approached, Meng Hao lifted his finger, congealing the invisible Demonic Qi in the area and then pushing down onto the Greenwood Tree.

"Shrink!" he bellowed. The congealed Demonic Qi exploded out with shocking pressure. In the blink of an eye, the Greenwood Tree shrank to the size of an inch. At this point, the Outlander Beast let out a fearsome roar. The Greenwood Tree shot toward Meng Hao's forehead, instantly branding onto him.

A Wood-type totem! The first of the colors of the five elements, a green tree!

The instant the branding formed, Meng Hao's Cultivation base began to rotate. It suddenly grew until it was only a hair's breadth from the Nascent Soul stage.... His life force abounded to a fearsome extent. In fact, it grew to the point that some of the injuries Meng Hao had sustained in the past from wasting his own life force were now completely recovered. Even more shocking, the incredible level of Meng Hao's life force made it so that no matter how ancient he grew in later years, he would always be able to maintain his current physical appearance.

Such terrifying life force also made Meng Hao's magical techniques even stronger than they had been before.

"This proves that my choice to tread the path of the five elements is the correct one. This path allows me to use an alternative method to create a Perfect Five-Colored Nascent Soul that belongs... solely to Meng Hao!"

Meng Hao turned, lifting his hand. Totemic power flashed as the Eyeless Larva appeared. Layers of silk suddenly began to spin around him, forming a shield roughly three meters large.

A massive boom shook everything as the Outlander Beast slammed into it. Meng Hao was shoved backward, and blood sprayed from his mouth. He looked up at the Outlander Beast, which hovered in front of him in mid-air, its eyes wide. It appeared shocked that the power of its attack was

incapable of shattering the silk shield.

An ominous glint appeared in its eyes. It could sense two different fluctuations of power on Meng Hao, fluctuations that frightened even it. However, the life force emanating from the Greenwood Tree brand on Meng Hao's forehead contained healing powers that caused greed to emanate up from within its heart.

Furthermore, the Demonic Qi on Meng Hao's body was driving it crazy. Its eyes began to glow red and it howled as it once more charged toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao shot backward. As he did, he took note of the thick, luxuriant fur that covered the Outlander Beast, and suddenly, his eyes flickered.

Next, he let out an enormous shout which echoed out in all directions, filtering out into the surrounding mountainous forest: "Parrot, there's a great furred beast here that you've definitely never tried out!!!"

Almost as soon as his voice echoed out, a squawk could be heard. This squawk caused the Outlander Beast to suddenly stop in its track. A look of vigilance appeared in its eyes as a multicolored streak shot toward them from off in the distance, moving with blinding speed.

Within the colorful streak, the parrot's eyes emitted a bright glow, and its body quivered with excitement. A dubious expression covered its face as it looked over the Outlander Beast's luxuriantly furred body. It shivered with anticipation.

"I haven't tried out this before. I really haven't! Ahhhhhhhh! Lord Fifth is happy!" The parrot seemed on the verge of going crazy. It exploded forward, utilizing all the power it possessed to shoot toward the fearful, vigilant Outlander Beast.

Meng Hao had a strange expression on his face. A short distance away, he stopped moving as he watched the parrot approaching. Suddenly, he sighed inwardly.

"It seems certain unique indulgences really can release the ultimate potential power. It didn't even notice that the Outlander Beast has a

Cultivation base with power similar to Spirit Severing...”

Chapter 410: Naive Earth Priest

The members of the Crow Scout Tribe, including the Greatfather, the High Priests and the Grand Elder, all watched the multicolored light approaching at rapid speed. It closed in on the Outlander Beast, radiating frenzy and determination.

“That neo-demon certainly is loyal to its master....” said the Earth Priest with a soft sigh. He had seen many neo-demons, but few that would show such care for a master, that would display such madness and ignore everything else in order to protect him.

The parrot’s excitement actually appeared to others as determination. Furthermore, its joy at being able to try out a new furred beast made it seem as if it were loyally protecting its master.

It wasn’t just the Earth Priest that was thinking in this way. Many of the other Crow Scout Tribe members saw the scene that was playing out, and the parrot within the multicolored light, and were filled with admiration.

They watched as the multicolored beam of light that was the parrot shot toward the Outlander Beast, which roared as it approached. The parrot ignored everything, seemingly ignoring any potential threats to its life, willing to die together with the Outlander Beast. It whistled through the air, circling around behind the Outlander Beast, whereupon it charged in to attack.

“That parrot neo-demon is extraordinary!” said the Earth Priest, flabbergasted. “It actually knows that the Outlander Beast’s only weak spot is not its front but its back!” The admiration in his eyes grew stronger.

The Grand Elder’s eyes grew wide as he watched what was happening. He too was astonished by everything that was happening. The Greatfather’s face flickered, and his eyes grew wide. He glanced at the Earth Priest, and then at the parrot. He suddenly started to look a bit suspicious.

Off to the side, Meng Hao heard the Earth Priest’s words and coughed

lightly. He looked over and could see that the Earth Priest really did deeply admire the parrot. Meng Hao sighed inwardly at the man's simplicity, realizing that he himself really had changed quite a bit over the years.

Meanwhile, the determined parrot looked like it was about to fulfill its dream. Looking like the member of a suicide squad, its eyes red, trembling with excitement, it shot toward the Outlander Beast. However, at the critical moment, the Outlander Beast suddenly flickered and then disappeared. A moment later, it reappeared in a different location.

Apparently, it could sense the parrot's motives. Its eyes filled with fury and it roared: "Outlander!"

The roar completely disoriented the parrot, and sent it tumbling backward through the air. It couldn't even get close; it looked like this Outlander Beast really was causing it some problems. However, the parrot wouldn't let some slight setbacks knock it out of the game. It let out a shrill squawk, and its eyes glowed with anticipation. Its appearance was that of both excitement and lechery fused together. The combination made it look quite vulgar and lewd. Once again, it shot toward the Outlander Beast in a colorful glow.

"What a loyal neo-demon!" cried the Earth Priest, clearly moved. "A truly rare neo-demon of utmost loyalty! Look everyone, despite being injured, it persists, bravely defying death!"

Many of the surrounding Crow Scout Tribe members felt the same way.

"Grandmaster Meng sure is lucky to have a neo-demon as loyal as that!"

"That's right. It looks a little bit ugly, but its moral character is definitely worthy of praise!"

They looked at the parrot with envy in their pure, simple hearts. They wished that they, too, could have such a devoted and faithful neo-demon.

However, even as the Earth Priest and the various envious Tribe members were watching the parrot and sighing emotionally....

"Don't run, darling!" cried the parrot, speeding up. "Lord Fifth is here to vanquish you!"

As his words echoed out and entered the ears of the Crow Scout Tribe members, strange expressions appeared on their faces. Their mouths dropped open as they realized what the parrot meant by its words. They could scarcely believe it.

The Earth Priest looked shocked for a moment, but then a look of realization and then admiration appeared. "So, it can even employ strategy!" he said, and then let out a long sigh. "What a noble display of character to use such a tactic to prevent its master from being injured by the Outlander Beast!"

Although the conclusion reached by the Earth Priest didn't seem very plausible, there were still some of the Crow Scout Tribe members who seemed to agree. However, most had strange looks on their faces. The Sky Priest looked over at the Earth Priest and was about to say something, then hesitated and simply smiled wryly.

The Grand Elder was looking in shock at the Earth Priest as if he didn't even know the man.

As for the Greatfather, the expression on his face grew even more strange, and he also could do nothing more than smile wryly.

Meng Hao coughed lightly once more. The naiveté of the Earth Priest was something one didn't see very often.

Up in mid-air, the parrot squawked as it shot toward the Outlander Beast, which roared and sent out an attack which manifested as terrifying ripples. They slammed into the charging parrot, making it impossible for it to near the Outlander Beast. However, its determination and excitement only continued to grow in the face of these setbacks. It seemed even more determined to try out this Outlander Beast.

"Heyyy, you really can put up a fight. Struggle if you wish, my darling. That just makes Lord Fifth more excited!" With a roar, the parrot charged again.

It shot forward with incredible speed. As it neared, a popping sound could suddenly be heard as hundreds of parrots appeared, all of which shot toward the Outlander Beast.

“Struggle away, my darling! Struggle and beg for mercy under Lord Fifth’s pounding!” The parrot roared with excitement as it neared the Outlander Beast, which howled back. The illusory parrots all exploded, but there was one parrot left which managed to successfully penetrate the Outlander Beast.

The instant the penetration occurred, the Outlander Beast’s body trembled, and a look of confusion filled its face. The look quickly turned into one of humiliation and unprecedented madness. It let out a howl that shook everything, louder than anything that had been heard up to this point. The loudness was such that it kicked up a violent tempest!

A popping sound could be heard as the parrot suddenly appeared in mid-air off to the side. It was trembling excitedly, and its eyes were glowing. “Scream, scream your throat out! No one will come to save you!”

By this point, the surrounding Crow Scout Tribe members were watching on dumbstruck. Many of the ones who had previously thought the parrot to be loyal and brave, now had faces completely pale. It was as if their whole world had been overturned. They stared blankly up into the air at the indescribably vulgar parrot.

The Earth Priest gaped again. However, it took only a moment before a bright glow began to shine in his eyes. It was a glow of admiration, and understanding.

“In order to provoke a reaction from the Outlander Beast, the parrot neo-demon is taunting it! What wisdom! What praiseworthy courage!” The Earth Priest sighed. “Fellow Daoist Meng, you truly have incredible luck to possess a neo-demon like that!”

The Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather couldn’t take it any longer and was about to say something. However, he then noticed the intense admiration in the eyes of the Earth Priest. The Greatfather sighed and held his tongue.

As for the Grand Elder, he stood there with wide eyes, staring in shock at the Earth Priest. The Sky Priest also had a very strange expression on her face. The two of them then exchanged a wry smile.

At the same time that the Earth Priest spoke, the parrot let out another

squawk. It shot again toward the Outlander Beast, which let out another howl. Subsequently, the beast and the parrot engaged in a back and forth battle. The parrot, of course, did the giving and the Outlander Beast did the taking.

Howls continued to ring out until finally the parrot let out a roar. It was unclear what technique it used specifically. Ignoring any potential injuries, it smashed through, once again penetrating into the Outlander Beast. The Outlander Beast let out a shocking howl, accompanied by a look of terror. It hovered in mid-air, trembling. As of this moment, it was no longer paying attention to Meng Hao's Demonic Qi. Instead, it turned and began to flee.

The parrot once again materialized, trembling and looking excited. It looked proud at its subjugation of a beast that it had never tried out before. It let out a squawk as it shot in pursuit of the Outlander Beast.

"Don't run away, darling!" it shouted. "Come come, there are a few positions Lord Fifth hasn't tried. Don't run!" With that it turned into a prismatic beam of light that raced after the Outlander Beast.

The Crow Scout Tribe members witnessed this whole scene, as did the powerful experts from the other Tribes, via Divine Sense. All of them were left with trembling hearts and indescribably bizarre feelings.

To see the mysterious Outlander Beast flee instead of fight... was thoroughly shocking. Even more astonishing was the parrot, who apparently didn't even fear death. Its method of attack was of course unimaginably bizarre.

Seeing the parrot heading off into the distance, Meng Hao let out a sigh of relief. Having called the parrot over, he had prepared himself for the worst. Looking around at the strange expressions on the Crow Scout Tribe members, and the look of admiration in the eyes of the Earth Priest, Meng Hao made a firm decision to never again call the parrot unless it was absolutely necessary....

As the crowds of people dispersed, the Greatfather gave Meng Hao a wry smile, and then forced out some words of praise regarding his totem

tattoo. Then, shaking his head, he made his way off.

The Grand Elder looked over Meng Hao with a serious expression, then gave him a rare bow. After that, he and the equally conflicted Sky Priest left the district behind the mountain.

As for the Earth Priest, it looked like he wanted to say a few words to Meng Hao. However, when he noticed that Meng Hao didn't seem concerned at all regarding the safety of the parrot, he simply gave him a stern and disapproving glare and then turned into a prismatic beam of light that shot off in the direction the parrot had disappeared.

Meng Hao smiled wryly, not sure of what to say. He simply watched the Earth Priest disappear.

"If that naive Earth Priest ever realizes what the parrot is really like, the man's sky will no longer be blue, and he will no longer view life as beautiful...." Meng Hao thought about what that scene might look like, and then felt somewhat sorry for the Earth Priest. Finally, he turned and made his way back to his courtyard.

Two days passed. On evening of the second day, the Earth Priest returned. He looked somewhat distracted, and his face was pale as if he had been the subject of a vicious attack. After returning, he went directly into secluded meditation.

During the two days, Meng Hao found that whenever he went out, the Crow Scout Tribe members that caught sight of him looked at him with awe. Sometimes it even bordered on fear, as if they feared offending him, and didn't dare to approach him. As soon as they saw him, sweat would break out on their foreheads and they would hurry off in the opposite direction.

At long last, the wickedness of the parrot was having an effect on Meng Hao. It didn't take long before the entire Crow Scout Tribe knew about the events regarding Grandmaster Meng's wicked neo-demon. The news rapidly began to spread to the other four Tribes.

Chapter 411: Rank 7 Mo Zi

The parrot never came back. Meng Hao wasn't too concerned about this. Who knew how many long years the parrot had lived, and yet it inherently seemed to like courting death. Nonetheless, it still hadn't died. Meng Hao was quite assured in its ability to survive.

Furthermore, the meat jelly bell was with the parrot. If anything, the one to worry about wasn't the parrot, but the poor Outlander Beast.

Several days passed, during which Meng Hao spent most of his time in his courtyard, studying his Greenwood Tree totem tattoo. It flickered there on his forehead, radiating boundless life force throughout his body. Every time he closed his eyes to meditate, it seemed that even his heartbeat could create ripples throughout the land and sky around him.

"This is only one of the five elements, a Wood-type totem. It's already propelled my Cultivation base much closer to the Nascent Soul stage...." When his eyes opened, they glittered brightly.

After carefully examining the totemic power within him, he had reached a new understanding.

"If I can acquire a second five elements totem, then my Cultivation base, despite being at the full circle of the Gold Core, will actually be strong enough to fight the peak of the early Nascent Soul stage, even without the blood-colored mask!

"In fact... by using the power of the totems, I should be able to employ some of the divine abilities that belong to the Nascent Soul stage!"

During the same period of time, Meng Hao also experimented a bit with the neo-demon horde he had acquired from Mo Fang. He fed them with Demon Nurturing Pills, and also took them out to hunt. In a relatively short period of time, they began to grow fiercer and tougher. Of course, due to the restraints of time, there was still a large gap between them and Big Hairy and the other Greenwood Wolves.

However, if things kept progressing the way they were, although they

might not compare to the five Greenwood Wolves, they would continue to transmogrify and grow stronger.

Finally one afternoon, Meng Hao was sitting cross-legged meditating when suddenly, an enormous roaring sound shook the rear mountain district of the Crow Scout Tribe. As the roaring echoed throughout the air, an enormous black python over twenty meters long shot toward Meng Hao in a beam of blackness.

The black snake emitted a powerful Qi, filled with savagery. Its forked tongue flicked in and out of its mouth, and its mere presence sent the Qi in the area into chaos. Furthermore, a black, churning mist with a Celestial appearance seethed around it as it flew.

Standing on top of the black snake was an old man in a black robe. His expression was grim, and his eyes were filled with arrogance and contempt as the black snake neared and then floated in the air above Meng Hao's courtyard. The old man looked down with a condescending look at Meng Hao.

The old man's Cultivation base was not extremely high, only at the mid Core Formation stage. However, his body was festooned with complex totem tattoos, which emanated shocking ripples. Because of them, the man actually emanated a Qi similar to that of the Nascent Soul stage.

"So, you're Meng Hao!" boomed a voice like that of rolling thunders. It didn't sound like the voice of a human, but rather, like the combined roaring of countless beasts. The sound rolled out in all directions, causing all of the Cultivators in the rear mountain district to tremble in their hearts. All of the neo-demons began to tremble in fear.

There were people who immediately recognized the man who rode on the black snake.

"Rank 7 Dragoneer Grandmaster Mo Zi!!"

"It really is Grandmaster Mo Zi! So, he's come looking for Grandmaster Meng!"

"Grandmaster Meng took away Mo Fang's neo-demon horde. It won't do

any good even if the Greatfather and the others interfered now. This will be the Crow Scout Tribe's first battle between Dragoneers. Grandmaster Mo versus Grandmaster Meng!"

Meng Hao sat cross-legged in his courtyard. He slowly opened his eyes, and they gleamed with coldness. He looked up indifferently at the black-robed old man who floated in mid-air atop the black snake.

He merely looked up; there was no shocking sharpness in his gaze, nor did he say any Heaven-shaking words. He just looked over. As his gaze passed over the wildly arrogant and fierce black snake, it suddenly began to tremble.

Terrifying waves of fear suddenly rose up in its simplistic mind. Meng Hao's gaze had seemed relatively casual, nor could the old man see any clues as to what was going on. But the black neo-demon snake shook violently, and its mind and heart reeled. Fear and awe welled up from its very soul.

It almost seemed like pressure was bearing down on its life force. The fear and awe it felt in its soul... would most likely also be present even in the ancient ancestor which gave birth to this creature's bloodline. It too would tremble in fear in front of Meng Hao. The unspeakable Qi he emanated made the black snake hold him in as much awe as the Heavens.

It took only one look, and the black snake let out a shrill howl, then immediately retreated backward. The shocked old man in the black robe did everything he could, but the black snake was completely incapable of recovering.

It was only after Meng Hao looked away a moment later that the black snake managed to straighten itself up. If Meng Hao had looked at it any longer, it would probably have simply fallen down out of the sky.

No observer could see what had happened. However, Mo Zi's heart trembled, and he could barely prevent himself from gasping. His eyes were wide. He had come here in an overbearing fashion in order to punish Meng Hao and take back the neo-demon horde. Suddenly, all of his plans completely changed. He floated there in mid-air, glaring down at Meng

Hao, a multitude of thoughts running through his head.

“Dammit,” he thought, “no wonder the Greatfather, Grand Elder and others did nothing to stop me from coming here. It turns out this guy is a high level Dragoneer!! Just what rank is he....?”

“How can I help you?” asked Meng Hao coolly. His voice was calm, but his eyes were filled with coldness. He looked up at rank 7 Dragonner Mo Zi, and suddenly realized that the totems on the man’s body were quite interesting.

“I am Mo Zi. Fellow Daoist Meng, my son is not a good student, but he spent half his life painstakingly collecting his neo-demon horde. I demand an explanation regarding this matter. However, we are both Dragoneers. In one month, the day will come in which the five Tribes of the Crow Divinity go to worship their Ancestor.

“At that time, the order of who enters the Ancestor’s land will be determined by a competition between the five great Tribes! On that day, I hope to experience your secret Dragoneer arts!” Mo Zi didn’t know what rank Dragoneer Meng Hao was; having come here, however, he couldn’t just leave immediately. Therefore, he forced these words out, then turned and left with his black snake.

As he left, he made up his mind. “I must determine for sure what rank Dragoneer he is. I can’t do anything rash. I’ll use the five great Tribe’s competition to determine how much of him is true and how much is false.”

He arrived abruptly and left quickly. The surrounding onlookers saw everything that happened and could only watch on in shock.

Meng Hao also stared in surprise for a moment. It only took a moment’s thought to realize why rank 7 Dragoneer Mo Zi had come here. However, his motives in coming and going were quite contradictory. Meng Hao smiled coldly, and his eyes glittered.

“So, the awaited time has come; the five great Tribes will offer sacrifices to their Ancestor.... The only way to do that is to enter the Crow Divinity Holy Land. That is the prescribed rendezvous point with the others.

“However, now that I have my Wood-type totem, getting into the Holy Land isn’t that important. Furthermore, the Crow Scout Tribe has actually treated me quite well.” After a moment’s thought he closed his eyes to continue his research on his Greenwood Tree totem.

The next day at dawn, when light was just appearing in the sky, Meng Hao emerged from his trance. He looked around at his silent neo-demon horde. Currently, his dozens of neo-demons were organized into three groups. The first was the Greenwood Wolves, led by Big Hairy.

Another was the Greenwood Bats, led by the Black Bat. There was a big difference in the numbers populating the two groups. There were a few more Greenwood Wolves; however, the Greenwood Bats had more mid-level neo-demons. The two groups weren’t necessarily evenly matched, but there was a clear delineation between the two. They didn’t get along very well, and a bit of hostility existed.

The third group was comprised of Greenwood Snakes. Their numbers lay between those of the Greenwood Wolves and the Greenwood Bats. However, in terms of strength, they didn’t measure up to either of the others. Being the lowest position, they showed complete awe for Big Hairy and the Black Bat.

Meng Hao looked thoughtfully for a while at the three groups of neo-demons. Then, his body flickered as he left the courtyard. Behind him, Big Hairy looked up, then also turned into a blur as he followed, along with the rest of the Greenwood Wolf neo-demon horde. The Black Bat’s eyes flickered, and it flew up into the air, bringing the Greenwood Bats with it.

The Greenwood Snakes took the flanking position as Meng Hao left the rear mountain district. The entire way, any of the Crow Scout Tribe members who saw Meng Hao would look at him in awe, then lower their heads and do their best to avoid him.

After leaving the Crow Scout Tribe, Meng Hao found himself in the surrounding mountain forest. As he usually did, he sent the various neo-demon hordes in different directions to hunt for food. As for himself, he sat down cross-legged underneath a tall tree to meditate.

Big Hairy didn't leave, but rather lay down next to Meng Hao. He looked lazy, but in truth, his eyes were filled with vigilance and coldness as he looked around.

Meng Hao had been in the Crow Scout Tribe for more than half a year now. During that time, he had often taken his Greenwood Wolves out to hunt; each time, Big Hairy would keep a close watch on Meng Hao. As for food, it was usually brought back to him by the other Greenwood Wolves. Unless Meng Hao ordered him, he would never leave his side.

Now, Meng Hao's neo-demon horde had grown much stronger and larger; nonetheless, Big Hairy continued to act the same as before.

Meng Hao petted Big Hairy's head. As he did, he thought of the mastiff. He suddenly sent his mind into the blood-colored mask. Sensing that the mastiff was still in a state of slumber, he sighed.

"When will you finally wake up?" he thought. He retracted his Spiritual Sense, then looked at the surrounding forest. A breeze wafted through the trees, giving rise to a rustling sound.

At first glance, it almost looked like the Southern Domain. However, there was also something unfamiliar about it; it didn't feel like home at all.

"After leaving the Black Lands, the power of the Celestial talisman that was interfering with the Ji Clan's search for me must have vanished. From now on... I need to be ready at any time for the Ji Clan to come after me. Although, despite being away from the Black Lands, perhaps I have enough Celestial talisman power on my person to continue to provide interference." He looked up into the sky, his heart filled with questions. During the past more than half year, he hadn't seen a single person from the Ji Clan. Now he was starting to come to the conclusion that acquiring the Celestial talisman symbols and using them to gain enlightenment, must be one of the main reasons that the Ji Clan wasn't coming after him.

"The Ji Clan...." he thought, his eyes filling with coldness. "One of these days, I will become strong.... Then the Ji Clan will be forced to acknowledge my superiority!" He took a deep breath, and determination

filled his eyes.

It was at this moment that Meng Hao's mind suddenly flickered. He turned his head to look off into the distance. In addition, a high-pitched voice suddenly drifted into his ears from off into the distance.

"It doesn't matter if the first person to spot that Ironblack Snake was you or me. My Master is rank 7 Dragoneer Gu La. Do you really dare to contend with this Young Master!?" 1

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1. Gu La is the Western Desert Dragoneer who Meng Hao captured when he first arrived at Holy Snow City. Later, Gu La, along with the Wild Giant, disappeared when Meng Hao teleported to the region of the five Crow Divinity Tribes.

Chapter 412: My Master is Gu La

The wooded mountain where Meng Hao was located wasn't close to the Crow Scout Tribe. Actually, it was some distance away in the boundless mountain chain. In accord with his usual custom, Meng Hao took his neo-demon horde to increasingly remote areas. Hearing the voice, he didn't move, but rather just listened for a while.

Usually, Meng Hao didn't run into people out here. He was usually alone; therefore, after hearing the voice, Meng Hao sent out some Spiritual Sense to check out the situation.

Not far off, separated from Meng Hao by a medium sized mountain, was a group of seven or eight Crow Scout Tribe members. Currently, they were facing off wrathfully against a group of three others. From their clothing, it was obvious these others were Crow Soldier Tribe members.

In the middle position of these three people was a young man. His Cultivation base was at the early Foundation Establishment stage. The two people flanking him were a bit older, and their faces were covered with cold grins, as well as contempt, as they stared at the Crow Scout Tribe members.

Surprisingly, Wu Chen and Wu Ling were among the Crow Scout Tribe members. Wu Hai was also there, as well as a few others with whom Meng Hao was familiar. All were outstanding figures in the younger generation of the Crow Scout Tribe.

They were surrounded by neo-demons, all of whom radiated fierce auras and glared at the three Crow Soldier Tribe members.

Situated between the two groups was an indistinct, shimmering net. Laying unconscious and motionless within the net was a small, black snake.

Wu Ling gritted her beautiful teeth and said, "We found that Ironblack Snake! We paid a heavy price for it, too. We captured it, so what the hell gives you the right to take it!?"

The young man from the Crow Soldier Tribe laughed coldly, virtually ignoring the members of the Crow Scout Tribe. He walked toward the black net and then waved his hand, clearly intent on taking it away. Wu Ling clenched her jaw and then performed an incantation with her right hand. Instantly, the Greenwood Wolf next to her leaped forward. At the same time, totemic power billowed out from Wu Ling's body.

When this happened, a look of disdain appeared in the eyes of the Crow Soldier Tribe youth. He waved his left hand, whereupon a pitch-black, decomposing Zombie Wolf materialized. It lifted its head up and roared as it shot toward Wu Ling.

The faces of all of the Crow Scout Tribe members instantly flickered, and they attacked simultaneously. A huge boom rang out, and the Crow Scout Tribe members staggered backward spitting up blood.

"Level 6 neo-demon...." cried Wu Hai bitterly.

Wu Chen's face was ashen. Wu Ling looked like she knew what she was doing, but unfortunately, there was nothing they could actually do. The rotting Zombie Wolf stood there looking at them coldly.

"My Crow Soldier Tribe and your Crow Scout Tribe have the same roots. If it weren't for that, all of you would die today for provoking me!" The young man looked scornfully over the Crow Scout Tribe members, then snatched up the black net. He turned to leave, then suddenly looked back. He had just caught sight of Hairy #5, who lay off in the forest, observing the goings on.

Hairy #5 was usually relatively high-spirited, and was deeply curious about all sorts of matters. Moments ago, he had been passing by, and his attention had been caught by the putrescent Zombie Wolf. He couldn't help but look on with wide eyes.

"Whoah," said the young man, his eyes suddenly brightening with pleasure as he looked at Hairy #5. "That wolf... is extraordinary! I can't believe I ran into a Greenwood Wolf like that in this place. If I can take it back as a gift for Master, he'll definitely be extremely pleased!" He laughed loudly. His two fellow Tribe Members next to him looked at Hairy #5 with

expressions of pleasant surprise.

Hairy #5 was no longer small, and had quite a mighty bearing. They could instantly see that he was far from ordinary.

“Hairy #5!” said Wu Chen, recognizing him instantly. After staring in shock for a moment, his heart suddenly filled with joy. He looked around, and though he didn’t see anything in particular, he knew what it meant if Hairy #5 was in the area.

Wu Hai’s expression also filled with joy. It was only Wu Ling who had mixed feelings. As for the other Crow Scout Tribe members, they all recognized Hairy #5 as well, and were instantly filled with happiness.

Hearing them call out his name, Hairy #5 turned his head in surprise. He looked at them for a moment, then turned back with curiosity to stare at the Zombie Wolf.

A look of savagery appeared on the face of the young man. He couldn’t care less that the Crow Scout Tribe members recognized this Greenwood Wolf. As far as he was concerned, anything he looked at, especially things that he wanted to give as a gift to his Master, he could take. The entire Crow Soldier Tribe would definitely approve. As far as the other Tribes went, there was hardly anyone who could possibly contend with his Master.

“Get me that wolf! I want it alive!” As soon as the words left his mouth, the two people standing next to him sprang into action. Simultaneously, the rotting Wolf Zombie shot toward Hairy #5.

As the two Cultivators flew through the air, their totem tattoos shone brightly, transforming into an enormous net which flew to encircle Hairy #5.

Hairy #5’s eyes flashed with coldness, and then his body flickered, exploding forward in attack. His mouth opened wide as he bit toward the youth. His speed was such that the young man had no time to react. In the blink of an eye, he was directly in front of the young man. As this happened, a black light sprung out from the young man’s body.

The black light slammed into Hairy #5, who let out a miserable cry. Immediately, black Qi began to emit from his body, and he quickly retreated. As he did, the putrefying Zombie Wolf closed in on him, its eyes glowing with grim coldness. It opened its mouth wide as it prepared to bite into Hairy #5.

It was at this moment that a howl suddenly could be heard from the nearby forest. A green beam of light shot out to slam into the body of the Zombie Wolf. It shook as it flew backward like a kite with its string cut. As it was thrown off to the side, Hairy #4 suddenly appeared to stand next to Hairy #5. He looked toward the three Crow Soldier Tribe members, snarling at them to reveal his sharp teeth.

“Two! Haha! There’s two!” cried the young man. “If I present them both to Master, he’ll definitely be thrilled!” The young man was actually shocked inwardly. The attack just now had been too fast for him to even react to. Were it not for the protective totem his Master had given him, he would have been torn in two just now. This only made him more desirous of Hairy #5. His eyes glowed with coldness.

He waved his right hand, causing a black bracelet to fly out. It suddenly let out a bang as it disintegrated in mid-air. It then transformed into a vortex, from within which multiple growling roars could be heard. Several black beams of light suddenly shot out, which transformed into more than twenty completely putrescent Zombie Wolves.

“Attack! I don’t care who lives or dies, just make sure the bodies of the Greenwood Wolves don’t get too torn up!” Vicious hatred emanated out from the young man’s eyes.

As soon as the Zombie Wolves appeared, a noxious reek billowed out. Furthermore, the forest floor in all directions began to wither and turn black. The faces of the Crow Scout Tribe members instantly fell.

“Hairy #4, Hairy #5, get out of here!!” cried Wu Chen urgently.

“DIE!” cried the young man, laughing as he pointed toward Wu Chen and the others. Immediately, four of the Zombie Wolves turned toward the Crow Scout Tribe members, then turned into black beams of light as they

shot forward in attack.

The rest of the Zombie Wolves radiated savagery and madness as they charged toward Hairys #4 and #5.

Meng Hao frowned as watched all of this happen. Finally, he gave a cold snort. Big Hairy looked up and began to howl. Immediately the sound of the howl filled the forest. Hairys #2 and #3, as well as the rest of the Greenwood Wolves, were all in the area. Hearing the howl, they immediately charged in the direction of Hairys #4 and #5.

Their speed was such that it only took a blink of an eye for the young man as well as the Crow Scout Tribe members to see multiple beams of green light shooting toward them from within the surrounding forest. Suddenly, more than twenty Greenwood Wolves were there, each one beyond ordinary, emanating incredible might. This was especially true of two of their number, which were more than nine meters long and emanated flickering green glows. The savagery and coldness which shone in their eyes filled the entire area.

The young man's face immediately fell. The rotting Zombie Wolves that were flying through the air sensed the sudden impending crisis, and immediately stopped and looked around vigilantly.

"Hairy #2! Hairy #3!" shouted Wu Chen excitedly.

The young man from the Crow Soldier Tribe looked shocked. The other two Tribe members next to him also looked around in surprise at the approaching Greenwood Wolves.

"I never thought my luck would look so good," said the young man after a moment, laughing loudly. "So many excellent Greenwood Wolves to present to Master! In his heart, I will definitely surpass Second Elder Brother and First Elder Brother!"

However, even as his laughter rang out through the woods, a savage howl ripped through the air in the forest. It circled about in all directions, along with an arrogant Qi which immediately caused the neo-demons in the area to begin to tremble. Even the Cultivators of the Crow Scout and Crow Soldier Tribes felt their minds trembling.

At the same time, a white blur appeared, shooting with such speed that nothing was visible but whiteness. The white blur slammed into seven or eight of the Zombie Wolves, whereupon booms echoed out along with bloodcurdling shrieks. The Zombie Wolves all exploded, sending a stinking black mist roiling out in all directions. The world-shaking white blur then transformed into a White Wolf who stood there with utmost grandeur, as if he could look down upon all Heaven and Earth.

The White Wolf's body wasn't very large, and even looked somewhat weak. But the instant he appeared, all of the other Greenwood Wolves immediately fell prone, emanating an air of allegiance.

The White Wolf raised its head up and howled, and as it did, the other Greenwood Wolves joined him. Within an instant, the entire wolf pack was howling in unison, causing everything in the area to shake. Even the trees were trembling. The Zombie Wolves began to quiver, and their listless eyes filled with veneration and submission.

"A White Wolf King!!" This was what each and every one of the observing Cultivators was thinking at the moment.

White Wolf King!

The young man's facial expression immediately changed, and he began to breathe heavily. He stepped back a few paces, looking at the White Wolf King, his eyes filling with unprecedented madness and avarice.

"White Wolf King!! Who could have imagined that this place would have a Wolf King! Once Master finds out, he's going to be delighted!! It doesn't matter who this Wolf King belongs to, now that it has appeared, it belongs to me!" The young man roared as he suddenly stretched out his right hand, within which he held a jade slip. Using the fastest speed he could muster, he crushed it, which sent a message to his Master, Gu La.

Meng Hao, who was still observing the proceedings with Spiritual Sense, finally gave a cold snort and then strode forward.

Chapter 413: Chapter title located at the end of the chapter...

At the same time that the young man crushed the jade slip....

Not too far away in the same mountain chain were two peaks that seemed to wish to climb up into the highest heights of the clouds. They towered over the earth, looking out in all directions, two powerful magical warriors the sight of which would send shock into anyone's heart.

Every day at noon, when the sunlight was densest, these two mountains would shine with a silver light. This light was the type that could split Heaven and Earth. It circulated around in the area, sending off powerful ripples.

This was none other than the home of the Crow Soldier Tribe!

On the second peak of the Crow Soldier Tribe was a limestone crag upon which sat seven or eight members of the Crow Soldier Tribe, all smiling respectfully. Sitting in their midst was a middle-aged man who joked and laughed with the surrounding Tribe members.

He wore a black robe, and was clearly beyond ordinary. His eyes contained the stars, and if you looked at them long enough, you could sense a certain sharpness. All of it made him like the sun; without even trying, he became the center of attention.

"... and that is just a fundamental quality of the magic of Dragoneers," said the man coolly. "If you want your Dao of Dragoneering to live forever, and wish to experience progress, then the only option is to look for the answer within your own flesh and blood and bones. That is where you will find the path you must tread." He wore a smile on his face, although there was no kindness in it; rather, he emanated a lofty and proud air. If you looked closely, however, you would be able to see a bit of an emotional sigh contained within them.

The people surrounding him were for the most part outstanding members of the Tribe. All had Cultivation bases at the Core Formation

stage; each and every one wore thoughtful expressions.

“Grandmaster Gu, you truly deserve to be a rank 7 Dragoneer. Although we’ve never heard anything like this before, after some thought, it really makes sense!”

“That’s right! Grandmaster Gu, it seems you’ve truly found your own path as a Dragoneer. You have limitless future potential. I think that in all of the five Tribes of the Crow Divinity, to find someone who could match you in terms of secret Dragoneer arts would be as difficult as finding phoenix feathers or qilin horns.”

The proud, middle-aged man engaging in the lively discussion was none other than Gu La, with whom Meng Hao had lost contact during the teleportation to this region. At that time, Meng Hao had rendered Gu La unconscious during his meeting with the other Nascent Soul eccentrics regarding the five Tribes of the Crow Divinity. Therefore, Gu La was completely unaware of any of those matters. All he knew was that when he woke up, he was back in the Western Desert.

Most importantly, there was no sign of that terrifying, inhuman person who plagued him with fear during the day and roamed in his nightmares at night. At first, Gu La had stared in shock. Then he had searched around, filled with disbelief. However, the only thing he had found was the unconscious Wild Giant.

After repeated searches of the area without finding Meng Hao, his body had begun to tremble, and finally, he lifted his head up and let out a roar.

He had thought about all the torment and maltreatment he had endured in the past. He thought about how many times his flesh and blood had been studied. All of it caused tears to stream down Gu La’s face as he roared.

These were the tears of happiness seen on the face of someone who survived a great disaster. Strangely, he also found that for some reason, his skills in the Dragoneer arts had increased, and he was now rank 7.

In his belief, everything that he had endured had moved the Heavens. Finally, a conscience had appeared in that inhuman being, and the man

had decided to let him go. Therefore, he left the mountains with the Wild Giant. Soon, he experienced a vast change in situation as he became a famous Dragoneer of the Crow Soldier Tribe.

As the surrounding Crow Soldier Tribe members continued to speak, Gu La laughed proudly and was about to continue speaking when suddenly his expression flickered. He slapped his bag of holding to produce a jade slip. The instant it appeared, cracking sounds could be heard. Everyone's gaze came to focus on the jade slip as it collapsed into pieces.

"Oh?" said Gu La, a cold light shining within his eyes. His voice cool, he continued, "That would be one of my three apprentices. It looks like one of them has run into some trouble on the outside." He waved his right hand, causing the remnants of the jade slip to transform into fragments. The resulting powder began to glow, and then turned into a faintly discernible image. Within, Big Hairy could be seen charging forward, emanating the elegant bearing of a Wolf King.

Seeing the image, the eyes of all the surrounding Crow Soldier Tribe members immediately went wide, as did Gu La's. He stared fixedly at Big Hairy, then began to laugh loudly.

"It seems my Third apprentice really is ingenious. He truly is an outstanding member of the Crow Soldier Tribe. He's even gone and found a Wolf King for me. Excellent, excellent!" Continuing to laugh, Gu La shot up into the air, followed by the chuckling Crow Soldier Tribe members.

"Congratulations, Grandmaster Gu! It looks like you've acquired another neo-demon Wolf King!"

"However, that particular Wolf King looks like a Greenwood Wolf. Could it possibly have something to do with the Crow Scout Tribe?"

"Even if it does, who cares? If Grandmaster Gu takes a fancy to something, even Mo Zi from the Crow Scout Tribe could do nothing but bow his head."

Amidst the chatter and laughter surrounding him, Gu La laughed loudly and tilted his head up with an expression of pride.

“I, Gu La, will not blithely take a beast away from someone without paying. Whoever the master of that Wolf King is, I will obviously offer some compensation. In fact, if he’s talented enough, then I might even accept that person as an apprentice.” With that, Gu La, flicked his sleeve and shot off into the air.

The surrounding Crow Scout Tribe members’ faces filled with admiration as they clustered around Gu La and flew away with him in the direction indicated by the jade slip. All of them transformed into prismatic beams that shot off into the distance.

Meanwhile, back in the thick mountain forest, even as Meng Hao strode forward, and the White Wolf made its grand entrance, the young man from the Crow Soldier Tribe crushed the jade slip and then ripped open the front of his garment. Immediately, a black stone could be seen hanging around his neck. He grabbed it and threw it out in front of him.

“I summon Demon Doyen Flood Dragon!” cried the youth, his eyes filled with madness. At the same time, he bit down on the tip of his tongue, spitting out a mouthful of blood. Simultaneously, his fellow Tribe members next to him also spit up some blood. The blood from the three people was sucked into the black stone, which then exploded, transforming into ripples that spread out in all directions, along with a Heaven-shaking roar.

Within the roar, a Flood Dragon emerged. Its body was several dozen meters long, and its appearance caused everything in the surrounding mountainous forest to shake. A massive pressure rolled out, pushing down onto everything.

This particular dragon was actually not complete; portions of it were in a state of decay. In fact, bones were visible in quite a few areas. A rotten stench emanated out as it appeared, filling the area.

“Demon Doyen, exterminate these things!” The young man’s eyes radiated madness. This Flood Dragon was a life-saving neo-demon gifted to him by his master. It was not level 6, but rather level 7. It was incredibly powerful, and in the eyes of the young man, once this Demon Doyen

appeared, he should be able to finish the battle before his Master arrived.

“That’s... level 7!”

“He actually has a level 7 neo-demon! Impossible!!”

The faces of the surrounding Crow Scout Tribe members immediately flickered, filling with disbelief. Even Mo Fang from the Crow Scout Tribe didn’t have a level 7 neo-demon. Such creatures were very difficult to control.

“My Master is Grandmaster Gu La. To him, nothing is impossible!” The young man laughed uproariously as the Flood Dragon roared and shot toward Big Hairy.

Meng Hao strode through the forest, using his Spiritual Sense to observe what was happening. Seeing everything happening, a strange expression appeared on his face. As soon as the rotting Zombie Wolf had appeared, Meng Hao was astonished at how different Gu La’s neo-demons were from everyone else’s.

Then the Flood Dragon appeared. Meng Hao recognized it instantly. It was, in fact, a Flood Dragon that he himself had killed and then given to Gu La as food for the Wild Giant.

Even as Meng Hao scanned the area with Spiritual Sense, Big Hairy let out a growling roar. His body flickered and he transformed into a white blur that shot toward the Flood Dragon. At the same time, the surrounding Greenwood Wolves instantly fell upon the putrefying Zombie Wolves, and a vicious, deadly battle erupted.

Booms rang out, accompanied by howls and roars as the Greenwood Wolves tangled with the Zombie Wolves. At the same time, Big Hairy and the Flood Dragon fought back and forth fiercely. Because of Big Hairy’s fierceness and incredibly high life force, it didn’t matter that the Flood Dragon was level 7. It couldn’t do anything to even scratch Big Hairy.

In fact, it continued to retreat, until finally Big Hairy had had enough. He let out a tremendous roar, and began to shake. In the blink of an eye, his body expanded to a size of over thirty meters. He looked like a small, white

mountain. His Qi emanated up endlessly so that in an instant, he suddenly exerted tremendous pressure down onto the Flood Dragon.

Big Hairy's Qi spread out in all directions, giving rise to a white-colored tempest that rose up to the Heavens. Accompanied by an Earth-shaking roar, Big Hairy charged toward the Flood Dragon, slamming into it and causing it to let out a miserable shriek. Its already damaged body began to collapse and fly about in all directions. Big Hairy's jaws latched onto the Flood Dragon's head, and he ripped it off with a howl.

Squeals filled the air as the Greenwood Wolves attacked relentlessly. It took only a moment for all of the rotting Zombie Wolves to be torn to pieces.

The Crow Scout Tribe members' spirits were instantly lifted; Wu Chen clenched his fists, his face filled with excitement.

On the other hand, the face of young man from the Crow Soldier Tribe, as well as the faces of his two companions, instantly went deathly pale. Without thinking about it, they backed up, breathing heavily. Complete disbelief filled the eyes of Grandmaster Gu La's Third apprentice.

"That's... a level 8... level 8 Wolf King!"

It was at this exact moment, that a black streak of light appeared from off to the side. It shot toward Big Hairy, and then transformed into the shocking Black Bat, as well as a large group of other Greenwood Bats.

A horde of Greenwood Snakes also appeared, hissing loudly as they emerged from the forest.

"That's... that's a Bat King!!" said the young man, his face filled with dread as he continued to back up. How could he ever have imagined that he would manage to provoke such a horde of neo-demons?

"It doesn't matter if there are two neo-demon Kings! You've run into me today, so now your lives belongs to me!" said the young man through clenched teeth. His eyes filled with venomous hatred as he slapped his bag of holding to produce a chunk of black-colored meat.

As soon as the meat appeared, a shocking sound rumbled out from the

surrounding forest. It was a roar that sounded as if it could shred the Heavens.

“Meat....”

Chapter 413: Meat....

Chapter 414: Master, Save Me!

The roar rumbled out, shaking the Heavens and causing the land to tremble. The surrounding forest burst into chaos, as if a tempest had sprung into being and was preparing to shred all life into ash.

Within the roar contained a mighty pressure that all Cultivators could sense. It instantly caused the faces of the Crow Scout Tribe members to fall; blood sprayed from their mouths and their ears rang.

All of the white fur on Big Hairy's body stood on end, and shockingly, he emanated an aura of vigilance. His eyes were filled with freezing coldness, and not even the slightest scrap of feeling could be detected therein, only killing intent.

He lowered his head and instinctively began to emit low-pitched, threatening growls.

The Black Bat next to him looked equally serious. It glared off toward where the growl came from, its eyes flickering mysteriously. It slowly opened its mouth, baring its sharp, vicious teeth.

They were the only neo-demons in the area who had such a reaction. The rest of them began trembling as soon as they heard the roar. One by one, they dropped prone to the ground, as because of the mighty pressure, they didn't dare to move.

Even Hairy #2 and the others had to force themselves to even lift their heads up. Their eyes were filled with fear and struggle as they let out low-pitched howls.

As for the young man and the other two from the Crow Soldier Tribe, their faces flickered and they trembled. The young man quickly took the piece of meat he held in his hand and prepared to throw it out in front of him.

"You're dead!" he cried. "Nobody can save you now!"

As the roar echoed toward them from off in the distance, Meng Hao finally emerged from the forest to stand in front of everyone.

The Crow Scout Tribe members looked over one by one, and their expressions were the same as if they had just seen a blood relative. They immediately began to clasp hands and excitedly bow to him.

“Grandmaster Meng!!”

“It’s Grandmaster Meng!”

“Greetings, Grandmaster Meng!”

This was especially true of Wu Chen. He was the first one to catch sight of Meng Hao, and his expression was one of extreme excitement. Catching sight of Meng Hao here filled him not just with simple respect, but something bordering on fanaticism.

Wu Hai gave a slight, inward sigh of relief. Next to him, Wu Ling had a complex expression and subconsciously lowered her head.

Meng Hao gave smiling nods to everyone. Then, his gaze shifted off into the distance. He could sense the pressure weighing down on everything, and as he did, he smiled. There was no need for him to even check with Spiritual Sense; he could tell that off in the distant forest was none other than a Wild Giant. It was striding toward them at top speed, most likely drooling at the same time.

As soon as Meng Hao appeared, it was as if all the pressure suddenly lifted from the neo-demons. One by one, they stood up, their dignity and might restored. Hairy #2 trotted over to Meng Hao, a happy expression in his eyes. It only took a moment for Meng Hao to be surrounded by neo-demons.

Big Hairy’s body flickered as he, too, returned to Meng Hao’s side. He no longer looked completely savage, but rather, clever and charming.

The Black Bat hesitated for a moment, then flew over to Meng Hao’s side. However, it continued to glance with cold eyes off into the distance.

“Grandmaster Meng?” said Gu La’s Third apprentice, his bearing arrogant and disdainful. “Since when did your Crow Scout Tribe get somebody named Grandmaster Meng?! Presumably this neo-demon horde belongs to you. Well, my Master is rank 7 Dragoner Grandmaster Gu La

of the Crow Soldier Tribe. If you're smart, you'll hand over the neo-demon horde to me immediately. If you don't, you'll have to face my Master, who's on the way here right now. And guess what, there's also a Wild Giant coming!"

Even as he spoke, the ground trembled, and another roar from off in the distance shook everything.

"Meat.... Meat...." The voice was like thunder, sweeping across everything. The Crow Scout Tribe members continued to appear to be at a loss as the ground heaved. The neo-demons next to Meng Hao, with the exception of Big Hairy and the Black Bat, all began to growl as they sensed a feeling of imminent crisis.

"Do you hear that?" said the young man excitedly. "That's the roar of a Wild Giant! That's none other than my Master's Demonic Magic Protector, an ancient neo-demon that he personally subjugated years ago. A Wild Giant!!" He laughed boisterously. "Wild Giants eat other neo-demons for lunch, and are rarely seen in the Western Desert. According to legend, they rarely bond masters. However, my Master was able to bond this one, and that's why it follows his commands!"

The ground trembled once again, and the roar of the Wild Giant seemed even closer. The Crow Scout Tribe members began to back up, and the growling roars of the neo-demons grew louder. Meng Hao was the only one who just stood there smiling as he looked out into the forest.

"It seems Gu La really does have some talent," thought Meng Hao. "After giving him the job of feeding the Wild Giant, he realized after we got split up that he could use food to control it."

"Scared yet?!" cried the young man. "Once the Wild Giant appears all of you are dead!!" He lifted his head up and laughed uproariously as the ground shook beneath him. Off in the distance, an enormous figure could already be seen striding with great steps through the forest.

Its frame was gigantic, and it emanated a barbaric Qi as it roared viciously. As of now everyone present could see it.

"Meat.... Meat...." Another roar filled the surroundings, circling around

and echoing like thunder. At the same time, the Wild Giant suddenly leaped up into the air. It shot out of the forest, flying up until it obscured the sun with its enormous frame. Beneath, the Crow Scout Tribe members' eyes were wide and filled with shock and amazement. They couldn't even breathe as they looked up at the shocking Wild Giant.

Gu La's Third apprentice stood there cool and composed. However, he was actually nervous inwardly. If it wasn't for the fact that it was absolutely necessary, and also that he knew his Master was on the way, he would never have called the Wild Giant here.

The Wild Giant was an irascible neo-demon who only showed up because of food. Even his Master Gu La treated the Wild Giant very politely and was constantly feeding it. He would even scratch its back when it was preparing to sleep.

"Esteemed Wild Giant, they are your food!!" he cried, sounding very much like his Master. Body trembling, he let out a roar and then tossed the piece of meat he held directly toward Meng Hao.

At the same time, he retreated back. The other two Crow Soldier Tribe members made to follow, their faces pale and their bodies trembling.

However, they were a bit too late. The Wild Giant descended like a storm. Even while it was still in mid-air, its huge hand shot down toward the ground and snatched up one of the two Crow Soldier Tribe Cultivators. The man screamed as the Wild Giant tossed him into its mouth. Crunching sounds could be heard, and then the man was swallowed down.

"Meat! Meat!" roared the Wild Giant. In its eyes, it didn't care at all about Cultivators or neo-demons. Its eyes were fixed on the chunk of small meat whistling through the air. Its hand shot out to snatch it up.

Seeing his fellow Tribe member grabbed and eaten caused the young apprentice's heart to fill with alarm. Even stronger, though, was the cruelty that welled up within him. He saw the Wild Giant's hand moving toward Meng Hao, and began to laugh wildly.

"The neo-demons that Young Master wanted are just about...." Before he

could finish speaking, his eyes suddenly went wide and filled with disbelief. He stared, gaping, first confused and then struck dumb with amazement.

This was because Meng Hao suddenly spoke.

“All you think about all day is eating meat! Get your butt over here!”

Then the young man saw what Meng Hao did!

He reached out and grabbed the piece of meat and watched the Wild Giant nearing. Shockingly, as soon as the Wild Giant heard Meng Hao's words, its entire body began to tremble.

It was as if to the Wild Giant, Meng Hao's voice contained Heavenly pressure. It seemed as if no matter how hungry or wild it became, it would never be able to forget Meng Hao's voice for its entire life.

The Wild Giant's eyes went wide as it recalled the scene of the man standing on its head, rousing the Demonic Qi in the area, and asking it if it was willing to capitulate and pledge allegiance.

Its enormous hand suddenly came to a stop only a meter away from Meng Hao. It stared at Meng Hao for a moment, and as it did, the frenzy in its eyes faded. It turned instead into happiness, as well as a bit of frustration, as if it were nursing a grievance. It let out a massive roar.

The happiness was because of finally being able to find its Master. The frustration was because it was never able to eat until being full recently, and was depressed because it had been unable to find Meng Hao. All of these feelings leaked out into the massive roar.

“Shut up and get over here,” chided Meng Hao.

The enormous Wild Giant immediately quieted down and stepped over to Meng Hao's side, as obedient as a kitten. It carefully avoided all of the other neo-demons and then squatted down next to Meng Hao.

Its face was filled with happiness as well as obedience. This caused the minds of everyone present to reel. Everything seemed to be happening opposite to expectation, and it caused their minds to be complete blanks.

Moments ago, the Wild Giant had been filled with incomparable mania. Now, however, it was clearly very obedient, and not the least bit ferocious. In fact, it really looked as if it had just found its master.

The ease with which it squatted down seemed to come from force of habit, as if it had done so many times in front of Meng Hao.

All of this caused a complete silence to fill the air. Wu Chen stared. Wu Hai panted. Wu Ling gaped.

As for Gu La's Third apprentice, the young man, he simply was incapable of reconciling the image of the frenzied, man-eating Wild Giant that even his Master was careful around, with the obedient, puppy-like thing that he saw just now. His mind reeled, and he suddenly had the feeling that this Wild Giant... was not his Master's after all, but instead belonged to this Grandmaster Meng whom he had never seen before.

"I let my Wild Giant roam free in this area, and you called it here to attack me?" said Meng Hao, looking at the young man with an expression that was a smile, and also not a smile.

The young man opened his mouth, but his brain was empty. He couldn't think of anything to say. Everything that had happened had turned his mind and heart inside out. However, it was at this moment that seven or eight beams of prismatic light appeared off in the distance. In the lead was none other than Gu La, a look of dignity covering his face as he shot booming through the air. Immediately, the young man came to his senses. He looked up into the air with a look of excitement.

"Master, save me!!"

Chapter 415: Grandmaster Gu La

“What are you losing your head over? I’m here! Who is there that would dare to harm my apprentice!?” Gu La was wearing a luxurious robe, and his hair floated in the wind as he flew down from up in the air. His expression was one of pride and aloofness, as if he were the most esteemed person under Heaven.

This was especially true considering he stood atop a thirty-meter long Flood Dragon with violet scales. The Flood Dragon’s fierce eyes were pale white making it so that even though the dragon emitted thick Death Qi, it still looked divine and mighty, anything but ordinary. Its domineering aura was enough to cause anyone to take it very seriously.

Gu La stood there atop the Flood Dragon, emanating billowing Qi. Next to him, the other Crow Soldier Tribe Cultivators all had Cultivation bases at the Core Formation stage. Clearly, none were ordinary Tribe members, but rather influential figures.

They clustered around Gu La as he shot down from the sky. Gu La glanced coolly over the situation, his expression one of authority. The first thing he saw, naturally, was the enormous figure of the Wild Giant.

However, because of the angle, he was unable to see Meng Hao standing on the other side of the Wild Giant. All he could see was the Wild Giant’s obedient posture, which seemed a bit odd.

Regardless of anything, however, he was incapable of connecting the Wild Giant’s obedient behaviour to Meng Hao. In his mind, this was the Western Desert, and that inhuman freak had forgotten about him long ago in the Black Lands. There was no way he would reappear.

Half a year ago, he would not have been so firm in his conviction. But after all this time had passed in comfort and safety, this way of thinking was deeply rooted in Gu La.

The second thing he noticed was Big Hairy and the Black Bat, as well as the rest of the neo-demon horde which stood beneath the shadow of the Wild Giant.

As for the Crow Scout Tribe members, Gu La completely ignored them.

“Those two neo-demon Kings are extraordinary! Having roamed the Western Desert for years, I can say that such neo-demons are rarely seen.” Gu La smiled, not paying too much attention to his pleading apprentice. Hands clasped behind his back, he stood there looking down at the scene.

As he spoke, Big Hairy looked up at him; cruel and cold killing intent shone in his eyes. Even his white fur seemed to emanate an icy desire to kill.

The Black Bat’s mysterious eyes narrowed. It could sense an intense pressure emanating from Gu La. It stared at him, baring a mouthful of sharp teeth.

As for the rest of the neo-demons, they trembled beneath the mighty pressure emitted by the Flood Dragon which floated above them.

As for Wu Chen and the others from the Crow Scout Tribe, their faces were pale. Seeing the group from the Crow Soldier Tribe arrive, as well as the terrifying Flood Dragon and Gu La, they all began to breathe heavily.

“That’s... that’s rank 7 Dragoneer Grandmaster Gu La from the Crow Soldier Tribe!!” blurted Wu Chen. He looked over at Meng Hao, and, seeing his calm expression, suddenly felt a bit better.

Meanwhile up in mid-air, the other Crow Soldier Tribe members started laughing in response to the words Gu La had just spoken.

“Those two neo-demons really do look extraordinary. Hahaha! Congratulations Grandmaster Gu, you’ve acquired two neo-demon Kings today. You’re going to be even more powerful than before.”

“Great! Your luck is astonishing, Grandmaster Gu. Those two are definitely rare neo-demons!”

From the pleasant laughter, it was clear that they meant what they said; these neo-demon Kings really were rare. Hearing their words and laughter, Gu La’s face filled with complacency and happiness. He was truly excited after having seen Big Hairy and the Black Bat.

“Apprentice offers greetings to Master!” said the young man down on the ground. Seeing Gu La arrive, he heaved an inward sigh of relief. Suddenly a feeling of arrogance and superiority rose up within him.

“Master,” he continued, backing up even as he shouted, “I accidentally happened upon these two neo-demon Kings. I was just attempting to capture them to give to you as a gift when this guy showed up. He even attacked me and tried to take them away! Master, please take charge of administering justice!” He glared at Meng Hao with venomous hatred the entire time, a cold smile covering his lips.

“I don’t care who you are in the Crow Scout Tribe,” he went on, unable to contain his pompous complacency. “You provoked Young Master and dared to lay in ambush to take the neo-demons Master took a liking to. You’re dead for sure!”

Gu La looked over at the Wild Giant and noted its strange obedience. However, his line of sight was blocked, and still couldn’t see Meng Hao. Then he thought about his status in the Crow Soldier Tribe, and coolly said, “This is a bit improper. Apprentice, these are Fellow Daoists from the Crow Scout Tribe. You really shouldn’t say such evil things about them.”

“I acknowledge my mistake, Master,” said the young man, lowering his head and putting on a victimized appearance. “However, this guy is really strong. If you hadn’t arrived in time, I would definitely have been a corpse already.”

Having heard what was being said, Meng Hao chuckled, then slowly took a step forward, emerging from the cover of the Wild Giant. Now, everyone up above could see him clearly. He looked up toward the proud, dignified Gu La.

Even as Meng Hao began to step out, Gu La heard his apprentice’s words and began to respond, his expression dignified, his jaw lifted up. “Well then, let’s see who exactly it was that would possibly dare to mess with Gu La’s discip... uh? What?! URGHK!!”

Gu La’s eyes went wide. The first part of the end of his sentence, “uh,” represented shock.

The second part, “what?!” represented disbelief.

The third part “URGHK” ... was an enormous gasp

Suddenly, he couldn't breathe. His face instantly twisted as if he had suddenly caught sight of an evil spirit just arisen from the Yellow Springs. As he stared down, his mind filled with a roaring sound, as if thunder boomed about inside of it.

The roaring inside his mind was actually similar to that of ten thousand horses galloping about inside his skull. His consciousness was trampled, shattered, as he suddenly realized why the Wild Giant was acting so obediently.

“Damn you, Wild Giant,” he thought, weeping inwardly. “I took care of you all this time in vain. You, you, you... you ran into that inhuman jinx first, why the hell didn't you at least tip me off?”

At the same time as this was happening, the surrounding Crow Soldier Tribe members saw Meng Hao. Their expressions were that of indifference as they began to call out.

“Fellow Daoist from the Crow Scout Tribe, your actions are beyond proper. Since Grandmaster Gu La's apprentice saw these neo-demons first, that means he had the right to capture them. For you to steal them in such a fashion is taking advantage of the Crow Soldier Tribe in an extreme way!”

“It turns out the trifling Crow Scout Tribe is full of bandits! I bet that guy is a Crow Scout Tribe vassal. Piddling vassal, do you really dare to be so aggressive? I'd love to see if you have the gall to try to kill any Crow Soldier Tribe members while we're around?!”

Of course, the Cultivators who had accompanied Gu La had no idea who Meng Hao was. Although he had caused a stir in the Crow Scout Tribe, the Greatfather and other powerful members of the Tribe had interfered with the spread of news. This enabled Meng Hao's identity to remain a mystery; no outsider knew any of the details.

Even news of his battle with Mo Fang had been suppressed on strict

orders from the Tribe. Not a scrap of information had leaked out.

Trembling, Gu La suddenly said, “Hahaha! Actually, I’m pretty tired today. Take care everyone, I’ll take my leave.” He immediately began to back up, and was about to turn and transform into a beam of light and flee at top speed when he was blocked by some of the nearby Crow Soldier Tribe members.

“Grandmaster Gu, what’s wrong?”

“Yeah, what’s going on Grandmaster Gu? Those two neo-demon Kings are matchlessly divine and mighty. It’s impossible to be mistaken, completely impossible. They’re definitely neo-demon Kings!”

“Oh, it doesn’t matter,” gushed Gu La, his heart shaking. “I suddenly remembered that I forgot to feed one of my neo-demon hordes. That’s... um, see you....” He shoved off the restraining hands of the Crow Soldier Tribe members and was about to ignore everyone and leave.

However, his young apprentice, seeing Gu La about to leave, suddenly shot into the air to block his way. “Master, this guy didn’t just attack me, when I mentioned your name, he suddenly got all arrogant and bossy. He even insulted YOU, Master. This is intolerable!”

Meng Hao watched all of this with a smileless smile. Patting the Wild Giant next to him, he suddenly realized that this new version of Gu La was much more amusing than before.

Wu Chen and the others from the Crow Scout Tribe were all staring in shock as the scene unfolded. Confused expressions covered their faces. They couldn’t understand why Grandmaster Gu La would arrive in such an impressive, overwhelming fashion, but then act like this. Without even thinking about it, they looked over at Meng Hao.

It wasn’t just them. The group from the Crow Soldier Tribe also could tell that something fishy was going on.

“Screw off!!” roared Gu La. He lifted his hand and was just about to push the young man out of the way when Meng Hao’s voice again could be heard.

“Since you’re here,” Meng Hao said with a laugh, “there’s no need to rush off.”

These words immediately caused Gu La to begin to quiver. He slowly turned, forcing a smile onto his face that made it look almost like he was crying. His body began to shake violently, and his mind roared. A roar of frustration and rage echoed out within his heart.

“How could it be...?” he thought. “This is the Western Desert.... It’s not the Black Lands.... How could he be here...? I, I, I....” Images began to flicker through his mind. That of the first moment he had met Meng Hao, to all the research he had been subjected to, and finally his recent happy days. Now, however, the good times had evaporated into a nightmare that would never go away.

“How could it be...?” Gu La felt grief and indignation, but he had no choice but turn blinking to look at Meng Hao and pretend that he had just noticed him. His expression was one of happiness, although all ability to think or even speak had left him.

Before he had a chance to say anything to Meng Hao, Gu La’s Third apprentice noted the fact that his Master was turning around and then let out an inward sigh of relief. Then he turned to glare viciously at Meng Hao.

“You’re dead! You provoked a rank 7 Dragoneer. Even if you are from the Crow Scout Tribe, they won’t protect you now!” The young man was growing even more aggressive. At the moment, he wasn’t paying any attention to the two neo-demons next to Meng Hao. In his mind, few people in the five Tribes of the Crow Divinity would possibly dare to enrage his Master.

Gu La’s expression changed, and his heart began to pound.

Chapter 416: Conning Master....

As the young man's words echoed in Gu La's ears, his eyes went wide. He suddenly thought of occasions in the past in which people had paid the price for offending Meng Hao.

His body began to tremble as he glared at his Third apprentice. He suddenly started wondering if this person... was his Third apprentice, or his enemy.

"Gu La, what do you think?" said Meng Hao, smiling as he looked up at Gu La. Gu La's body was like a sieve, not just shaking, but also pouring out cold sweat. He was just about to open his mouth to reply when...

"What gall!" shouted the young man, once again cutting off his Master's explanation. "You dare to call my Master by his personal name? What makes you think you're qualified to do that?!"

"You!!" cried Gu La, his eyes red. He was especially frightened because Meng Hao had just frowned. His frown suddenly made Gu La feel like a hundred thousand lightning bolts were exploding around inside his heart and mind. His face completely changed as he let out a terrified howl. "SHUT UP!!"

His voice echoed around in the area, causing the faces of the surrounding Crow Soldier Tribe members to fall as they instinctively edged away from Gu La.

The young man stared mutely at Gu La for a moment before quickly saying, "Master, what's wrong. This guy is arrogant to the extreme. Earlier, he was being endlessly sarcastic! Master..."

The rage in Gu La's heart billowed to untold heights. Flames of fury seemed to be on the verge of exploding out of his eyes, and he looked like he wanted to swallow his apprentice alive. This was the first time he started wondering how his apprentice could be such an idiot. Couldn't the kid see Gu La's expression, and hear the words spoken by the inhuman freak?

“Master? Dog farts! When was I ever your Master? You damned punk, you’re not my apprentice! You’re my enemy!” At the same time that Gu La’s rage burned, he also felt a profound sense of deadly crisis. His entire body was tingling as he thought of how he had been cut into bloody pieces that year. A massive roar exploded out of his body as he struck out in front of him with his palm.

A slapping sound rang out as the young man flew backward with a miserable shriek. He coughed up a huge mouthful of blood as he slammed into the ground off in the distance, then passed out.

That wasn’t enough to ease Gu La’s anger. His body flickered toward the unconscious young man and began to trample him.

A cracking sound could be heard, and the young man suddenly regained consciousness. He let out another scream, then passed out a second time.

Seeing this happened caused the faces of the surrounding Crow Soldier Tribe members to immediately grow sharp even as they backed up again.

“Grandmaster Gu, what’s the meaning of this!?”

Gu La pretended not to hear them. He leaped into the air, flew over, then flopped onto his knees in front of Meng Hao. Tears streamed down his face, which was filled with an expression of boundless happiness.

“I’ve finally found you Young Master. Young Master... your old servant has been looking for you for the better part of a year.... I really thought that you had abandoned me. I... I....”

As soon as Gu La’s words filled the air, cries of astonishment could be heard. Whether it be Wu Chen and the others from the Crow Scout Tribe, or the group of Crow Soldier Tribe members up in mid-air, all of them could not possibly have anything other than expressions of complete astonishment when they heard Gu La’s words. They almost couldn’t believe it.

One by one, they started to breathe heavily as they looked at Gu La and Meng Hao.

Wu Chen and the others from the Crow Scout Tribe were staring with

wide eyes.

“Just... just what is the relationship between them?”

“It turns out that Grandmaster Meng is actually Grandmaster Gu’s Master.... So it turns out Grandmaster Meng is even more prestigious than we thought!”

“No wonder Grandmaster Meng’s secret Dragoneer arts are so profound. He can even raise neo-demon Kings. If his servant is a rank 7 Dragoneer, then just what rank is he?”

However, even more shocked than the Crow Scout Tribe members were the influential people from the Crow Soldier Tribe who had accompanied Gu La here.

“Grandmaster Gu actually called that guy Young Master.... Just... just what exactly is going on here!?!?”

“Is it really true...? If that guy is Grandmaster Gu’s Young Master, well, considering how powerful Grandmaster Gu is, then what about his Master...?”

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever as he looked at Gu La with a mysterious smile. Obviously, Gu La was worried that Meng Hao would exact some sort of punishment on him. He clearly regretted everything that had happened before. Now, he kneeled there, looking anxiously at Meng Hao, his expression one of bereavement and pleading.

“You’ve taken good care of the Wild Giant,” said Meng Hao coolly. “When I need you, I’ll call for you.” He turned toward the Wild Giant and patted it. Then, he flicked his sleeve and turned, walking off into the distance. The Wild Giant seemed reluctant to part with him.

Big Hairy, the Black Bat, and the rest of the neo-demon horde followed Meng Hao. As for Wu Chen and the rest of the Crow Scout Tribe members, they quickly followed along too, panting.

Gu La bowed respectfully toward Meng Hao, then loudly said, “Young Master, your old servant pledges to follow your orders to the death!”

With that, Gu La let out a sigh. His body was no longer trembling, but he had been nearly frightened to death just now. He watched Meng Hao leave before rising to his feet, the proud and lofty expression once again appearing on his face. Hands clasped behind his back, he turned toward the shocked, gaping Crow Soldier Tribe members.

“The young prince of our House is yet young, but as dignified as ever. I’ve never told you who I am. I am the Dao Protector of a mysterious Western Desert legacy. I have been tasked with protecting the young prince of our House. Half a year ago, we were separated when teleporting to this area.” Rolling his eyes at them, he patted the Wild Giant, then took it to head back toward the Crow Soldier Tribe. Although Gu La seemed to have recovered, the look in his eyes was the same as a person who had survived a great disaster. As for the Wild Giant, it continued to roar for meat.

“Dammit,” thought Gu La, “I can’t stay in this place for much longer. I have to flee in the night. Get as far away from that inhuman Meng Hao....” Countless ideas sprang into Gu La’s head, however, he then began to hesitate. He recalled the words Meng Hao had spoken just before he left, and he began to struggle inwardly. A moment later, he let out long sigh.

In the end, he just didn’t have the courage to flee secretly.

Meanwhile, Meng Hao proceeded along through the mountains, followed by his neo-demon horde. Wu Chen and the others from the Crow Scout Tribe followed cautiously. They couldn’t help but look at Meng Hao with respect, Wu Ling included. Of course, Wu Chen’s respect for Meng Hao had long since turned into fanaticism.

Everyone was quiet. Meng Hao didn’t speak, so neither did anyone else dare to make any noise. Eventually they emerged from the mountain forest; off in the distance, the Crow Scout Tribe was now visible.

Finally, Wu Chen couldn’t take it any more. After a moment’s hesitation, he hurried forward and said in lowered voice, “Grand... Grandmaster Meng.... Grandmaster Meng, sir, just what exactly is the relationship between you and Grandmaster Gu?”

Behind him, the eyes of the others began to shine. This was the same question all of them had been hesitating about the entire time.

Meng Hao didn't pause for even a moment as he proceeded forward. Instead, he smiled.

"When I came to this place, I brought along a Wild Giant who happens to be addicted to meat. Feeding it was quite bothersome. Thankfully, I had an attendant in charge of taking care of the Wild Giant. He was none other than Gu La." Having given this simple explanation, Meng Hao continued onward.

When Wu Chen heard the explanation, it resounded like thunderclaps in his ears. The others gasped, and they all looked at Meng Hao with expressions even more fanatical than before.

From what they could tell, the Wild Giant was a neo-demon, and a shocking one at that. But even more shocking was that Meng Hao had a rank 7 Dragoneer raising it for him!

All of this immediately turned into cloak of mystery that enveloped Meng Hao in their eyes.

As they neared the Crow Scout Tribe, Meng Hao turned back to look at Wu Chen and the others. With a smile, he said, "I don't mind you all knowing about this matter, but please don't spread the word to others." Then he turned, transforming into a beam of light that shot off into the distance along with his neo-demon horde.

Wu Chen and the others clasped hands and bowed as he left. Each and every one decided in their hearts that since Grandmaster Meng did not wish the events which had occurred today to be spread about, they definitely wouldn't mention them to anyone.

Wu Chen and the others watched him until he disappeared. All of them had indescribable feelings within them; what they had experienced today was something far beyond anything they had experienced in many years.

Sighing emotionally, they continued onward toward the Tribe. In contrast to the fanaticism of Wu Chen, Wu Ling was thoughtful as she

walked silently through the Tribe. She had a dark, torn look on her face, as well as a bit of hesitation. However, after glancing back at Wu Chen, her eyes filled with determination that added a certain special beauty to her looks.

After night fell, Wu Ling's figure turned into a beam of light that shot directly toward Meng Hao's courtyard.

She arrived quickly, whereupon she stood outside beneath the moonlight, beautiful enough to make anyone's heart pound.

Biting her lip, but eyes filled with determination, she stepped forward and then softly said, "Wu Ling requests an audience with Grandmaster Meng."

Meng Hao sat cross-legged in the courtyard. His eyes opened, and he scanned the area. When he caught sight of Wu Ling, his brow furrowed. However, he didn't refuse her. Without saying a word, he waved his hand, causing the courtyard door to open.

Wu Ling's beautiful silhouette could be seen hurrying in.

She stood there nervously, and, seeing Meng Hao's cold expression, quickly said, "Many thanks, for allowing Wu Ling to enter, Grandmaster Meng."

Meng Hao looked at her, expressionless.

"Last time, when Wu Chen came to ask for your help, Wu Ling did not understand matters, and made many improper remarks. Grandmaster Meng, please don't take offense...." She was starting to get even more nervous, and was now unconsciously gripping the corner of her garment. She lowered her head.

Meng Hao frowned.

She was now panting a little bit. Her mind felt as if it were in chaos. All the words she had prepared before coming here just wouldn't come out. "... Regarding the matter today, please don't worry, Grandmaster Meng. I will make sure they understand not to spread the word."

“Why are you here?” barked Meng Hao coldly, cutting her off.

Wu Ling was now completely nervous. Meng Hao’s loud words caused her heart to tremble. Gritting her teeth, she looked up.

As she did, her right hand reached up and unfastened her outer garment. The garment immediately fell to the ground, revealing her yellowish-pink underclothing. Beneath the moonlight, her beautiful curves suddenly seemed to emanate a soul-stirring air of seduction.

Her face was pale, but her eyes were determined. She stood there beneath the moon, trembling slightly, but staring at Meng Hao with gritted teeth.

Chapter 417: Chapter title available at the end....

Meng Hao stared in shock. Without realizing it, his eyes gazed down at her body. He wasn't sure why, but for some reason, he suddenly found himself thinking about Chu Yuyan.

"Grandmaster Meng, I'm willing to do anything for my younger brother." Her body trembled, but she held her head high nonetheless. The moon accentuated her beauty, making her particularly enticing.

Meng Hao didn't say anything. Wu Ling's purpose was clear; she wanted to help her brother acquire a proper position and status within the Crow Scout Tribe. Accomplishing something like that wouldn't be difficult for Meng Hao. Be it in terms of his Cultivation base or his identity as a Dragoneer, if he threw his support behind someone from one of the three bloodlines, it would be enough.

After a long moment passed, Meng Hao looked back up and said, "I'm not very interested in your body." Having reached his current level of Cultivation base, he could ignore the changes wrought by time. Because of that, his interest in certain matters had cooled. He had never experienced the passionate love between a man and a woman, and as such was able to look down on such carnal temptations.

With a simple nod of his head, vast numbers of women with low Cultivation bases would throw themselves at him to acquire the protection of powerful expert of the great circle of the Gold Core, a person who could contend with the early Nascent Soul stage.

However, Meng Hao's heart was not focused on lust. His ambitions lay in the Eastern Lands and the Great Tang, in Immortal Ascension, in superseding the Ji Clan, in assuring that no one under Heaven could interfere with his plans, in preventing the Heavens from ever suppressing him.

These were his dreams. From the moment he had entered the

Cultivation world, he had staunchly stuck to pursuing the path of his dreams.

In this life, he would not be an insect to others!

In pursuit of these dreams, he had entered the Southern Domain. In pursuit of these dreams, he had gone to the Black Lands. In pursuit of these dreams, he had traveled to the Western Desert to search for the path of his Five-Colored Nascent Soul.

With the passage of time, these things had become indelibly imprinted on his heart. This was his path.

Wu Ling's face was ashen, and she bit her lip. She could see Meng Hao's calmness, and could see that his gaze wasn't the bit affected by her body. She knew what he said to be true. He didn't care about her body.

The moonlight poured down onto her, and she clenched her jaw as she looked at him bitterly. It was at this point that Meng Hao's eyes narrowed and he suddenly looked directly at her chest.

Just now, moonlight had fallen on her neck, and a pendant which hung there, something he hadn't noticed before.

It was a silver pendant, which let off a gentle aura beneath the moonlight. The design was that of a flower with ten petals. A small, silver flower.

Almost the same instant that Meng Hao caught sight of the pendant, he suddenly sensed the imminent awakening of the Resurrection Lily, which Shui Dongliu had sealed such a long time ago.

The signs of awakening were sudden; in the blink of an eye, an intense pain suddenly filled his body, causing his face to immediately flicker.

Meng Hao's Cultivation base back then couldn't even compare to his current one. Despite the fact that the pain washed over him like floodwaters, the only thing that Wu Ling could see was a slight flicker before his expression returned to normal.

Meng Hao's hand suddenly lifted up and made a snatching motion. The

necklace which the pendant was attached to snapped, and it turned into a beam of silver light as it shot toward Meng Hao. He grabbed it out of the air.

“Where did you get this?” Even as he asked the question, his body filled with pain, and his Cultivation base trembled as it fought back and forth with the Resurrection Lily. One tried to shake off its seal, the other tried to push back with full strength. Despite all that was happening, not a trace of it could be seen on Meng Hao’s face.

Wu Ling stared in shock and unconsciously raised her hand up to her neck.

“My mother gave that to me....”

“You can leave now,” said Meng Hao. “As for the matter regarding Wu Chen, I will consider it.” With that, he closed his eyes. He didn’t return the pendant.

Wu Ling hesitated for a moment, then bowed her head and put her garments back on. Giving Meng Hao a slight curtsy, she turned and left, feeling disconsolate and frustrated.

It was about the same time that Wu Ling left the courtyard that Meng Hao finally couldn’t control himself anymore. His face instantly went pale, and sweat drops as big as beans began to pour down. It only took an instant for him to be completely soaked. He waved his left hand, causing the Greenwood Tree totem to magically appear on his forehead. The Eyeless Larva could be seen on his right hand, and the surrounding neo-demon horde suddenly looked extremely vigilant. A gently glowing shield appeared, with Meng Hao at its center. It completely surrounded the entire courtyard as Meng Hao trembled, then coughed up a mouthful of blood.

This blood was not red, but rather, was made of four colors. It transformed into a mist which hovered in mid-air before him, forming into a Resurrection Lily. It faced Meng Hao and let out a soundless shriek that was filled with ferocity and obstinacy.

Meng Hao’s eyes glowed brightly. He began to rotate his Cultivation base with full power, and then closed his eyes. He did everything he could

to suppress the Resurrection Lily. Soon, enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, whereupon a tremor ran through his body.

“You wanna come out? Fine!” Meng Hao gave a cold harrumph, then slapped his bag of holding to produce a scroll painting. It floated in front of him and slowly unfurled, seemingly under the power of some invisible force that wanted to open the Resurrection Lily painting.

Meng Hao’s eyes widened as he stared coldly at the painting. It trembled as a howl emerged from within that only Meng Hao could hear. They stared at each other, one man, one painting, for nearly an hour within the confines of the protective shield.

Eventually, the unyielding howl began to fade slowly away. Finally, the painting fell to the ground with a flop. Meng Hao let out a long sigh and closed his eyes. After a long moment passed, he opened them again and looked recovered. A grim look appeared in his eyes.

“So, it’s actually been awake for a while!” An angry glint flickered in his eyes. The power exhibited by the Resurrection Lily in their struggle just now was extremely intense, and was obviously nothing like the power that would manifest had it just awakened. On the contrary, it seemed it had waited and built up its strength in an attempt to break through its seal in one fell swoop.

“And here I thought it was sealed and sleeping this entire time. Instead, it actually awakened for some reason, and then remained there motionless, waiting for the perfect critical moment, when I was least prepared, to fight with all its might....” Meng Hao took a deep breath, then looked down at the pendant in his hand.

“Is it possible that this thing provoked some instinctive reaction on the part of the Resurrection Lily? Once I noticed the signs of its awakening, it couldn’t hold back any more, and launched its fatal blow!?” Meng Hao sat in silent contemplation. He was well aware that if it weren’t for the chance occurrences today, if the Resurrection Lily had been given more time to grow strong, then there would have been a high likelihood that at the critical moment, his lack of preparation would have led to the

Resurrection Lily casting off its seal and taking over his body!

Thinking of this caused lingering fear to spread throughout Meng Hao, despite the level of his Cultivation base and mental strength.

“What is this thing?” he thought, studying the pendant. “After hiding so carefully, the Resurrection Lily instinctively broke its cover because of it.” His eyes glittered, and he sent out his Spiritual Sense, only to come up with nothing.

After some thought, Meng Hao lifted his hand and pushed down onto his left eye. Because of the presence of Immortal Shows the Way inside of him, he was able to rotate the scrap of Immortal Qi within. It coalesced into his eye, which he then blinked several times in succession. Suddenly, it glowed with brilliant light as he examined the pendant.

Instantly, the pendant looked vastly different than it had a moment before. In fact, it was obviously not just a pendant; shockingly, it was a Resurrection Lily.

It now had seven petals, but all were the same color. Furthermore, it was emanating a faint Death Qi. Only a very faint bit of life force remained within.

It seemed to be in some sort of special state, as if that life force were struggling, and wished to truly live once again.

Meng Hao suddenly understood. “This... don’t tell me that this... is a Resurrection Lily seed!?”

His left eye flickered, then returned to normal. His face was pale white as his right hand clenched around the pendant.

He was breathing heavily now, and it took a long moment for him to recover his composure.

“Just what is this pendant? It actually provoked some instinctive change in Resurrection Lily even in the midst of its fear of being detected by me.” Coldness filled his eyes, and he was about to crush down on the seed with his fist to smash it, when suddenly, something flickered in his mind. After a moment’s deliberation, he lifted the seed up once more and examined it

closely. His eyes then began to shine with a strange light.

“Crushing it would solve the main problem, but, that would be quite a pity. This seed is the best object of reference I have to study the Resurrection Lily and find its weakness.” His eyes glittered as he put the Resurrection Lily seed away.

“I owe a great debt to Wu Chen and his sister,” he thought. With that, he waved his hand, causing the protective shield to disappear. It was already early morning.

“In terms of the five elements, the Crow Scout Tribe’s totems attach importance to the Wood-type. All others are simply collateral branches. I’ve acquired the Greenwood Tree totem, and originally I didn’t plan to partake in any other matters relating to the Tribe. In fact, I wasn’t even going to enter the Crow Divinity Holy Land to meet Yan Song and the others. I was going to just leave. But now.... I think it might be good to stay a little bit longer. I can do some more research to find out how Wu Ling’s mother ended up with a Resurrection Lily seed! Plus, if I’m lucky, maybe I can get my hands on a Metal-type totem.”

When it came to matters relating to Wood-type and Fire-type, through Meng Hao’s more than half year of observation and enlightenment, his most important clue had come from the Golden Crow that flew out from the Crow Divinity Holy Land the previous year. From what Meng Hao could tell, it emanated not a will of Fire, but rather, a shocking Wood-type will.

Having made up his mind, Meng Hao closed his eyes and began to meditate. He rotated his Cultivation base and began to examine himself inwardly. Finally, he took out the painting to study for a moment. Eventually, a cold smile turned up the corners of his lips, and he put the painting away.

He wasn’t sure if the Resurrection Lily was actually sleeping at the moment, or just pretending. However, he was now prepared. Even if the Resurrection Lily sprang into action suddenly, he was confident that he could repress it a second time.

“In fact, I will suppress it to the point where, it won’t be absorbing me; instead, I will force it to merge with me! When that happens, I will be the Resurrection Lily, but the Resurrection Lily will not be me!”

Meng Hao’s face filled with determination as he muttered to himself.

“The day the Resurrection Lily blooms with seven colors, the flower falls; Immortal Ascension in a thousand years 1.... If I can fully master the secrets of this Resurrection Lily, then Immortal Ascension... might not be so far-fetched....” Meng Hao lifted his head to look up at the sky. He suddenly felt an intense desire to reach that stage of Immortal Ascension.

“It doesn’t matter whether it has to do with Demon Sealing or Immortal Ascension, without reaching that stage... I’m nothing but an insect in Heaven and Earth.” With that, he closed his eyes, covering up that growing hope which could be seen inside.

Chapter 417: The Resurrection Lily Suddenly Makes a Move!

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1. He is quoting the words left to him by Shui Dongliu in chapter 208.

Chapter 418: Pool of Destiny

Time flashed by. Soon, it was half a month later. The day was swiftly approaching in which the five Tribes of the Crow Divinity would offer sacrifices to the Ancestor.

To the five Tribes, this day of sacrifices was an extremely important occasion. That was because in addition to being a day of ceremonies and rites, it was also the time when the Tribes determined their ranking in terms of strength.

The most important reason for the whole ceremony was because of the totem legacy within the Crow Divinity Holy Land. This legacy was not some imaginary thing, but rather something called the Pool of Destiny!

This pond was actually a deep cistern that would fill with clear waters every few years. The water was very strange. Any member of the Crow Divinity Tribes who entered the waters and meditated therein would experience incredible growth in totemic power.

The water in the pond was not of the five elements; however, it would change to become one of the five elements, depending on who entered it. In fact, throughout the years, the five Tribes of the Crow Divinity had experienced many situations in which Tribe members experienced Cultivation base breakthroughs thanks to the increase in their totemic power.

The Pool of Destiny was the most important object to the five Tribes of the Crow Divinity, and also one of the reasons so many vassals chose to join one of the five Tribes.

However... the waters of the Pool of Destiny were not infinite. The water was limited, even from the very beginning of the rite. Therefore, the first person to enter it would receive the greatest benefit. The benefits received by those who entered after would increasingly lessen.

Therefore, the so-called Ancestor Rite Competition was used to determine the order in which various members of the five great Tribes would enter and seize the fortune of the Pool of Destiny.

Currently, the voice of the Crow Scout Tribe's Greatfather rang out from the top of the mountain: "For three hundred years, the Crow Scout Tribe has always been the last to enter. During those three hundred years, it was always the Crow Soldier Tribe who entered first...."

Meng Hao stood down in the square along with rank 7 Dragoneer Mo Zi and his son Mo Fang. They were joined by the Crow Scout Tribe's Sky Priest and the Grand Elder.

As for the Earth Priest, he had been in secluded meditation the entire time since he had returned to the Tribe, and had still not emerged.

Additionally, there were several Western Desert Cultivators who, as could be seen from their clothing, were obviously not members of the Crow Scout Tribe. All had incredible Cultivation bases, and radiated killing intent. These people were similar to Meng Hao, vassals. Obviously, though, they were not Dragoneers, but Totem Cultivators.

There were several dozen members of the Crow Scout Tribe also present, including Wu Chen, Wu Ling, and Wu Ali. All of them looked both nervous and excited.

Wu Ling would cast frequent glances toward Meng Hao, whose expression was the same as ever as he stood there silently, with eyes closed. It seemed he didn't even notice her.

"The Ancestor Rite Competition will begin soon," continued the Greatfather. "According to the rules set forth by the Ancestor, spilling the blood of fellow Tribe members is prohibited in the Holy Land, as is killing. Therefore, as has been the custom throughout the successive Ancestor Rite Competitions, it is you vassals who will participate in the contest, and earn the chance to step foot into the Pool of Destiny. I offer my profound thanks to all of you." He looked over Meng Hao and the other vassals and then clasped hands and bowed deeply.

Next to him, the Sky Priest and the Grand Elder gave deep looks to everyone and then also clasped hands and bowed.

The rest of the Crow Scout Tribe members also bowed, looks of veneration covering their faces.

Mo Zi was not the first to respond, but rather, Mo Fang. "Fear not, Greatfather, with my father and I here, I dare not claim that we will take first place in the Dragoneer competition, but we will definitely not take last." As he spoke, he cast a grim glare in Meng Hao's direction.

As for Grandmaster Mo Zi, he gave an indifferent chuckle. "I, Mo, will do my best." His grating voice was filled with obvious self-confidence.

Meng Hao's eyes opened, and his expression was the same as usual. He did not respond to Mo Fang's provocation, but rather, ignored him. He looked over the other vassals, taking note of one man in particular who was large, but rather unimposing in appearance. His Cultivation base appeared to be in the Core Formation stage, but there was something strange about him. Meng Hao could sense that there was something almost like a mist circling around him that could not be seen through.

When Meng Hao looked at him, the man looked back. Their gazes locked for a brief moment before the man looked away. However, it was at this point that Meng Hao's eyes began to glitter.

"That guy has the Qi of a neo-demon," he thought. "It's faint, but he definitely is not emanating the power of totems. It's as if... he himself is emanating neo-demon Qi!"

Suddenly, the sound of bells and horns filled the air. It came from Crow Divinity Holy Land, which was located in the center of all the mountains. The sound circled out in all directions, along with waves of ripples which kicked up massive winds. Soon everything up above and down below was shaking.

Next, ripples could be seen emanating out, as if everything was being sealed. Next, a golden light shot up from the Crow Divinity Holy Land. It shot up into the Heavens, spreading out and emitting massive pressure.

The Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather took a deep breath as he looked at the golden light. Determination filled his eyes as he said, "Let us depart!"

He flicked his sleeve and flew up into the air, transforming into a beam of light that shot off toward the area where the golden light was emanating from.

Everyone else flew up as well. Quite a few of the other vassals had bodies festooned with totems, that were now flickering and glowing. As for rank 7 Dragoneer Mo Zi, he flicked his sleeve, causing an enormous two-headed Flood Dragon to magically appear in mid-air. It lifted its heads up into the air and roared. Mo Zi stood on its back, and Mo Fang approached to do the same.

The two-headed Flood Dragon was clearly incredibly powerful. The instant it appeared, it attracted the shock and astonishment of the surrounding Cultivators. Quite a few people looked over at Meng Hao, curious as to what mount he would ride.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he slapped a green-colored bag of holding. A beam of white light instantly shot out, which transformed into Big Hairy. He seemed skinny and weak, but was over ten meters long. As Meng Hao hopped onto his back, he lifted his head up to the sky and howled.

The sound was extremely shocking as it drifted out in all directions. The surrounding Crow Scout Tribe members were filled with shock. Even the two-headed Flood Dragon backed up a bit.

Mo Zi gave a cold snort, patting the two-headed Flood Dragon, which transformed into a colorful beam as it shot off.

Meng Hao sat atop Big Hairy, his eyes focused on the golden glow off in the distance. He actually wasn't very interested in the Crow Divinity Holy Land, but figured that since he was here, he might as well investigate a bit.

As he proceeded onward, the dozens of Crow Scout Tribe members flew off from the mountaintop. Up in mid-air, Meng Hao could see groups of Cultivators flying out from the directions of the other four Tribes, all of them heading toward the central location.

There were several hundred members of the five Tribes in all, heading toward the golden glow at top speed.

Meng Hao also caught sight of Gu La, standing on top of the Wild Giant. His face was proud, as were the faces of the Crow Soldier Tribe members who surrounded him.

There were also Dragoneers from the other Tribe. Among the Dragoneers from the Crow Fighter Tribe, the most conspicuous was an old woman upon whose face could be seen dark greenish freckles. She wore a long robe, and was relatively ugly. However, she was riding a gigantic Cyclops Ape which emanated a fiendish aura.

The Crow Flame Tribe had three Dragoneers, one of whom was a white-robed old man who had the extraordinary bearing of a transcendent being. The neo-demon he rode was an enormous white crane, elegant and beautiful. It soared through the air as if it had just descended from the world of Immortals.

Last was the Crow Gloom Tribe. They only had two Dragoneers; one of them was dressed completely differently than the others. He wore a conical bamboo hat that hid his features, along with a woven rush raincoat that made him look like an old fisherman. Beneath his feet was a gigantic earthworm several dozen meters long, which was covered with a shocking, viscous liquid. As the earthworm whizzed through the air, it emitted a very peculiar smell.

"I doubt that Yan Song and the others are with the Dragoneers. They're most likely with the totem vassals from the various Tribes." As he sized the others up, he could see that they were looking over at him and Mo Zi. 1

Mo Zi looked over at the nearing Dragoneers and grimly said, "Grandmaster Meng, you'd better not disappoint me in the competition." With that, the two-headed Flood Dragon shot forward toward the golden light.

Meng Hao frowned slightly and then sighed inwardly. Ever since coming to the Western Desert, he had very rarely taken the initiative in provoking others. However, as he slowly revealed more and more power, it was only natural for others to take note of him. Disputes would obviously rise up, although that was not Meng Hao's intention.

"I'll have to settle this dispute sooner or later," he thought, a vicious look appearing in his eyes. Having practiced Cultivation up to his current point, he very well understood the law of the jungle. When decisiveness

was required, Meng Hao would not be softhearted.

Soon, everyone was nearing the golden glow. There, a floating golden platform could be seen that looked almost like an arena. It was surrounded by swirling, golden shield.

Before long, all the members of the five great Tribes arrived to float around the golden platform. The various Greatfathers and Priests did not exchange many words. They looked at each other coldly, and without any hint of politeness, chose to let the fighting begin.

The Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather looked back at his vassals, and said, "There are two rounds of fighting, each of which could be considered a battle royal. One is for Totem Cultivators, the other is for Dragoneers! We must win both battles!

"During each battle royal, every Tribe can send three people into battle. If a Tribe wins in both battles, then they naturally will take first place. As for who takes second, that will be based on the performance of the vassals; there are a few who are still deciding on whether or not to attend.

"Throughout the history of these battles, there have been deaths. Vassals, I urge you, if you find yourself outmatched... please forfeit the match. The importance of victory or defeat cannot be overstated, however. I encourage you to work together with a sense of camaraderie.

"The first battle is for Totem Cultivators!" After the Greatfather finished speaking, three vassals emerged from the others. They clasped hands to the Greatfather and then shot toward the golden light.

One of the three was none other than the strange, unimposing man Meng Hao had noticed earlier. Meng Hao observed him as he shot forward, his eyes flickering. He circulated the Immortal Qi of Immortal Shows the Way, then blinked his right eye several times in succession.

This time when he looked at the man, his pupils constricted.

He could now clearly see that this man was no Western Desert Cultivator. A cloud-like mist covered his body, within which... was the Outlander Beast, which the parrot had chased after months before.

Even more astonishing, he could also see traces of the meat jelly on the Outlander Beast. With his Celestial Vision technique he could even see the Qi of the parrot.

*

1. As a quick re-cap, the infiltration party consisted of Yan Song, the alchemist from the Eastern Lands that Meng Hao met in Holy Snow City. There was also Mo Li and a guy surnamed Wang; it was implied that they were a gay couple. Finally was Li Tao, the one who gave them all the ability to disguise themselves and their Southern Domain Cultivator Qi.

Chapter 419: Outtie

“The parrot never came back after it went chasing the Outlander Beast. It’s impossible to tell what happened between the two of them. In any case, it seems... they came to some sort of agreement?” He ended the Celestial Vision technique. He was astonished, of course, but considering the parrot’s personality, anything was possible.

All of a sudden, Meng Hao felt a bit sorry for all the people from the other tribes who were making their way onto the platform within the golden shield.

“I would imagine Yan Song and the others are in that group....” he thought, looking the group over. Of course, Yan Song and the others were wily old foxes who would obviously have taken precautions to prevent anyone from realizing who they were. After looking at the twelve vassals from the other Tribes, even Meng Hao couldn’t discern any clues.

This was a battle royal with fifteen Totem Cultivators from the five Tribes. As they stepped into the golden shield on the platform, they did not speak. Instead, booming sounds immediately filled the air as the fighting began.

Each group of three formed a unit, instantly become comrades-in-arms as they joined forces. At least, this was what happened with the other four Tribes. However... as for the three people from the Crow Scout Tribe, it was a different story.

The man-form Outlander Beast stepped onto the platform, lifted his head with a roar, and then charged forward. He didn’t even look at his two compatriots, which caused them to stare in astonishment. They had a mind to follow in the charge, but the ferocity emanating from the man-form Outlander Beast seemed to indicate that he intended to fight solo. The two immediately backed up, trembling.

This development caused the Cultivators from the other Tribes to stare wide-eyed in surprise. In fact, many of them assumed that this was some sort of pre-planned tactic on the part of the Crow Scout Tribe.

However, the Greatfather and Priest of the Crow Scout Tribe, as well as other influential members, were all clearly stunned. The Tribe members from the other four Tribes looked on thoughtfully.

Rumbling filled the air, and Meng Hao's eyes glittered. However, what he was looking at was not the man-form Outlander Beast, but rather the vassals from the other Tribes. He was still trying to figure out which ones were Yan Song and the others.

Suddenly, the man-form Outlander Beast howled, "You bunch of immoral bastards! I represent Outtie and my fifth kid bro! I'm here to convert all of you!"

The sound of it was like thunder. In the blink of an eye, the man was in front of one of the three-man units. Immediately, a boom could be heard, and magical totemic lights sprang out.

These three men were from the Crow Flame Tribe. They watched the man approached, then simultaneously attacked without hesitation. At once, an enormous boom rattled out as magical techniques collided.

"Waaaaaahhhhh!" shouted the man, sounding as if he felt wronged. "One, two, three... dammit! There's three of you! THREE! Three against one is immoral!!" Hearing this caused strange expressions to appear on the faces of the surrounding Tribe members.

They watched on as the big man retreated. As he did, his expression suddenly changed; now it looked somewhat vile.

"Bitches!" cried the man. "It looks like you people lack screwing! Well you wait. You just wait!" He no longer looked hurt, but rather, wildly pompous and arrogant. This time, he headed toward a different group of three.

"I thrust!

"I screw!

"Hahaha. And I thrust again!" The large man's voice was now piercing, and even more arrogant. It was with incredible speed that he shot back and forth among the various people. He seemed to be incredibly thick

skinned; no matter how people struck him, it didn't do anything. The vassals were growing more furious; this man's attacks were completely despicable and shameless. All his divine abilities seemed to be focused on one finger.

And that finger... specialized in attacking rear ends.

Furthermore, he didn't differentiate between Tribes. He attacked anyone in his field of vision, even the two people from the Crow Scout Tribe. They, too, were jabbed by the man, which caused them to burst forth with fury. After all, they were from the same Tribe and shouldn't be attacking each other.

Because of this provocation, the battle royal immediately... was no longer a battle royal. Now, all of the members of the various Tribes were ganging up on this one, large man.

Subsequently, the faces of the Crow Scout Tribe members in the audience were quite unsightly. The Greatfather and the Priest, even the Grand Elder, all had extremely grim expressions on their faces.

Throughout all the years that this Ancestral Rite Competition had been held, nothing like this had ever happened. This was no battle royal; instead, it was a beat down.

Meng Hao gave a dry cough, and looked a little bit guilty. After all, if he hadn't brought the parrot to this place, then this competition would not have turned out this way.

"The meat jelly can't die.... The parrot's twisted vices.... I'm afraid the savagery of the Outlander Beast is the next thing we will see. Heyyy... if nothing else out of the ordinary happens, the Crow Scout Tribe will most likely be the winner." Even as Meng Hao was thinking these thoughts, a roar of rage could suddenly be heard from the platform as one of the other Crow Scout Tribe vassals charged in attack.

He couldn't take it any longer. Having been jabbed three times in succession was too much of a humiliation. Roaring furiously, he charged the large man, completely ignoring the fact that they were fellow vassals from the same Tribe.

The other vassal next to him was about to block his way when suddenly, the large man flickered into being next to him. His finger jabbed out.

“Dammit, we’re together! You, you, you....” Infuriated, the vassal’s eyes turned red and he let out a furious shout. “Fine! To the death!”

Once again the scene of the battle taking place inside the golden shield on the platform changed. Now, everyone was bombarding the big man. This was not even to mention the Tribe members on the outside, who were also preparing to attack him. After all, his attacks were completely shameless, despicable to the extreme.

In their entire lives, none of them had ever seen someone as vulgar as this.

Immediately, the members of the other Tribes began to ridicule the Crow Scout Tribe members.

“This is the Ancestral Rite Competition! For the Crow Scout Tribe to have recruited a vassal like that, it’s... intentionally causing trouble!”

“Maybe the Crow Scout Tribe couldn’t find anyone else, and then this shameless fellow showed up!”

The faces of the Crow Scout Tribe members were extremely unsightly. They wanted to offer up retorts, but there was really nothing they could say. The Greatfather’s eyes were filled with fury as he glared at the man up on the platform.

Meng Hao sighed inwardly, and felt even more guilty. However, he continued to study the members of the other Tribes up on the platform, hoping to see pick up on some clues as to the identities of Yan Song and the others.

Suddenly, his eyes flickered as they came to rest on a vassal standing with the Crow Gloom Tribe. It was a middle-aged man, tall and stalwart, his face filled with savagery. However, when the man-form Outlander Beast attacked him, his face looked different from that of the others. He looked a bit hesitant, even somewhat absentminded.

The look quickly disappeared, to be replaced with fury. However, even as

the fury filled his face, one of the vassals from the Crow Soldier Tribe suddenly shot forward in pursuit of the Outlander Beast.

Meng Hao's eyes narrowed. Based on this development, he could now tell who these two people were. "Mo Li and Eccentric Wang!"

The howling man-form Outlander Beast was now surrounded.

"Outtie, you wimp, it's your turn!" Suddenly, a tremor ran through the man's body. It was at this exact moment that the surrounding vassals all attacked.

A shocking boom echoed out. From the perspective of everyone watching, there was no way the man could possibly escape death. It was only Meng Hao that let out a sigh; he knew that the Outlander Beast was coming.

Within the booming sound, an astonishing roar suddenly lifted up. The intensity of the roar turned into an attack that rippled out in all directions on the platform. The sight of this attack caused the observing members of the five Tribes to stop breathing and stare in disbelief.

What they saw was all of the vassals who were attacking the large man suddenly tumbling backward, their faces filled with disbelief and shock.

The man who everyone had assumed would die stood there with an expression of savagery, his eyes bright red and his hair flying about. He lifted his head to the sky and roared with the madness of a neo-demon.

His body flickered, and he suddenly appeared in front of one of the other vassals, his face filled with cruelty. His hands reached out with a strange motion and grabbed ahold of the vassal, who had no chance to evade. Then, he ripped.

A bloodcurdling scream filled the air as the Cultivator's body was torn completely in half. Blood showered everywhere, and the large man flickered again.

Miserable screams filled the air. The gory scene instantly caused the surrounding members of the five great Tribes to feel incredible shock. They began to pant, their eyes wide.

It took only a moment for three people to die. The big man was like an unmatched Celestial warrior; to approach him was the same as approaching death.

“I forfeit!!” cried a vassal from the Crow Flame Tribe as he saw the man approaching him. Trembling, his body suddenly disappeared through the golden shield as he left the battlefield.

“I forfeit!!”

“I forfeit!!” The shouts rang out one after another, although some people were too late, and ended up getting ripped into pieces by the frenzied man.

“I for....” One vassal from the Crow Soldier Tribe was just beginning to speak when the man-form Outlander Beast appeared in front of him. The Outlander Beast opened his mouth wide and directly bit down onto the vassal’s neck, causing his words to instantly change into a bloodcurdling shriek.

It took only moments for the platform to be completely empty except for the big man. He stood there, looking around savagely and roaring.

“Crow Scout Tribe,” he cried, “I have secured victory for you! Now give me the Pool of Destiny!!”

The Crow Scout Tribe members’ minds were reeling. The Sky Priest was panting and the Grand Elder was staring with wide eyes. As for the Greatfather, his eyes flickered and he started to laugh.

“Exactly as it should be,” he said. “Fellow Daoist, you have secured yourself a spot in the Pool of Destiny!”

The man gazed at the Greatfather and then nodded. He took a step, and then his body flickered and he left the golden shield. When he reappeared, the surrounding Tribe members all backed up and made room for him. Their hearts trembled as they avoided him. As the man neared, he seemed to almost be attempting to avoid Meng Hao’s gaze.

Everything was quiet for the space of about ten breaths. Finally, a grim voice called out from the Crow Fighter Tribe.

“Second battle, Dragoneer Duel!”

Meng Hao looked up.

Chapter 420: Break those Fangs!

“What a pity,” thought Meng Hao. “I was only able to identify Mo Li and old devil Wang. There was no way to figure out who Yan Song and Li Tao are.”

“Grandmaster Meng,” said rank 7 Dragoneer Mo Zi coolly, “you need to be careful. This is a battle of life and death. When the time comes, hopefully you’ll have enough time to say the word ‘forfeit.’” He passed by Meng Hao, glaring at him with a sinister expression.

Next to him was Mo Fang, who looked at Meng Hao with a look of deep fury and the clear desire to kill.

As the father and son shot past him into the golden shield, Meng Hao’s expression was calm. Of course, that was the nature of Meng Hao’s personality; the calmer he looked, the more likely he was to kill.

Considering his opponents had bared their fangs, then as far as Meng Hao was concerned, it was time to break those fangs!

Wu Ling looked nervous as she watched Meng Hao. Wu Chen stood next to her, his eyes filled with fanaticism. He had ultimate confidence in Meng Hao, almost to the point of blind faith. In his heart, Meng Hao’s strength was incomparable.

Meng Hao’s body flickered as he and Big Hairy turned into a white beam that shot toward the golden shield. As they entered, Meng Hao’s eyes flickered. The shield was like water passing over his skin. He could very clearly feel the Wood-type power within it. It seemed as if he could even utilize the power of the Greenwood Tree totem to exercise some simple level of control over it.

At the same time, there also appeared to be Metal-type power within the golden light, which caused Meng Hao no small bit of surprise.

Almost at the same time that Meng Hao stepped foot onto the platform, Dragoneers from the other four Tribes arrived in groups of threes. Gu La, the old woman, the old fisherman, and others. All of the Dragoneers who

would be participating in the battle now stood on the platform. It was at this moment that....

Roars immediately shook Heaven and Earth as Gu La waved his hand, causing nearly a hundred neo-demons to appear around the howling Wild Giant. Among the shocking group were more than ten Flood Dragons as well as a gigantic Zombie Wolf which emanated boundless Death Qi. This immediately set Gu La apart from the others in shocking fashion.

The continuous roars of the Wild Giant caused the observing members of the five great Tribes to be filled with shock.

Next was the old woman. The giant Cyclops Ape she rode let out a howl as she seemed to open up a door in the air itself. Instantly, a horde of apes appeared, every single one of them a Demonic Cyclops. There were nearly a hundred in total, the sight of which was just as shocking as that of Gu La.

After her was the white-haired old man with the demeanor of a transcendent being, who rode the mighty white crane. He waved his hand and was suddenly surrounded by a vast collection of tiny white snakes. The number of snakes he possessed vastly outnumbered that of the neo-demons of the other Dragoneers. There were hundreds of them, all of whom had forked tongues that flicked in and out. The aura of a hyper toxic venom drifted out from them.

Most shocking of all, however, was the old fisherman. The enormous earthworm he stood atop of let out a noiseless roar as massive amounts of silt magically appeared around the both of them. Within the silt burrowed countless vicious-looking earthworms that swayed back and forth, making the whole scene look like an illusion.

Then there was Mo Zi. As the roaring, two-headed Flood Dragon circled around him, distortions appeared in the air. A neo-demon horde emerged from within, a vast collection of howling Flood Dragons, none of which were small.

As for Meng Hao, he didn't look quite as impressive as the others. His horde only contained a few dozen Greenwood Wolves and Bats, which was

not enough to shock anyone when compared to the other five.

As of this moment, all the members of the five great Tribes outside of the golden shield were paying close attention. This was especially true of the Tribe Greatfathers and Priests. The Dragoneer Duel was much different than the battle of Totem Cultivators. Totems represented personal strength. However, in many aspects, Dragoneers could influence the Tribe as a whole.

Whichever way you looked at it, Dragoneers were in a far higher position than Totem Cultivators.

The first battle of the Ancestor Rite Competition could be ignored to some extent; the truly important part of the whole thing was the second battle!

Wu Ling looked extremely nervous. Wu Chen looked excited and passionate. The rest of the members of the five great Tribes exchanged anxious glances....

It was at this point that the battle royal began!

In the past, Meng Hao had always waited for others to take the initiative in battle. But after coming to the Western Desert, things were different. He would be the first one out of the gate. And when he attacked... it was with the intent to kill!

His first attack was actually not levelled against any of the Dragoneers from the four other Tribes, but instead, toward Mo Zi.

Bear your teeth? Then you're looking to die!

That was Meng Hao. If you attack, you must do so with decisiveness and killing intent.

He waved his sleeve, and immediately, Big Hairy howled as his body began to expand. The wolfpack next to him, as well as the Black Bat, all transformed into beams of light that shot toward Mo Zi and his neo-demon horde.

Meng Hao's attack caught Mo Zi completely by surprise. He had never

imagined that Meng Hao would be the first one to make a move, let alone against him. His plan all along had been to launch a sneak attack against Meng Hao during the thick of battle, so that he would have a good excuse in case anyone called him out on the matter.

Meng Hao's attack had thus caught him completely unawares.

"Are you looking to die!?" he roared. Flood Dragons from the horde next to him roared and shot toward Meng Hao's neo-demons. Off to the side, Mo Fang's face filled with intense rage as he glared at Meng Hao. Then a cold smile twisted his face.

"You're dead!" he said.

Rumbling sounds immediately rose up into the sky.

Meng Hao's attack filled the other Dragoneer vassals with shock. Everyone outside of the golden shield also watched on, eyes flickering with astonishment.

"What's going on with the Crow Scout Tribe...?"

"They have another turncoat? Don't tell me that this guy is just like that guy from before, so powerful that he can beat everyone else?"

"No way! Dragoneer Tian Qi is too powerful, and could never be defeated by that guy."

The shocked members of the other Tribes slowly looked over to the members of the Crow Scout Tribe. What they saw was the Crow Scout Tribe members in complete astonishment. This was especially true of the Greatfather and the Priest, whose expressions were very similar to their expressions during the first battle.

This prompted further discussions.

"Dammit, something's wrong here. Look at their expressions!"

"The first time was understandable, but for the same thing to happen again means it has to be some kind of trick on their part!!"

"But.... What trick exactly is it? To kill each other first?"

As the discussion continued on the outside, inside the golden shield Mo Zi was laughing uproariously.

“Meng, you twerp, since you’re looking to die, don’t blame me for accommodating you. We’re both vassals of the same Tribe, but considering how you’re attacking me, you must be a double agent! In that case... I’m going to kill you even if you do try to forfeit!” Mo Zi had sent half of his Flood Dragons, as well as the two-headed Flood Dragon, charging forward in attack.

A huge boom resonated up into the sky. Big Hairy was a blinding white beam of light, filled with savagery. The Black Bat flickered forward. Its sharp teeth glinted, and the body of one of the Flood Dragons immediately shrivelled up. It died with a miserable shriek.

Mo Zi’s face immediately fell. He had predicted that Meng Hao would be strong, but he never imagined that the White Wolf and Black Bat would be so shocking. In fact, he almost couldn’t believe that this was the same bat that used to belong to him. In his recollection, its latent talent didn’t match up to the Flood Dragons, which was why he had eventually given it to his son to protect him.

How could he ever have imagined that under Meng Hao’s control, the Black Bat would exhibit such astonishing power!?

“Things are just beginning,” he then said with a cold laugh. “I’d originally planned to use this next trick on an outsider, but I guess you’ll do nicely.” With that, he slapped his bag of holding. Immediately, hundreds of howling Flood Dragons emerged, ten of whom were two-headed.

When the other Dragoneers saw the Qi emanating from these Flood Dragons, it filled their faces with shock. Of course, those on the outside of the shield were even more surprised.

Meng Hao looked indifferently at the Flood Dragons and then said, “Wrong. Things aren’t beginning, they’re ending.”

His hand flashed an incantation gesture, and then pushed down onto his dantian region. Immediately, his Gold Core trembled as a roar emanated

out from the ancient Flying Rain-Dragon Core.

In accompaniment with the roar, the illusory image of a three hundred meter long Flying Rain-Dragon appeared above his head. It had a long tail, wings with sharp tips, and blood-red eyes. Immediately, a shocking Qi emanated out.

Even the golden shield began to ripple and distort. The surrounding Dragoneers stared in shock.

“That’s....”

“A level 11 neo-demon! Heavens, that’s... the illusory spirit projection of a level 11 neo-demon!!”

“Such pressure.... This guy... don’t tell me he’s a Grand Dragoneer!?!?”

All of the other Dragoneers on the platform were shocked. They and their neo-demons were all trembling with intense fear as they looked at the Flying Rain-Dragon.

The intense pressure emanated by something vastly above them suddenly filled the area.

This intangible pressure covered everything within the golden shield on the platform. The instant the Flying Rain-Dragon appeared, the Flood Dragons around Mo Zi began to shake and emit plaintive shrieks. They seemed to be shrieks of fear bordering on phobia.

They all shrank back, shaking, as if they couldn’t stand up to the pressure weighing down on them. Their miserable shrieks were such that it seemed as if their bodies might begin to collapse.

Meng Hao’s face was cold as he waved his right hand. Immediately, the Flying Rain-Dragon let out a shocking howl which caused the golden shield to shake, and the sky outside of the shield to grow dim. The ancient Flying Rain-Dragon was a sovereign of the sky, and its pride and dignity were now on full display as it charged toward the trembling Flood Dragons.

When it passed, there were no miserable shrieks. The Flood Dragons did

nothing to prevent the Flying Rain-Dragon from swallowing them up. Regardless of whether they had two heads or one, in front of the Flying Rain-Dragon, they were so weak that they couldn't do anything to resist. Within the space of a few breaths, they had all been completely consumed.

Mo Zi cried out in alarm and disbelief. His face was pale white as he staggered backward. As the Flying Rain-Dragon neared him, his eyes filled with frenzy. His eyes radiating with manic desire to continue living, he suddenly grabbed Mo Fang, and shoved him out in front.

"I, Mo Zi, have submerged myself in the Dao of Dragoneering for many years. I have expended my heart's blood in my pursuits, in my research in how to produce shocking neo-demons. Meng, you twerp, I refuse to give in!" Roaring, he performed an incantation with his left hand as the Flying Rain-Dragon neared. Then he pushed his hand down onto the head of his son Mo Fang. A look of disbelief and confusion could be seen on Mo Fang's face as blood sprayed from his mouth. Suddenly, his head exploded.

"Take my son to give birth to a new neo-demon! Use my son's soul to bring forth the Mo Clan's Dragoneer Legacy, the eight-headed Mo Flood Dragon!"

Roaring could be heard as Mo Fang's body shook. Suddenly, the black head of a Flood Dragon emerged from within. It flew out into the air.

One. Two. Three.... It took only a split second for eight heads to burst out from within Mo Fang's body.

Chapter 421: THAT Fishing Line!

Mo Fang's body exploded into pieces. However, his flesh and blood did not disappear, but rather congealed together. In the blink of an eye, it formed eight Flood Dragon heads. Another moment later, a three hundred meter long, eight-headed Flood Dragon was there in front of Mo Zi.

Mo Zi's eyes were bright red as he lifted his head back and howled. The Flood Dragon in front of him let out a roar as it sped toward the incoming Flying Rain-Dragon.

"Kill them!" cried Mo Zi frenziedly.

The eight-headed Flood Dragon was much different than an ordinary Flood Dragon and was just barely able to stand up to the pressure exerted by the Flying Rain-Dragon. It charged forward with a howl, then slammed into the Flying Rain-Dragon.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he watched on coldly. The surrounding Dragoneers observed the scene with shock. Outside of the golden shield, the members of the five great Tribes were panting. All of them were paying close attention to this battle of dragons!

A boom rose up into the sky, along with a miserable shriek. Three out of eight of the Flood Dragon's heads transformed into clouds of blood and gore as the Flying Rain-Dragon swallowed them up. The remaining five heads let out frantic cries and tried to bite the Flying Rain-Dragon. The Flying Rain-Dragon lifted its head up to the sky and roared. It sounded as if its dignity had been encroached upon! Its body began to grow larger until it was several hundred meters larger. Then it slammed once again into the Flood Dragon.

Everything shook as a massive explosion rippled out. The rest of the Flood Dragon's five heads let out shrieks, and its entire body trembled. Looks of terror appeared on its faces, and it was just beginning to retreat when a huge boom could be heard. The entire Flood Dragon began to explode into blood and flesh. In response, the Flying Rain-Dragon sucked all of it in and swallowed it in one huge gulp.

Mo Zi was scared out of his mind. His brain spun as he backed up.

“I forfeit!!” he cried, completely overcome by his terror. It was at this moment of crisis that a golden light swirled out toward him from the golden shield, preparing to pull him out of the platform.

The Flying Rain-Dragon roared again. Suddenly flames appeared, as if its body were about to burn up. The flames rose up into the sky as the Flying Rain-Dragon shot toward Mo Zi. The instant Mo Zi was about to be pulled out from within the golden shield, the Flying Rain-Dragon slammed into the golden light, blocking it.

“When Meng Hao wants to kill someone, nobody can interfere!” said Meng Hao coolly. He slowly lifted his right finger. Immediately the image of a Greenwood Tree became visible on his forehead. Wood-type power emanated out, following the direction of Meng Hao’s finger to shoot toward the golden shield.

Because the golden shield was made up of Wood-and Metal-type energy, the power of the Greenwood Tree caused it to begin to ripple and distort. The Flying Rain-Dragon stretched its head out. Just when Mo Zi was heaving a sigh of relief as he thought he was about to escape, everything went black.

That was because the Flying Rain-Dragon’s mouth had latched onto him.

A miserable shriek could be heard from Mo Zi, which was cut off by crunching sounds. The top half of Mo Zi’s body was swallowed down by the Flying Rain-Dragon.

This was what it meant to break the fangs!

The Flying Rain-Dragon slowly dissipated. The shocking scene immediately caused a huge commotion among the members of the five Crow Divinity Tribes outside of the golden shield.

“He’s... he’s a Grand Dragoneer!!”

“That dragon.... What kind of dragon is it? I’ve never seen a neo-demon like that before!!”

“Even the ancestral shield was powerless. Mo Zi obviously forfeited, but still got killed!”

Slowly, the eyes of all the Tribe members came to rest on Meng Hao.

The Greatfather of the Crow Scout Tribe stared in shock, panting. The Sky Priest quickly looked over at the Greatfather, who looked back. Both of them could see the astonishment in each other's eyes.

Both were thinking exactly the same thing: “Grand Dragoner! He must have been injured in the past, and that's why his neo-demon could only appear in illusory form. He's currently incapable of summoning its true form!”

They weren't the only ones thinking along these lines. Apparently the Greatfathers and Priests from the other Tribes were all coming to the same conclusion.

The Grand Elder of the Crow Scout Tribe took a deep breath as he looked at Meng Hao. No longer were his eyes filled with hostility and contempt. Instead, he now looked at Meng Hao as if he were looking at someone of similar status to himself.

Wu Ling was panting, her face flushed with excitement and hands clenched into fists. She was once again reminded that Grandmaster Meng was the most powerful person she could rely on in her attempts to raise herself and Wu Chen to prominence within the Tribe.

As for Wu Chen, his eyes were filled with zeal. In his eyes, Meng Hao wielded the might of the Heavens; there was no one whom he had esteemed more in his entire life.

As for the man-form Outlander Beast, he stood there with wide eyes, muttering to himself.

Everyone else had similar reactions. This was not to mention all of the people inside of the golden shield. Gu La took a deep breath, and his eyes filled with pain. At long last, he had resigned himself to his fate. A figure as powerful as Meng Hao was not someone who he could afford to provoke. There was really no other option than to just accept his lot. At

the same time, he was actually somewhat happy.

“The Young Master has grown even stronger. It seems following him won’t be such a bad choice.” His eyes turned to the side thoughtfully as he considered how to perform some meritorious deed that would propel him up from being little more than Meng Hao’s zookeeper.

It was at this moment, when everyone was still in the throes of shock, that the old woman, the white-haired old man, and the Dragoneer dressed like a fisherman all made a move at the same time. Their neo-demons roared as they shot toward Meng Hao, who was now without his illusory Flying Rain-Dragon.

Looks of greed could be seen in their eyes. As Dragoneers, they were able to read between the eyes; they knew that something was wrong with Meng Hao’s illusory dragon neo-demon. It couldn’t exist for very long before disappearing. If they could kill Meng Hao, then they would be able to seize the rest of his neo-demons.

“He’s an injured Grand Dragoneer! He wields the might of a Grand Dragoneer, however... he is not like the true legendary Grand Dragoneers who are impossible to kill!”

“To run into an injured Grand Dragoneer like this is actually luck for me!”

The three people who attacked did so in unison, clearly having reached a common understanding. As for Gu La, he had only been a part of the five Crow Divinity Tribes for a short time. The other Dragoneer vassals were not very familiar with him, and therefore, did not include him in their decision.

As they attacked, Meng Hao turned, cold, killing intent radiating from his eyes. He waved his right hand, causing the Eyeless Larva totem tattoo to spring into action. Strands of silk flew out to surround him.

Meng Hao didn’t move at all as the attacking neo-demons from the other three Dragoneers screamed toward him.

“Shameless!!” shouted Wu Ling furiously, her expression one of anxiety.

The others from the Crow Scout Tribe looked completely indignant. The Greatfather and the Sky Priest, even the Grand Elder, all flew up in the air to go rescue Meng Hao. Unfortunately, they were immediately obstructed by the Greatfathers and Priests from the other Tribes.

Meanwhile, up on the platform, Gu La watched as all of this was happening. His face flickered, and without hesitation, he sent his neo-demon horde whistling through the air toward the other three Dragoneers.

At this critical juncture, a massive roaring sound ripped out through the air from the direction of Meng Hao. The source of this sound was none other than the strands of silk from the Eyeless Larva, which spun rapidly through the air. Suddenly, they shot outward in all directions, slashing through the incoming neo-demons and turning them into a cloud of blood.

Moments later, Meng Hao strolled out from within the sea of blood. Silk continued to spin around him as he looked coldly at the three who had just attacked him. As for them, their faces flickered and they began to step backward.

It was at this point that the old woman's eyes flickered with anger. Suddenly, the giant Cyclops Ape which she had held in reserve charged in attack toward Meng Hao.

"Wild Giant?" said Meng Hao, his voice indifferent. Immediately, the Wild Giant roared and dashed forward. It directly picked up the giant Cyclops Ape and then viciously bit into the creature, sending blood spraying everywhere. As the Cyclops Ape screamed, the old woman's face twisted. She was about to try to retreat when a white flash of light appeared. Suddenly, Big Hairy was standing behind her, his eyes cold and grim. Without hesitation, he savagely bit down onto the woman's neck.

She wanted to struggle, but then the Black Bat appeared. Its fangs sank into her, and she let out a bloodcurdling scream as her life force was sucked away. In the blink of an eye, she was turned into a withered corpse.

Even as this was happening, the transcendent, white-haired old man

atop the white crane shot toward the golden shield in an obvious attempt to flee the platform. As soon as he appeared outside, he looked back at Meng Hao, his face pale. He then let out a sigh of relief.

Back atop the platform, Meng Hao ignored the man and began to walk toward the old fisherman. However, at the same time, he said, "Parrot?"

Immediately, the large man who was standing among the Crow Scout Tribe members outside the shield let out a roar and charged toward the old man who had just emerged from the shield. The man's cry of alarm turned into a miserable shriek as he was torn to pieces. As for the white crane, its cries were even more bloodcurdling.

Back on the platform, the other weaker Dragoneers were all fleeing. The only ones who remained were Meng Hao, Gu La and the old fisherman.

The old fisherman's face was ashen and filled with astonishment as Meng Hao strode toward him. It was as if Meng Hao's feet were trampling upon his heart and mind. He felt an increasingly intense pressure, and was well aware that he could not flee in this situation. He also knew that even if Meng Hao was an injured Grand Dragoneer, he still was not someone who could be provoked.

However, the fisherman also knew that this was a critical life-or-death moment. The fight to survive lit his eyes. He waved his right hand, causing his enormous earthworm to let out a vicious shriek. At the same time, the countless earthworms within the magical silt suddenly flew up and attached themselves onto the giant earthworm. Now they were tentacles, making the giant earthworm look even more ferocious.

At the same time, the old fisherman spit up a mouthful of blood and then began to perform an incantation with both hands.

"Occult Karma Magic!" he cried. Immediately, the enormous earthworm lowered its head, opened its mouth and did something that came as a complete shock to all the onlookers.... It swallowed the old fisherman whole. After that, the top of the earthworm's head began to bulge, and suddenly the face of the old fisherman appeared there.

"I can't hope to fight back against a Grand Dragoneer," he cried. "But

this Occult Karma Magic that I acquired years ago allows me to merge my body with a neo-demon and become a new life form! Even if you are a Grand Dragoneer, you can't fight me now!"

Meng Hao's expression flickered, and he immediately retreated, an expression of unprecedented seriousness filling his face. His Cultivation base was now in full rotation, and his eyes shone with a bright gleam. What he was looking at was, not the old man, but something else in up in the air!

What had caught his attention was actually... the Occult Karma Magic!

Within this Occult Magic, Meng Hao could sense the Qi of the Ji Clan!

Suddenly, a gigantic vortex appeared up in the sky, within which a silver string appeared that looked very much like a fishing line. It shot down toward the old man who had merged with the earthworm. 1

Instantly, everything went silent. Meng Hao noticed with astonishment that everything, including the Greatfathers, were all completely motionless. It was as if everything in the entire world had been frozen in place!!

It was like everyone in the world had become fishes on the chopping block, just waiting for that fishing line to hook them and take them away.

Apparently, he was the only person in the world capable of seeing this silver thread.

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1. This will surely cause some readers to recall a scene from chapter 307.

Chapter 422: Karmic Annihilation [1]

The world was silent. Nothing moved. Even the golden shield seemed to have become part of this perpetuity; the rays of light shining out from it also stopped moving.

The members of the five great Tribes in the area were all like clay statues, absolutely motionless.

Even the old man who had used the Occult Karma Magic to merge into the gigantic earthworm was frozen in mid-air like a statue, a maniacal laugh plastered onto his face.

The only things that could move were Meng Hao and the silver line in the air!

A profound sense of danger appeared in Meng Hao's mind. One of the main reasons he had been forced to flee the Southern Domain and go into hiding was the Ji Clan. And yet here again they appeared in the sky above the Western Desert.

Silver light floated lazily off of the line as it whistled down from up above. Ripples emanated out that seemed capable of ripping apart the very air. As it turned out, Meng Hao was not the target. Instead, the line hooked up the old earthworm man. This all happened in front of everyone present, although it seemed they weren't able to see it happening.

Meng Hao started to breath heavily. He didn't dare to move. He stood in place, watching, trying to look exactly like everyone else. He remained completely motionless, attempting to not even think.

He could see that at the end of the silver line was a hook. The hook was currently stabbing effortlessly through the body of the earthworm, piercing all the way through. It was almost like the old earthworm man was now bait on the hook....

Meng Hao's mind spun and his heart was pounding.

"It's not a thread, it's a fishing line, the same type you would use to go fishing!!" Meng Hao remained motionless, but was able to clearly see

everything happening. After the old earthworm man was completely stabbed through by the hook, he was suddenly wrenched up into the sky.

Suddenly, an archaic voice could be heard from up above, where the fishing line originated from. In a leisurely tone, it said, “So, it turns out there are Cultivators in the Western Desert who practice Occult Karma Magic. Turned your body into bait, huh? I guess I can use you to go fishing. Maybe I can snag a big fish from the Western Desert. Since you’re fish bait now, you have no need for Karma.”

As the voice echoed out, Meng Hao was astonished to find that he could suddenly see threads attached to the bodies of everyone present. They were faint, indistinct and flickering, and seemed to contain fate itself. If you looked closely, all of the threads seemed to be connected to each other.

Regardless of neo-demon or Cultivator, even the mountains and rivers, all things in the world, were filled with vast quantities of these threads. They spread out, connected together, even to the earthworm man up in the air. Everything and everyone was connected together into something like an enormous, living web.

Anything seen or remembered caused a merging of Karma strings, connecting everything.

“Henceforth, let your Karma be extinguished,” said the ancient voice in the sky. Suddenly, Meng Hao could see that the threads attached to the earthworm up in the sky were suddenly beginning to collapse and be destroyed!

As these threads of fate were being eliminated, it caused a huge chain reaction. All of the other threads connected to everything else—mountains, rivers, the land, the neo-demons, the Cultivators—began to tremble.

Even more shocking to Meng Hao was that the surrounding Cultivators were all trembling, and their faces were pale. The threads attached from them to the earthworm began to shatter into pieces. It wasn’t all the threads attached to everything; rather, any connection or memory they had regarding the existence of the old earthworm man, was collapsing.

Now it seemed as if the balance of Karma had been disturbed. By forcibly erasing the Karma that had been sown, it affected the rest of Karma in all creation.

It was at this moment that Meng Hao's mind began to tremble; he had just noticed that the threads attached to his own body were trembling and seemed to be on the verge of collapsing. An unspeakable power seemed to be spreading out through the world. It seemed any vestige or memory of the old earthworm man was being completely wiped out.

Even as his mind reeled, the Demon Sealing Jade suddenly began to vibrate inside his bag of holding. A warm, gentle power emanated out from it to envelop Meng Hao's entire person. It appeared as if the threads attached to Meng Hao were collapsing, but in truth, as that massive power washed over him, the memories of the old earthworm man were not wiped away.

Suddenly, the earthworm man up above transformed into a beam of light that shot up into the sky and then disappeared.

Finally, the previously still world once again began to move.

As things returned to normal... everyone shuddered.

The golden light once again emanated up around the platform. Gu La had a look of confusion on his face, which was quickly replaced with happiness. With a loud shout, he proclaimed his forfeiture, after which he was enveloped by golden light and pulled off of the platform.

Nothing existed in his memories regarding the old fisherman. He only remembered Meng Hao's fabulous victory over the other Dragoneers.

Outside of the golden shield, the Greatfathers of the five great Tribes were completely recovered. All of them had different expressions as their gazes came to focus on Meng Hao. Their memories did not contain anything regarding the old fisherman either. It was as if the old fisherman... had never even existed.

"The Crow Scout Tribe has recruited a Grand Dragoneer!"

"The Crow Scout Tribe must have paid a hefty price in preparation for

this Ancestor Rite Competition. Otherwise, they would never have been able to convince a Grand Dragoner to work for them!"

As the buzz of conversation rose up from the members of the five great Tribes, Meng Hao stood on the platform, his face ashen. Nobody that he could see looked even a little bit different than from before. In fact, it seemed as if... none of them were even aware that everything had stopped moving moments ago.

Furthermore, they had no reaction whatsoever to the sudden disappearance of the old earthworm man. Apparently, his life did not exist at all within their memories.

It seemed as if all the causes and effects of the old man's Karma had been completely severed from everything, the neo-demons, the mountains, the rivers and even the land. Not a trace remained of him in any consciousness whatsoever.

Meng Hao looked around, panting, face pale. An unprecedented feeling of fear filled him. "Now that is death... true death. To be erased from the memory of anyone you ever met, as if you had never existed in the world.... So that... that is the Karma Line of the Ji Clan!"

Suddenly, Meng Hao recalled the fishing rod in his bag of holding, the one he had acquired when he slayed one of the sons of Ji. Now he understood the function of that rod.

He also realized that if that fishing line had come for him, and hooked him instead, then perhaps all traces of his own existence would have been erased from the world.

"The Ji Clan...." Meng Hao's face was pale. He waved his right hand to collect up his neo-demon horde, then strode off of the platform. The Wild Giant accompanied him as he left.

Meng Hao paid no attention to the gazes and words directed toward him. Instead, he looked up into the sky, his face unsightly. Of course, no one could understand what he was feeling. Even the parrot seemed unaware of what had just happened.

Perhaps this wasn't because the parrot wasn't powerful enough, but rather because it didn't care enough about the old earthworm man to notice. Perhaps it had even been willing to allow it to happen.

Maybe it would have been different if the Karmic Annihilation was directed at someone important to it.

Finally Meng Hao looked back at the members of the five Crow Divinity Tribes who stood around him. As of now, everyone had to admit that the Crow Scout Tribe had clearly won the right to be the first to enter into the Crow Divinity Holy Land.

Using their bloodline powers along with a special technique, the five Tribes of the Crow Divinity fully opened the Crow Divinity Holy Land.

The Crow Scout Tribe members cheered as the Greatfather and the Sky Priest politely clasped hands and offered thanks to Meng Hao.

After that, all of the Crow Scout Tribe members, along with Meng Hao, turned into colorful beams as they shot toward the golden light. Up ahead, the tall platform was fading away, replaced by two massive doors that were slowly opening.

In front of the doors, the Greatfather clasped hands to Meng Hao and the man-form Outlander Beast. "Many thanks, Grandmaster Meng and Fellow Daoist Out. In accord with our promise, you may follow the Tribe members to enter the Luck Pool!"

Meng Hao nodded distractedly as he looked at the opening doors.

"The Karma Line of the Ji Clan is so powerful. Being destroyed by it actually erases every trace of your existence. Wow..." Meng Hao was lost in thought as the massive doors opened within the golden light. When they were about half opened, Meng Hao suddenly felt a tremor running through him. He couldn't stop his face from flickering.

That was because he had suddenly been struck with a new realization.

"Oh no! The Karma Line severs Karma, completely erasing it. It prohibits anything from remembering what was severed. That is a complete erasure. However... if someone happens to remember something about the person

who was erased, that would mean that the technique was incomplete, not perfect. Essentially, it means the technique failed.... Not good!"

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Meng Hao's face completely fell. He could imagine a situation in which whoever it was that employed the technique detected the fact that it had in fact failed. He had little time to continue thinking about the matter. His body flickered as he shot toward the huge doors.

Almost the instant he flew forward, the entire world suddenly grew still. Suddenly, the fishing line which had so recently disappeared... could be seen again up in the sky. This time, it was shooting down toward Meng Hao!

"So a little fish slipped through the net," said the archaic voice, chuckling. "You dare to spoil my Karmic Annihilation? Thankfully, you left some clues behind that I noticed, nor are you capable of causing my technique to backfire against me. The Heavens are large and the Earth is wide, but do you really think you can escape me?"

Around Meng Hao, everything was silent and unmoving!

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1. The term Karmic Annihilation came up before in chapter 208.

Chapter 423: A Fortunate Chance

Meng Hao had practiced Cultivation for many years. From the day his journey began on Mount Daqing all the way until now, he had experienced many deadly situations. However, this particular crisis was the greatest he had ever experienced by far!

The consequences of killing one of the sons of Ji had been enormous. Recently, he had sensed signs that the Mastiff might be beginning to awaken, which gave him a bit of confidence. Except now....

Having seen the old earthworm man's death, Meng Hao knew that there was absolutely no way for him to fight back against this unheard of Karmic Annihilation!

His face was pale as he realized that everything around him was once again completely still. The members of the five great Tribes, the neo-demons, even the clouds in the sky were completely motionless. Only the fishing line and Meng Hao could move.

He shot as quickly as possible through the golden light, passing through the massive doors with all the speed he could muster. He exploded with the power of the great circle of the Gold Core, vanishing inside.

However, even as Meng Hao entered the doors, the fishing line came in after him. The speed with which it moved was incredible as it followed him.

This door was no teleportation device, but rather a passageway. When Meng Hao emerged from the other side, he saw that he was surrounded by mountains.

These mountains were a murky golden color, and a faintly discernible pressure could be felt from them. In the distance in front of him were a collection of mountains that had no peaks, but rather, gaping holes at the top. What appeared to be scorching heat billowed out from the holes; these were volcanoes!

In total, there were seven of them, all linked together. This place... was

the Crow Divinity Tribes' Holy Land, and also the domain of the Golden Crow.

After entering, Meng Hao didn't pause for even a moment. However, even as he shot forward, the air around him started to fill with what looked like cracks.

The cracks emanated a fearsome Qi. Meng Hao got the feeling that if he ran into one of them, his body would most likely be torn into pieces.

Meng Hao could actually sense a strange Qi filling this entire volcanic realm. It was strange and multifarious, as if countless neo-demons were present.

As Meng Hao flew forward, he suddenly caught sight of a black wind off in the distance. It seemed as if it sensed his encroachment into this area, and was flying to intercept him. This black wind was actually composed of countless black crows. There were more than a thousand of them, blotting out the sky as they flew. Their speed was incredible, and as they neared, Meng Hao could see that their eyes were bright red and filled with frenzy.

In fact, from the Cultivation base ripples emanating out from the more than one thousand crows, Meng Hao could tell that they were level 7, comparable to the early Core Formation stage. There were even ten of them who were level 9!

Meng Hao's face flickered. However, it was at this point that the silver fishing line shot out into the Crow Divinity Holy Land. It emanated an intense rumbling that spread out with the power of stillness. Soon, everything within the Crow Divinity Holy Land... began to grow quiet and still.

The grass stopped swaying, and the cracks appearing in the air suddenly seemed to have been slowed to a standstill. As for the approaching flock of black crows, it stopped moving completely. Even the waves of heat erupting from the volcanoes ceased moving.

However... up ahead, in the centermost of the seven volcanoes, was a location that seemed to be a point of freedom within all the stillness!

“There’s life force there!” thought Meng Hao, his eyes glittering. He immediately began to fly in that direction.

Behind him, the silver line pursued at incredible speed. At its end could just barely be seen the glint of what must be a hook!

This takes some time to describe, but happened extremely quickly. Meng Hao exploded forward with all the power of his Cultivation base. He used the Bloodburst Flash without hesitation, causing him to flicker in and out of the air as he move. He moved in jumps of hundreds of meters, not holding anything back in this moment of grave crisis.

In the blink of an eye, he was directly next to the flock of motionless black crows. He was just about to continue on his way, when suddenly he felt a tremor in his heart.

“Because of the presence of the fishing line, everything has stopped moving, even these neo-demons. You could say that this is the kind of opportunity that comes around only once in a thousand years. In the entire time that the Crow Divinity Holy Land has existed, something like this has most likely never occurred.... It would really be far too much of a shame to let this opportunity slip by. It’s a risk... that I’m willing to take!”

His eyes shone with a bright light that transformed into determination. Immediately, he waved his right hand toward the motionless crows. They had absolutely no control of themselves as they turned into beams of blackness that shot into his bag of the Cosmos.

That having been accomplished, he once again proceeded forward.

Behind him, the fishing line neared!

Panting, Meng Hao bit the tip of his tongue and then sprayed some blood out of his mouth. His body flickered as the Bloodburst Flash activated, propelling him off into the distance. His face was pale, but he didn’t hesitate at all. In an instant, he had reached an area that grew thick with grass. There, he could see a group of seven or eight poisonous wasps hovering motionless in mid-air. Behind them was a gigantic wasp nest which was surrounded by dozens more wasps.

Seeing them, Meng Hao gritted his teeth, then waved his right hand. Immediately, the wasps and the wasp nest were gathered up. Then, he Bloodburst Flashed again.

“This is an extremely rare opportunity, I have to take advantage of it!!” Meng Hao was shouting inwardly, but at the same time, somewhat conflicted. This was a moment of extreme, grave danger, perhaps the most critical he had experienced since he had begun practicing Cultivation. However... this moment of crisis had transformed this Crow Divinity Holy Land into an unprecedented bit of luck!

This luck had caused everything in the area to become motionless, allowing Meng Hao free access to a variety of neo-demons. Such an opportunity caused even Meng Hao’s heart to begin to pound.

That was especially true... when he happened to look into the mouth of one of the motionless volcanoes. There he could see an enormous lizard, half emerged from the volcano. It was dozens of meters long. Meng Hao was now even more conflicted.

“Put everything on the line!” he roared. His body flickered as he shot toward the lizard. With the wave of a right hand, he collected it into his bag of the Cosmos. Then, he spit some more blood out of his mouth to shoot away at incredible speed. At this moment, it was almost like Meng Hao had forgotten about the danger to his life. Whenever he saw a neo-demon he would shoot toward it and collect it up.

One neo-demon horde and super-powerful neo-demon after another, things which had existed for countless years within the Crow Divinity Holy Land, creatures which no one had ever been able to collect even throughout all the years in which the five Tribes had offered sacrifices to the Ancestor, dangerous beasts which normally could only be avoided with special techniques... were all completely motionless, making it extremely convenient for Meng Hao to seize them.

A group of more than one thousand green mosquitos were sitting stock still within the mouth of a volcano, apparently just on their way inside to fight a gigantic crocodile that was half submerged in the lava inside.

The mouthparts of the mosquitos emitted a mysterious glow, and their bodies were ferocious looking, covered with countless fur-like spikes. They were completely shocking in appearance.

As for the crocodile, it was bright red, with two pitch-black eyes. It lay half-submerged in the lava, emanating shocking ripples.

“How... how many neo-demon hordes are in this place?!?!” thought Meng Hao, his eyes widening. The twisted feeling inside of him could not be any more intense. Behind him, the silver line whistled toward him with increasing speed. It was no less than a hundred and fifty meters away.

“Dammit!” Meng Hao’s eyes were red as he once again utilized the Bloodburst Flash. He reappeared at the mouth of the volcano, where he waved his right hand. Immediately, the mosquitos and the shocking red crocodile were sucked into his bag of the Cosmos.

His body flickered once again as he fled away. By now, the silver line was about a hundred meters away from him, and moving even faster through the air.

The sense of grave crisis was incredibly intense. Meng Hao’s eyes were completely bloodshot, and he now had no time to consider any surrounding neo-demons. Instead, he continued to head forward toward the apparently active volcano which was his goal.

Except... even as he neared it, he noticed that up ahead was, shockingly, a burial mound!

The burial mound was covered in cracks, making the coffin inside clearly visible. Inside the coffin was a corpse which was half human and half beast, completely bizarre in appearance.

What set Meng Hao panting, however, was that laying on top of the corpse’s chest was a wooden sword!!

The instant he saw the wooden sword, his eyes went wide. Meng Hao could tell that this corpse was not in fact dead. In fact, its eyes were open. Also, despite the stillness everywhere, he could still sense a threatening aura coming from it, and a powerful pressure similar to the Spirit Severing

stage.

“A third wooden sword!” he thought, breathing heavily. Having seen the sword, he knew that he must have it. Including his duplicate sword, it would increase the number of wooden swords he had to four.

As for the origin of this sword, Meng Hao wasn't sure. But his intuition told him that considering it cost two thousand ultra high-grade Spirit Stones to duplicate, it was obviously beyond ordinary. As for why it hadn't manifested its true majesty, perhaps it was because he hadn't acquired enough of them yet.

Meng Hao had the intense sensation that if he did not take advantage of this peculiar situation, then he would never again have a chance to snatch the wooden sword from this bizarre corpse.

Feeling both miserable and happy, he bit down viciously on his tongue, changing directions and shooting toward the corpse. As soon as he neared the burial mound, his hand shot in through one of the cracks and grabbed the wooden sword. As he wrenched it out, he could faintly hear a snarl of profound rage coming from the corpse.

There was no time for any further examination. Meng Hao's body flickered as he shot toward the volcano in the very center. Almost in the exact moment that he entered it, the pursuing silver line did the same.

Chapter 424: See the title after

The archaic voice boomed out from the sky to echo about within the volcano.

“Flee to the remotest corners of the Earth and you will still be incapable of evading me!”

Meng Hao was only about ten meters ahead of the silver line, his face pale.

It really seemed as if what the voice said was true. Meng Hao... was incapable of evasion!

There was lava inside this volcano, as well as one location deep within that appeared to be a cistern. The rock surrounding the cistern had been chiseled into stone steps, which in turn formed a pool of water.

Meng Hao neared, he passed through multiple restrictive spells. These restrictive spells were set up to prevent anyone not of the Crow Divinity Tribe from nearing. Any outsider who attempted to approach without the help of a Crow Divinity Tribe member would be killed.

However... Meng Hao was being followed by the fishing line. As it neared, it caused everything to cease moving, even all of the bizarre and fantastic things inside of the volcano.

The restrictive spells were also static now, and any hindering power was rendered useless. Meng Hao shot forward with all of the speed he could muster. From ancient times until now, he was the first outsider to ever come to this place alone!

This event was unprecedented. As Meng Hao neared the Pool of Destiny, waves and ripples could be seen on its surface. However, Meng Hao had nothing to be happy about. His eyes radiated despair. Earlier, he had hoped that there would be something here he could use to fight back against the silver line, which was why he had headed in this direction.

Unfortunately, it seemed that the pond was the only thing here.

“Nowhere to go....” His gaze flickered about, and he sent his Spiritual

Sense billowing out. After confirming that there really was nothing else in the area besides the Pool of Destiny, he gave a wan smile.

“The Pool of Destiny.... It seems I have nowhere to go and no other options. Well, if I’m really going to perish, then I’ll go out fighting. And I’ll do it in this Pool of Destiny!” His eyes shining with vicious determination, his body flickered and he stepped foot into the Pool of Destiny.

The very moment that he did, the silver line finally reached him. It wrapped him up immediately, binding him tightly!

As soon as the line touched him, Meng Hao’s mind filled with a roaring sound, and he felt as if his soul was about to fly out of his body. It was as if his mind and his body were completely split apart. A sensation of icy coldness appeared within his soul. He suddenly had the sense that a deadly crisis was imminent.

“As I said, you’re not strong enough to hide from me. Do you really think you can measure up to the people in the past who tried to evade my grasp? When I’ve hooked your Karma, everything is over!

“Eee? Hold on... you already have traces of Karma from the Ji Clan? It’s faint, and it looks like you’re almost on the verge of completely erasing it. Since it’s still here, though, I think I’ll just take a look and see who you are. Let’s see.... Meng Hao.... Killed one of the sons of Ji.... Wanted by the Ji Clan. Oh, so it’s you.... I guess it’s just your destiny to run into me here. I might as well settle the Karma you have with the Ji Clan.

“I am Ji Nineteen. I shall bequeath thee with... the Ji Clan’s Karmic Annihilation!” Meng Hao’s body was trembling. He felt as if his consciousness and his body were being ripped apart. His soul felt as if it were in fetters as if some massive force were preparing to wrench it out of his body. 1

He was filled with confusion, and his Cultivation base vanished. Even his Demon Sealing powers disappeared. It was as if he was nothing more than a mortal, so weak that he could do absolutely nothing to fight back.

The only thing he was aware of were the words spoken by the archaic voice, which echoed about in his head.

“Karmic Annihilation....”

He could vaguely see a vast assortment of faint, flickering threads connected to his body. These threads were his fate and Karma, massed together and stretching out into the air, connected to who knew what.

Suddenly, Meng Hao could see that deep within him, a power was spreading out to these threads, and to his very life force....

“SEVER!” said the archaic voice. The instant the word came out of his mouth, the world shook as if it were being struck with lightning.

Meng Hao’s body trembled violently as he watched the threads connected to his body beginning to collapse, as if some intangible blade were beginning to chop through them. They shattered, causing a chain reaction which destroyed even more of the threads. It was impossible to say whose memories these threads connected to, but in this instant, they were falling into pieces.

It didn’t matter how much distance was involved, the threads were destroyed. The effect began to spread about throughout all the lands of South Heaven.

In the Western Desert, outside the golden light, everything was completely still. All the members of the five great Crow Divinity Tribes suddenly shivered. Their faces went pale and filled with blankness. Within their memories, any trace of Meng Hao was erased, almost as if it were annihilated.

Wu Ling, Wu Chen, Wu Hai, all of the Tribe members from the five great Tribes suddenly had not even a scrap of a memory of Meng Hao within their minds.

Mo Li and old devil Wang, even Yan Song and Eccentric Li Tao all trembled as the Karma threads connecting them to Meng Hao were destroyed.

It was like a gigantic invisible blade was slashing down. As it headed toward the man-form Outlander Beast, it met up against a powerful force that struggled back against it. The man’s body shook, but in the end... the

blade descended nonetheless.

The voice of the parrot suddenly came out of the man's mouth in a faint roar: "Ji Clan Immortal, this time Lord Fifth will not forget!!"

The blade swept past, slicing across Gu La, erasing Meng Hao's existence. It spread out toward the Black Lands. As for the stillness, it did not touch the Black Lands; it was limited to the area in the Western Desert surrounding the Crow Divinity Tribes. At the moment, Black Lands Palace Dao Child Luo Chong was sitting cross-legged in meditation. His body suddenly shook, and he coughed up a mouthful of blood. He looked up, an expression of confusion on his face.

In the Church of the Golden Light, the members of the congregation all began to tremble and cough up blood. Perplexed looks appeared on their faces, as if they had forgotten something, but weren't sure what.

The invisible blade swept across the Black Lands, erasing any vestige that Meng Hao had ever been there. It continued on toward the Southern Domain.

Currently, Fatty was contentedly filing away at his teeth and holding a pretty girl in his arm. He was murmuring something to her when suddenly his body trembled and his face flickered. He then coughed up seven or eight mouthfuls of blood. His face was ashen as he looked around in confusion.

"What's wrong?" asked the girl, looking alarmed as she rubbed him gently.

"Nothing.... It seems like... like I just forgot someone.... Weird."

During this moment, it wasn't just Fatty who was affected. Chen Fan and all the other people within whose memories existed the image of Meng Hao, suddenly coughed up blood and then looked around in confusion.

As of this moment, all traces of Meng Hao that existed within their memories were blotted out. All Karma threads of theirs which were entangled with Meng Hao were crushed.

As of now, their lives did not contain anyone who went by the name of

Meng Hao, or of Grandmaster Pill Cauldron.

“Dammit, just how famous is this guy in the Southern Domain!?” said the archaic voice, sounding shocked. “There are so many people connected to him by Karma!” He sounded flustered and disbelieving. The art of Karmic Annihilation is a magic which consumes energy in correlation to the amount of connections that are severed. It was definitely an astonishing technique, but one needed to be careful when using it.

Xu Qing sat meditating in her Immortal’s cave in the Black Sieve Sect. It was evening outside. Suddenly she opened her eyes and let out a soft sigh. Her hand reached into her robe, where a small pill bottle was stored, within which was a Cosmetic Cultivation Pill.

It was at this moment that a tremor ran through her and she coughed up not one, but a total of nine mouthfuls of blood. Her face was pale, and she was shaking violently.

She could feel the existence of Meng Hao within her memories beginning to shake and collapse, forcibly being erased.

“NO!!” she cried. Her hair was instantly thrown into disarray, and she began to flash an incantation gesture to fight back. The only result was more coughing up of blood.

“Meng Hao.... Meng Hao....” Her Cultivation base began to rotate rapidly, as she prepared to use all the strength she could summon to resist.

However, even as her Cultivation base began to move, she said, “Meng Hao.... Who’s that?”

She sat there mutely, a blank expression on her face. She tried to remember who Meng Hao was, and why she was rotating her Cultivation base. She could tell that her heart was in the process of breaking, and unconsciously reached up to her face. She felt tears.

“Why do I hurt so much?” she thought. “Why am I crying?”

Throughout the Southern Domain an invisible Karmic storm raged. The raging tempest was strongest in the Violet Fate Sect. Everyone in the entire Sect trembled and coughed up blood.

Chu Yuyan's face was pale, and her fists were clenched tightly. She laughed bitterly as she felt her memories changing; Meng Hao was being completely wiped away. She quickly lifted her hand up and then bit her tongue. Spitting the blood onto her finger, she began to write two characters onto the wall next to her: Meng Hao.

However, after she wrote the character Meng... her hand stopped moving and a look of bewilderment appeared on her face.

"What was I writing?"

Pill Demon sat in his short mountain, looking off into the sky. It wasn't clear what he was thinking, but as the invisible blade neared him, he sat there and sighed.

"So, this day has finally come, has it...?" He shook his head bitterly, but a brilliant light shone in his eyes. He lifted his right hand, within which appeared a medicinal pill. The pill emanated an archaic Qi, and was clearly incredibly old.

"If you annihilate my apprentice's Karma," he thought, "then I will absolutely never give up in my refusal to become an Immortal of the Ji Clan!" With that, he closed his eyes and watched in anguish as everything within his memories that existed regarding Meng Hao was turned into nothing but ash.

The pill in his hand emanated shocking aura, which caused these drifting pieces of memory ash to suddenly be reformed a new, unaffected.

"Dammit, he has something like that as his Master!!" echoed the archaic voice. It sounded furious. "It's a pity my Cultivation base isn't sufficient. If it were, then everything would be wiped out!"

The blade continued to sweep across the Southern Domain. However, when it reached the Rebirth Cave, the cold voice of a woman could be heard.

"A phony Immortal from the Ji Clan. Do you truly dare to try to wipe out my memories? Screw off!"

The sound echoed out into the air. The archaic voice, filled with disbelief

and alarm, weakly responded. “He’s even connected to that figure in the Rebirth Cave! Dammit! Dammit! Who else does this guy know? How come his Karma is so hard to sever!?”

Chapter 424: Severing Meng Hao’s Karma

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1. A similar name was mentioned in chapter 310. In the original release, I translated it a bit different, but adjusted it later.

Chapter 425: The Severing Cannot Continue!

Out on the Milky Way Sea floated an island. If you looked at the island from up above in the sky, it had the appearance of a turtle. This island had been quite a mystery in the Milky Way Sea during past years. It floated about here and there, surrounded by mists.

Suddenly the floating island stopped, and an astonishing bellow of rage could be heard from within.

“SCREW OFF!! Bastard! I just fell asleep, and now you come bothering me? You think I want those memories of that twerp Meng Hao? Dammit! SCREW OFF!!”

Patriarch Reliance’s thunderous voice echoed out, kicking up huge waves on the Milky Way Sea.

The archaic voice anxiously said, “How could something like that even exist!?!? How do I accomplish this severing? How?!?!”

He sounded completely flustered and exasperated, shaking because of Meng Hao’s very existence. On another island in the Milky Way Sea was a stooped old man who was currently standing in front of an artist’s easel, painting a picture of the tall, strapping man who stood in front of him.

In the middle of making a brushstroke, the old man suddenly frowned and looked up into the sky. A profound glow suddenly appeared.

“People who exist in my memory cannot have their Karma severed by the Heavens of Ji,” he said softly. He lifted his right hand into the air and then waved his paintbrush. A drop of ink flew out which then merged into the air.

Suddenly, the entire sky in the region turned completely black.

A miserable shriek could be heard echoing out from the void. The voice was none other than that of ancient Ji Nineteen.

As the shriek filled the air, all of the Cultivators who were affected by

the destruction of the Karma threads suddenly shook. The threads connecting them to Meng Hao, suddenly began to recover. They returned from absolute destruction to form once again. In fact, because they were being reformed out of destruction, they were even stronger and more tenacious than before.

Chu Yuyan's face was pale white. Her closed eyes opened, and she looked silently at the character 'Meng' written on the wall. She slowly lifted her hand up and wrote the character 'Hao.'

Pill Demon put away the medicinal pill and looked wordlessly off into the distance. However, his eyes were filled with staunchness and determination.

Fatty rubbed his head as he thought confusedly about past events. Suddenly, his body trembled and he gasped. There were now many more memories of the past. His face flickered as he recalled Meng Hao.

Chen Fan was the same, as was the entirety of the lands of the Southern Domain. In the Black Lands and the Western Desert, all of the Cultivators whose Karma threads had been affected, were suddenly recovered.

Xu Qing gnawed at her lip silently. She looked at the pill bottle in her hand, and her eyes filled with deep anxiety. She now remembered everything that had happened, and was filled with coldness. She could only imagine the loneliness she would experience if Meng Hao's image did not exist within her memories.

Within her silence, she clenched her teeth. She knew that power was the only way to truly resolve problems. She was now more determined than ever to fully fuse with the memories of Matriarch Phoenix, and increase the level of her Cultivation base.

Back in the Western Desert, in the Crow Divinity Holy Land, within the depths of the volcano, Meng Hao stood trembling in the Pool of Destiny. He, too, heard the miserable shriek. As it echoed about, he opened his eyes to see the silver fishing line turning black. The blackness spread, and as it did, the line turned into smoke and ashes. The ash and smoke spread out amidst the shriek.

The sound of the shriek caused Meng Hao's eyes to glow with coldness. He hadn't been able to see what had happened just now, but he had witnessed the annihilation of the Karma of the old earthworm man. He could only imagine the death he had just experienced.

Killing intent radiated out from his eyes as he caught sight of an indistinct figure in front of him. It was the image of a Cultivator surrounded by black flames, screaming as he struggled to disappear from this place.

The indistinct figure was repeatedly calling out a name. "Shui Dongliu, it's Shui Dongliu...."

Meng Hao's eyes glittered. His left hand raised up and placed the blood-colored mask onto his face. Massive, frenzied power exploded from his Cultivation base. Blood Qi emanated out in waves as he charged forward.

Blood Finger. Blood Palm. Blood Death World!

They all appeared, causing massive roaring to fill the air as they descended upon the illusory figure. Meng Hao's killing intent soared as he waved his hand again. The Lotus Sword Formation appeared; as it rotated, the power of Time rippled out.

"DIE!" shouted Meng Hao, his voice ice cold. His hand flickered an incantation and he pointed forward.

The Violet Qi Guillotine, Violet Qi Garrote, Violet Gibbous Moon exploded out with a roar, causing violet light to billow up.

"Without a face, a single word, the flames of war unify!" Meng Hao lifted up his left hand and pressed down onto the mask. Immediately, a gigantic face appeared. It opened its mouth and spoke a voiceless word. A roaring sound filled the air as it shot toward the illusory figure.

As the miserable screaming continued, Meng Hao charged forward, slipping on the Fang Clan glove. He punched, and a massive rumbling could be heard. Meng Hao's killing intent soared as he punched over and over again, more than a hundred times.

Each of these fists contained incredible power. Rumbling sounded out

without end, and the illusory figure seemed to be on the verge of bursting into pieces. It appeared to have been sealed, rendering it incapable of making any moves whatsoever; even its Cultivation base was weak beyond compare. It was still trying to disappear and escape, but Meng Hao performed another incantation, and the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex appeared.

As the figure suddenly stopped moving, Meng Hao's face distorted with the desire to kill. None of his magical arts seemed to have any effect on this figure. And yet, Meng Hao was not willing to let him escape.

He had killed one of the sons of Ji, and he wasn't afraid to kill this Ji Nineteen. That was especially true considering that if he didn't kill him right now, when he was at his weakest, then the man would no doubt cause endless troubles in the future.

Gritting his teeth, Meng Hao pressed down again onto the blood-colored mask.

"Flag of three streamers!" he growled. This was the most powerful magical item he possessed!

Considering the current level of his Cultivation base, he could, with effort, wield one streamer. This time, it didn't appear in illusory form, either. As soon as the words left his mouth, power filled the area as a long, blood-colored streamer appeared. As soon as it left Meng Hao's hand, Heaven and Earth shook. It shot forward, wrapping around the figure of Ji Nineteen, dragging him.

Ji Nineteen let out a horrified scream filled with shock, fear, and disbelief.

"This... this is... the Mountain and Sea Emperor's Banner!" He cried out in alarm as roaring shook his body. Suddenly, what had been illusory, only partly in the same world as Meng Hao, was now forcibly dragged out. There, standing directly in front of Meng Hao, was an old man.

He was clearly in very sore straits; his face was covered with a burning, black ink, and his aura was in absolute chaos. Currently, it seemed he was being forcibly repressed, and was now only able to wield the power of

Core Formation.

His face was filled with astonishment. He could scarcely believe that he had actually been pulled into this world.

“Impossible! It can’t be the Emperor’s Banner. The legendary Emperor’s Banner was destroyed....”

“What Emperor’s Banner, bitch!?” said Meng Hao, his face contorted with fury as he thought about how he had just basically died. Then he recalled what Shui Dongliu had said years ago, that people he remembered could not have their Karma annihilated by the Ji Clan. He was certain that without Shui Dongliu, he would most likely be dead.

In his fury, he unthinkingly imitated the parrot’s wording. With that, he clenched his hand into a fist and punched. A boom filled the air, and the old man let out a cry.

“You trifling mortal, do you dare to injure me? You....”

BOOM!

“Do you dare to kill me!?!?”

BOOM!

Meng Hao struck out repeatedly with his incredibly powerful fist, pummelling the old man until his body was on the verge of exploding. However, the man’s Cultivation base was fundamentally intrepid. Despite being attacked in such a way, his body was recovering rapidly.

“Puny mortal, you injured me and dragged me out from the world of Ji. But just wait until I’m fully recovered. I’ll kill you with my bare hands!”

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered with coldness, and retracted his right hand. He glared coldly at the old man, which caused the old man to stare in shock. Then, the old man began to laugh coldly.

The instant he began to laugh, however, Meng Hao’s right hand flickered an incantation and then he pushed down onto the old man’s forehead.

“It would be a pity to kill you. However, your blood, along with the blood of that son of Ji that I killed, can help me to create my Blood Spirit!”

“My recovery will quickly outpace whatever tiny injuries you inflict on me,” said the old man, his tone vicious. Suddenly, Meng Hao waved his hand, and the Lotus Sword Formation appeared. Rippling power of Time flowed out, relentlessly pounding against the old man.

The old man’s face fell, but he let out a cold snort nonetheless.

“If it were twice as powerful, maybe it could affect me. But that level of Time power is simply not enough!”

“Not enough?” asked Meng Hao, his eyes flickering icily. He instantly produced his four wooden swords and stabbed them into the man’s body to hinder his recovery.

The old man was inherently tyrannical and haughty, but the instant he saw the four wooden swords, and especially when they stabbed into him, he had no choice but to scream miserably.

“Dammit! Dammit! Those are... Immortal Murdering Swords!! You, you, you... just who are you?! How can you have so many!! Although they’re not completely unsealed... they really are Immortal Murdering Swords!!” His injuries suddenly worsened, and his recovery slowed down to a crawl. Thanks to Meng Hao’s many forms of torment, Ji Nineteen was in an incredibly wretched predicament.

“There’s still more time to cause you suffering!” said Meng Hao, coldness flickering within his gaze.

Meanwhile....

In the Great Tang in the Eastern Lands exists a luxurious mansion. Sitting inside was the girl with the explosive temper that Meng Hao had met that year, Fang Yu. She was currently wiping some blood off of her mouth; how could Ji Nineteen ever have imagined that the effects of his Karmic Annihilation would reach all the way to the Great Tang in the Eastern Lands, and Fang Yu? 1

Fang Yu’s face filled with fury, and she rose to her feet. She was about to walk out the door when suddenly a woman’s voice could be heard, shocking and furious to the extreme. It came from the restricted area in

the back of the mansion.

“JI CLAN!!”

When she heard the voice, Fang Yu’s face flickered. She saw someone flying out from the restricted area toward her. It was an elegantly dressed middle-aged woman. Her face was beautiful, but grim. As soon as she appeared, everything grew dim, and the air itself began to vibrate. The land quaked, and cracks appeared on the surfaces of the nearby buildings, despite the restrictive spells that protected them.

“Mom....” said Fang Yu, trembling. She feared no one in the world more than she did her mother.

“You, come with me!” said the woman. This woman was none other than the woman who had appeared in the Song Clan back in the Southern Domain. Her eyes radiated killing intent as she turned toward the Ji Clan mansion which existed in the Great Tang of the Eastern Lands. 2

“Mom, don’t do anything rash. Dad said before that....”

“Don’t talk to me about your dad. Are you coming or not?!” The woman’s phoenix-like eyes radiated intense killing intent.

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1. Meng Hao met Fang Yu in chapter 309, in the events leading up to the end of book 3. She initially attacked him, but backed off after seeing the mark on his hand, whereupon she threw an epic temper tantrum.
2. This woman appeared in chapter 190 as well as subsequent chapters. It was in chapter 193 that the guy from the Song Clan speculated that she was actually the mother of the Resurrection Lily.

Chapter 426: Just This Once!

Moments later, a massive roaring sound filled this luxurious mansion in the Great Tang of the Eastern Lands. The entire mansion shook, and then began to crumble into pieces. Large groups of people quickly emerged, although they seemed quite calm. In fact, some were even having pleasant conversations in low tones. Some held books, and there was even one man who had an abacus, and was walking and making calculations at the same time.

Everyone seemed completely unperturbed. There was only one conclusion that could be reached.... This mansion often experienced such thunderous collapse....

As the mansion fell apart, the beautiful woman and Fang Yu transformed into beams of light that shot off in the direction of the Ji Clan Ancestral Mansion.

A sigh could be heard from within the collapsing mansion as a middle-aged man in scholar's clothing emerged, shaking his head. He looked at his wife and daughter disappearing in the distance and then sighed again, but did nothing to hinder them.

As she flew through the air, the beautiful woman's face was filled with killing intent. She moved with shocking speed. Next to her, Fang Yu looked nervous, but she was actually quite excited inwardly.

After a bit of time, the two of them neared a sprawling walled city, the entirety of which was pitch black. It was square in shape, like a giant seal that had been pressed down into the land.

Located within the city was an imperial palace, which from a distance, looked magnificent. Palatial structures sprawled around it, and in front was a large square in which could be seen eighteen dragon statues that emanated shocking auras.

This imperial palace had only one main gate, which was completely gold. Protruding from the surface of this gate were 3,927 golden nails. Each of these nails was completely out of the ordinary, and obviously

could be considered a precious treasure.

The gate was also carved with soaring clouds and auspicious beasts. Everything was gold, making it look like some sort of Celestial gate.

This was the number one ancestral mansion of the Ji Clan in all of the Great Tang of the Eastern Lands. In total, they had nearly one hundred, each one of which looked like an imperial palace, although it wasn't. After being erected, these palaces stood mightily for years, never weakening. They were like a figurative shield for the entire Clan.

In any case, surrounding this imperial palace, the Ji Clan members had also erected an enormous wall.

The approach of Fang Yu and her mother send out shocking ripples through the air, as well as a screaming wind. Immediately, the Cultivators within the Ji Clan noticed this.

“Halt immediately!”

“If you take a step further you will be executed without hesitation!”

Fang Yu looked over at her mother anxiously. “Mom, don't do anything rash....”

Even as the words left her mouth, the beautiful woman lifted up her right foot and violently kicked the city gate. Immediately, a roaring sound echoed out in all directions as the entire city shook. The gate immediately collapsed into pieces, crumbling downward into dust. A gale force wind swept out, carrying the rubble with it.

“What gall! You dare to make a move against the Ji Clan!?!?”

As the gate collapsed, howls could be heard within the city and crowds of people appeared, shooting through the air toward the gate. “Are you looking to die!?!?”

“Mom, don't be rash, you must not under any circumstances be impulsive....”

“Shut up!” cried the beautiful woman, glaring at Fang Yu. She clenched her right hand into a fist and then slammed it into the ground, which

rippled like seawaters as a massive boom echoed out. Cracks spread out in all direction, ripping the ground apart in shocking fashion.

The woman, radiating killing intent, shot toward the incoming Cultivators. All it took was a single punch from her, and they went flying off one by one like kites with their strings cut. They tumbled through the air, crying out miserably.

The woman was like an explosively violent dragon. Everywhere she went, everything shook. It was like a whirlwind that none of the nearly thousand approaching Cultivators could do anything to stop.

Fang Yu stood off to the side. She continued to call out to her mother to not do anything rash but her face radiated a killing intent quite similar to her mother's, along with excitement. It got to the point where she ran over and, anyone who her mom had already taken care of, she would take care of again.

After the space of a few breaths passed, the sky suddenly grew dim. The city wall seemed on the verge of being completely destroyed, and the land itself was covered with countless cracks. Finally, the city wall collapsed into dust. The beautiful woman transformed into a whirlwind that swept out toward the imperial palace.

In the blink of an eye, she reached the Celestial gate of the imperial palace, and the enormous plaque which glowed with golden light and was covered with the more than three thousand nails, as well as auspicious animals. Suddenly, a roar could be heard from within the city as dozens of figures shot out. Their Cultivation bases emanated shocking power as they emerged.

"Madam Fang, are you here as a representative of the Fang Clan to declare war on the Ji Clan!?" One of the approaching figures was a white-haired old man who spoke with a grim voice. Next to him was none other than Ji Eleven, whose face was written with astonishment. He stared in shock at the mother-daughter pair as they approached. 1

"I'm not here representing the Fang Clan. I'm here as a mother, representing myself!" The beautiful woman's jaw was set, and her

phoenix-like eyes radiated killing intent. She punctuated her words by once again slamming her fist down onto the ground.

Heaven and Earth filled with roaring, and it seemed like the air would collapse. A black wind spread out in all directions, slamming into the approaching group of dozens of Ji Clan members.

Their expressions immediately flickered. At the same time, Fang Yu urgently said, "Mom, don't do..."

Before she could finish, the beautiful woman charged toward the Celestial gate of the imperial palace and punched it directly with her fist.

When the blow landed, a shocking boom rang out that shook nearly half of the entire Eastern Lands. This Celestial Gate of the Ji Clan had stood here in its majesty for who knew how many years. But now, cracking sounds rang out as, layer by layer, it began to completely disintegrate. As it transformed into crumbling fragments, the more than three thousand golden nails shot toward the imperial palace, to slam into the eighteen dragon statues which were actually in the process of coming to life.

Rumbling filled the air, and the eighteen dragons let out miserable shrieks. Their bodies were unable to withstand the attack, and they exploded. By this point, half of the palace was a wreck, and the entire city was in an uproar.

"... anything rash...." finished Fang Yu. She stared mutely at her mother, and the destroyed golden gate.

"Meng Li!! Are you crazy!?!?" 2

Howls of rage could be heard from the approaching group of a dozen or so old men. Their eyes radiated killing intent and fury, but also a bit of helplessness.

"You dare to harm my son?! I will dismantle this entire Ji Clan Ancestral Mansion and cut down your South Heaven Gate! Others fear you Ji Clan people, but not me!" The killing intent boiling in the woman's eyes seemed to have no end. She had suppressed it for a long time, but could do so no longer. She strode directly in through the crumbling main gate.

Fang Yu hurried after her. The mother-daughter team passed through the Celestial gate, and suddenly they were in a different world.

In front of them, a mountain range spread out, completely white in color. From a distance, they looked like they were covered with snow, but if you looked more closely, you would see that they were in fact made from jade.

The entire mountain range was the same, and at its very highest point was a simple house. The house was encircled by palatial structures, and half way down from the house could be seen an enormous gate-like bridge. It was richly ornamented with jade and marble, and on its surface, three characters were carved in flowing script that made the words look like flying dragons and dancing phoenixes.

“South Heaven Gate!”

Steps were carved into the jade mountain that led under this bridge, all the way down to the bottom of the mountain where a lake existed. The reflection of the imperial palace above could be seen on the surface of the lake. No waves existed on its surface, making the reflection very realistic. If you didn’t look very closely, you might not even be able to tell the difference between the two. The mountain and the reflection of the mountain in the lake were almost identical.

“Mom....” said Fang Yu as soon as they entered. Normally, she was quite audacious, but as of this moment, she was a bit taken aback. Everything that had happened up to now was incredibly shocking. She looked at her mom, almost in a daze.

The beautiful woman gave a cold snort as she looked up at the white jade mountains. At this point, a bit of dread could be seen even in her eyes. However, the dread quickly vanished, wiped away by fury and killing intent. She took a deep breath, during which time, a terrifying, frenzied power suddenly rose up within her.

Her hair whipped about, and her eyes glowed brightly. Everything around her changed, and even the sky grew blurry as a massive pressure radiated out. Shockingly, she now had a sword in her hand!

And this sword... was a wooden sword!

It was not the same as the four wooden swords that Meng Hao had acquired. Instead, it was covered with characters written in an ancient style.

Sunder!

Gripping the sword tightly in hand, the beautiful woman swung it toward the South Heaven Gate up on the mountain. The sword strike caused the sky above to turn black, and the ground to turn into nothingness. It was as if all of the power in the world were being sucked into this one sword and transformed into cascading Sword Qi. This shocking Qi whistled through the air directly toward the South Heaven Gate.

It was at this exact moment that the dozen old men neared. They were filled with fury, but as soon as they saw the sword, their faces filled with shock.

“Dammit! Immortal Sundering Sword!!”

“You crazy Meng! You, you, you... you dare to wield that Immortal Sundering Sword here on Planet South Heaven!?!?”

The speed of the Sword Qi was such that it arrived at South Heaven Gate in the blink of an eye. However, at some unknown time, directly next to South Heaven Gate, a young man had appeared. Based on his appearance, he was not very old; however, his body radiated an intangible ancientness.

He looked at the incoming Sword Qi, and then at the beautiful woman. Shaking his head, he did nothing to block it. The Sword Qi slammed into South Heaven Gate, causing the entire structure to shake and then collapse into pieces.

The South Heaven Gate had stood from the moment the Ji Clan arrived on Planet South Heaven, and represented their position of rulership. This was the first time it had ever collapsed.

The young man looked at the collapsing gate and then coolly said, “For the sake of your father, Senior Meng, I won’t go too hard on you. Go ahead

and vent your anger. But... it will only be just this once!”

The young man waved his sleeve, and everything in the world began to grow blurry, and everyone began to disappear.

Before she completely disappeared, the beautiful woman’s voice rang out throughout the entire world, filled with determination and staunchness.

“I will issue a warning too,” she said, “and it had BETTER be just this once!”

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1. Ji Eleven was briefly mentioned in chapter 310.
2. Earlier she was called “Madam Fang” and here she is called Meng Li. In Chinese culture, women don’t change their name upon marriage. However, they can be addressed with their husband’s surname if used with the right title. In Chinese, her name is 孟丽 mèng lì – Meng is a surname, the same as Meng Hao’s. Li means “beautiful.” Please note that this Li is NOT the same Li as Immortal Li 黎, which is pronounced differently, lí.

Chapter 427: Greenwood Tree Ancestor Awakening!

“It doesn’t matter whether we’re talking about family love or one’s temper,” the young man said lightly. He smiled slightly. “Everything is Karma. Sooner or later, everything becomes empty after it has been severed and annihilated.” With that, he waved his right hand. Time almost seemed to flow in reverse as the crumbled South Heaven Gate instantly reformed, as good as new.

Of course, the young man knew that although the gate itself could be repaired, its collapse earlier had caused harm to the Cultivation bases of all living Ji Clan Cultivators connected to it. Such losses would not be easily recovered.

That was the true importance of this gate; it allowed all Cultivators who were part of the Ji Clan to utilize power of the Heavens of Ji to achieve Cultivation base breakthroughs.

Meanwhile, back in the Western Desert, outside of the Crow Divinity Holy Land, the stillness which had gripped the world was gone. Because of the failure of the Karmic Annihilation, the members of the five great Tribes once again had their memories of Meng Hao.

However, they were left with no sense whatsoever regarding the stillness. The last thing they remembered was Meng Hao suddenly flying up through the shining golden doors.

The Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather shook his head and laughed heartily. “Grandmaster Meng is being a bit hasty, but there’s no harm in that. Let’s go meet up.” With that, his body flickered and he entered the glowing golden doors. He was followed by the Priest, the Grand Elder and the others, including the man-form Outlander Beast. The large man’s face was grim, and his eyes flickered with rage and humiliation.

At the moment, the parrot was the dominant one. It remembered everything that had happened, and understood the truth. This caused its

fury to billow up as it urgently entered into the golden light.

As for the rest of the Tribes, they didn't care a bit whether Grandmaster Meng barged in, nor did they say anything. In fact, were they in the place of the Crow Scout Tribe, they would do nothing about the matter. After all... Grandmaster Meng had displayed the power of a Grand Dragoner. A person like that would be treated like an esteemed guest in any Tribe.

The members of the Crow Scout Tribe passed through the golden doors and entered the Holy Land with the seven volcanoes. By this time, Meng Hao had Ji Nineteen thoroughly bound up. The four wooden swords were continuously crippling his Cultivation base, making it impossible for him to recover.

In fact, out of fear that his Cultivation base would rise too high, Meng Hao decided to use some additional methods. From within his bag of holding, he retrieved a large collection of poison pills that he had concocted. The power of these poisons was terrifying, not to mention any possible interactions they might have later. Meng Hao knew that even he himself would have a difficult time dispelling them. Without hesitation, he fed them to Ji Nineteen.

Ji Nineteen's eyes went wide as he was forced to consume the vast quantities of poison pills. His face turned purple, and seven tremors ran through his body. With each tremor, he withered a bit, until his very aura seemed to ooze with poison. His eyes were green, and filled with terror.

"You.... Dammit! How many poison pills do you have? How many did you give me!?!?"

Meng Hao snorted coldly.

"We will end your torment for today. Once the poisons are fully fused into your body, I'll concoct some more for you." With that, Meng Hao waved his hand, wrapping Ji Nineteen up in the flag of three streamers and sucking him into the blood-colored mask.

Only binding him in such a way allowed Meng Hao to set his mind at ease. Otherwise, how could he feel safe, considering Ji Nineteen's incredible power?

“Once he’s weak enough, I can use his blood to make a Blood Spirit. Also, I can use his soul to make a Soul of Lightning, just like the Li Clan Patriarch. If I can use some special methods, I can turn his body into a puppet. A high level expert like him is a treasure through and through. I can’t waste any part of him. The sad thing is, he didn’t have a bag of holding....” After a long moment of consideration, he came to the conclusion that he truly hadn’t wasted any opportunities. Finally, he nodded in satisfaction.

It was a good thing Ji Nineteen didn’t hear the conclusions he had reached, otherwise blood would spray from his mouth as he realized that being killed by Shui Dongliu would have been much better.

“This time I really did profit from misfortune.” He looked down at his bag of the Cosmos, and his heart began to twitch with excitement. On the way here, he had taken advantage of the power of the fishing line to collect a huge assortment of ferocious neo-demons. There were some that, normally speaking, he would have had great difficulty in acquiring on his own.

That was especially true regarding some of the hordes he had acquired. In his opinion, he really had profited wildly.

“And then there’s the sword!” He started breathing heavily as he thought of his fourth sword, which was currently stuck into Ji Nineteen. Technically speaking it was the third he had found.

Meng Hao now knew that the swords must contain some incredible mystery. If he could somehow acquire more of them, he would probably be able to solve the puzzle.

“Immortal Murdering Sword, huh? And then there’s the flag of three streamers. Ji Nineteen called it a much different name than the meat jelly did. The Mountain and Sea Emperor’s Banner.” After more thought, Meng Hao slapped his bag of holding to produce a green fishing pole. Hefting it in his hand, his eyes began to shine with a bright glow.

“When Ji Nineteen launched his Karmic Annihilation, he used a fishing line. I’m guessing that the fishing pole he used was the same type as this

one!” He looked thoughtfully at the fishing pole. All of a sudden, the same cacophony of life he had heard before, once again began to sound out in his mind. There were babies crying, old people gasping for breath, men and women laughing and arguing.

He quickly released his grip on the fishing pole. His eyes flickered as he muttered to himself for a moment, then put the fishing pole back into his bag of holding.

“I wonder how you use the thing? Maybe I can get the answer from Ji Nineteen.” Meng Hao glanced at the mouth of the volcano and then looked at the Pool of Destiny.

His heart suddenly quivered. Earlier, he had stepped into the pool because of the Karma Line. As such, he hadn’t noticed anything too extraordinary about it. Now, his eyes glittered as he once again shot back to enter the pool. Once inside, he closed his eyes for a long moment. When they opened, they were filled with excitement.

“So, it contains totemic transmogrification powers.... If I cultivate here, my Greenwood Tree totem will grow even stronger. With enough power, I should even be able to transmogrify the totem itself! It should even provide benefits to the Eyeless Larva. It should be able to make it into something like a true totem. I won’t need Li Tao’s magic to cover it up!” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered brightly. The Wood-type Greenwood Tree totem was a legacy handed down to him from Ancestor Greenwood of the Crow Scout Tribe. Meng Hao wasn’t sure what it would turn into if he transmogrified it further.

He stood there thoughtfully for a moment, his eyes filling with determination. Then he sat down cross-legged in the waters to meditate. When he closed his eyes, the Greenwood Tree totem tattoo on his forehead and the Eyeless Larva totem tattoo on his hand immediately appeared.

The waters in the pool began to seethe as if they were boiling. A whirlpool formed, with Meng Hao at the center and the water rushing around him.

Within the pool waters surged totemic power. As it circled around him, it fused into Meng Hao's body and then, into the Greenwood Tree totem and the Eyeless Larva totem.

After the fusion began, the pool waters were clearly lessening. Moments later, mist began to rise up from the seething water. The mist rose up to surround Meng Hao and then fill the entire inner part of the volcano.

At the same time that Meng Hao was performing the fusion, the group from the Crow Scout Tribe was cautiously making its way through the region outside.

The Greatfather, the Sky Priest, and the Grand Elder all looked suspicious as they traveled through the Holy Land. Things weren't exactly the way they remembered from previous occasions. Everything seemed much emptier.

"How strange. I remember last time there was a flock of crow neo-demons in this area. By using a special method, there was a high chance of acquiring a few of them."

"Yeah, that's right. And I remember that over there was a group of green mosquito neo-demons, completely fearsome in appearance. That year, the group I was leading happened to see someone from the Crow Fighter Tribe accidentally provoke them. He was drained up and turned into a withered corpse in the blink of an eye."

"Weird, it's much quieter than usual in here this time...."

They encountered almost no neo-demons during their entire way, nor did they need to use any of the ancestral techniques. They simply flew directly toward the centermost of the seven volcanoes.

According to the Tribe records, the center volcano housed the primary pool. If the water in the Pool of Destiny in the center volcano was reduced, then the water in pools in the other volcanos would also be reduced.

As soon as the Crow Scout Tribe members neared the volcano mouth, they saw the mist within in. They also heard a growling roar coming from within.

It was none other than the voice of Meng Hao. His long cry echoed out as the image of an enormous Greenwood Tree suddenly emerged from within the mist.

At the same time, the mist in the volcano began to shrink down, absorbed. Soon, the image of Meng Hao became visible, seated cross-legged within the pool, sucking in all of the mist.

The image of the Greenwood Tree existed directly above him.

“It’s Grandmaster Meng!” cried the members of the Crow Scout Tribe, instantly recognizing him. Their hearts trembled as Meng Hao’s eyes suddenly opened. He took a deep breath, and the waters around him lessened further. Wisps of white Qi rose up to be absorbed by Meng Hao and the Greenwood Tree image, causing the tree to become even more lifelike as if it really existed there.

It was at this point that rumbling sounds could be heard from the other six volcanos. White Qi rose up from them and shot toward the region of the Crow Scout Tribe members. It shot into the volcano mouth and directly toward Meng Hao.

The Greenwood Tree above him suddenly began to shake, and it expanded outward. Its bark began to look older and older, as if years were passing. It seemed as if at this moment, the tree was growing so high it could reach the Heavens.

In fact, to anyone observing, it seemed... the tree wasn’t just growing. The ancient scars and marks on the tree’s surface seemed to be naturally occurring. This indicated that the Greenwood Tree....

The Sky Priest gasped. “Ancestral Awakening!” she said faintly. “Grandmaster Meng’s Greenwood Tree totem is experiencing an Ancestral Awakening!!”

“Greenwood Tree Ancestral Awakening!” cried the Greatfather, shocked. He began panting, his eyes wide.

Down inside the pool waters, Meng Hao’s eyes snapped open again. Even he had never imagined that by absorbing the totemic power of the

pool and fusing it into the Greenwood Tree totem would actually give birth to... the power of Ancestral Awakening!

Meng Hao was astonished. “What will be awakened in the end? An ancient Greenwood Tree?”

Chapter 428: A World that Supersedes

“Or perhaps it will turn into the tree that emerged from within the Ninth Sea all those years ago and crossed the stars to Planet South Heaven... the supreme Greenwood Tree!” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered as the Qi continued to rush into him. Outside, the other six volcanoes were rumbling as white mist continued to shoot out toward Meng Hao.

The more Qi he absorbed, the brighter his eyes grew.

He looked up at the enormous Greenwood Tree floating in mid-air above him, which emanated a boundless green glow. It dyed the sky, covered the land, filling everything with the aura of the Greenwood Tree. Throughout the Crow Divinity Holy Land, all of the plants and vegetation were writhing.

The members of the Crow Scout Tribe panted as they stared at the scene. Meanwhile, outside of the Holy Land, back in the region of the Crow Scout Tribe, the enormous Treant looked over at the green glow rising up to the Heavens.

“Wood....” it said softly.

Even the members of the other four Tribes who were waiting outside of the golden doors were filled with shock. Although they couldn’t see clearly everything that was happening inside, they were filled with a sense of baffling wonderment. Each and every one had faces filled with shock.

At the same time, the various totemic Sacred Ancients atop the mountains of the other four Tribes appeared. They stared toward the Crow Divinity Holy Land, and one by one all uttered the same word.

“Wood....”

Even as this word filled the air, the plants and vegetation in the surrounding mountain ranges were whipping about wildly, despite the fact that there was no wind. They flickered, emitting rustling sounds that seemed to form voices of submission. It was as if they were offering obeisance to the sovereign of all Wood-type entities!

The four bizarre life forms from the other four Tribes slowly bowed as if in salute to the miracle which was occurring.

As they were saluting, the members of the Crow Scout Tribe back in the Crow Divinity Holy Land actually stopped breathing momentarily. They watched as the gigantic Greenwood Tree rapidly began to shrink in size. The smaller it got, the more intense was the green light it emitted.

By the time it shrank to three hundred meters in height, it was like a green sun, filling everything around it with intense green light. Meng Hao breathed deeply as he watched the Greenwood Tree shrinking. Three hundred meters, one hundred fifty, one hundred... until it was thirty meters!

Fifteen, ten, three... half a meter, one third... three inches, two inches....

It seemed to be shrinking in correlation to the reduction of water in the pool. Massive amounts of mist were absorbed by Meng Hao; in the blink of an eye, the Greenwood Tree was only one inch tall!

The light it emitted was so bright that it penetrated out of the Crow Divinity Holy Land. The plants and vegetation outside which were grovelling in reverence, the five saluting life forms, and all of the Cultivators who had Wood-type totems, felt a profound impulse to prostrate themselves in worship.

Back within the Crow Divinity Holy Land, the one inch tall, brightly glowing Greenwood Tree in front of Meng Hao shot toward him, branding onto his forehead. A massive roaring noise filled the air, and green light shot out in all directions. As soon as everyone was able to see again, they looked at Meng Hao's forehead and saw... a type of totem that no one had ever seen before!

This totem tattoo was of a single ancient character!

Wood! 1

There was no green tree, no picture, no resplendent glow. It was smooth and ordinary. A single ancient character. Wood!

However, this character Wood represented everything Wood-type under

Heaven. Because of this, it didn't need some picture representation of a plant or tree, because it... was the essence of Wood!

All Wood-types in Heaven and Earth!

Everything shook as all plants and vegetation bowed in worship. All such living things paid respect.

"Wood...." Meng Hao floated up out from within the Pool of Destiny, the Wood character on his forehead glittering with green light. He suddenly had the sensation that he could communicate with all plant forms in the world. He had the intense feeling that by merely exercising his will, he could magically manifest any type of wood.

He also felt a type of calling from the Pool of Destiny beneath him. The pool had always borne the semblance of a pool, but when Meng Hao looked down at it, what he saw was a path.

The call originated from the end of the path, where Meng Hao had the strange sensation that there existed... a Heavenly Wood character.

His eyes flickered thoughtfully, and then his body flashed. The Crow Scout Tribe watched panting as he suddenly shot back down toward the Pool of Destiny, toward the path. Then, he completely disappeared.

It wasn't until Meng Hao disappeared that the Crow Scout Tribe members finally reacted. In fact, it was the man-form Outlander Beast who did so first. Eyes wide, he looked at the scant amount of water left in the Pool of Destiny, and then let out a roar and charged toward the water.

The Greatfather's face flickered. He waved his hand, indicating for the others to follow as he headed toward the Pool of Destiny. There was already very little water left, but even absorbing a bit would be very beneficial.

Almost at the same time that the Crow Scout Tribe members were charging toward the Pool of Destiny, the faces of the members of the four Tribes on the outside flickered. This was especially so when they noticed that the golden doors were growing dim. The four Greatfathers and the Priests looked shocked.

“How could it be happening so quickly?! Dammit! The Pool of Destiny is going to disappear!”

“The golden light is fading! That means the waters in the Pool of Destiny are already running out!” As of now, the Greatfathers and Priests of the four Tribes did not feel it necessary to abide by the previous agreement. They immediately began to lead their various Tribe members toward the golden light. In an instant, more than one hundred colorful beams of light shot through the doors.

Within the Crow Divinity Holy Land, the members of the four Tribes scattered, heading in the direction of the various volcanoes.

Everything was quite chaotic. However, amidst the chaos, there were four people who happened to have a special means of communication. Suddenly, they all began to whistle through the air toward the seventh volcano.

These four people were none other than Yan Song and the other Nascent Soul Eccentrics. They moved with great speed, but cautiously, so as not to make themselves stand out. They entered the volcano and looked around, killing intent flickering in their eyes as they immediately attacked the other Tribe members who had entered the volcano at the same time.

Considering the level of their Cultivation bases, and the fact that the Tribe members were caught unawares, it only took the space of a few breaths before they wiped them out. There wasn't even time for miserable cries to ring out.

Now that they didn't have to conceal their identities anymore, the four of them revealed their true appearances.

The reek of blood filled the air, but Li Tian waved his hand, causing it to disappear instantly. At the same time, Mo Li and old devil Wang performed double-handed incantations. In the blink of an eye, a magical shield covered over everything, making it impossible for anyone else to enter the volcano.

“I have the feeling that Grandmaster Meng is none other than our Fellow Daoist Meng,” said Yan Song coolly, looking at the others.

“He was the first to enter this place,” said Li Tian, frowning. “He must definitely have picked up on some clues already. We need to move faster.”

“According to my understanding,” said Yan Song, “this seventh volcano has the weakest restrictive spells. May I prevail upon you Fellow Daoists to break the spells? Then we will be able to enter the location of the ancient Dao of alchemy.”

The four exchanged glances, then rushed down to the bottom of the volcano. According to the previous arrangement, Mo and Wang began to use their magical techniques to break down the restrictive spells.

As the party of four got to work, the rest of the five Tribes were struggling over the Pools of Destiny. Even as the man-form version of the Outlander Beast, parrot and meat jelly was absorbing the waters, Meng Hao magically appeared in a world that seemed to supercede anything that even remotely resembled it.

The instant he appeared, he looked around, stunned. His eyes began to shine.

Shockingly, he was... in exactly the same place he had been before. He was in the same volcano he had just left. The water beneath his feet was none other than that of the Pool of Destiny. However, the waters were murky, and impossible to absorb. Everything around him seemed tinged with gray, as if that were the only color that existed in this world.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he loped around for a moment and then flew up toward the mouth of the volcano. Outside, everything looked the same; there were still seven volcanoes. The land and the forests, everything looked just exactly the same as the Crow Divinity Holy Land. Except... located in the middle of the seven volcanoes was a gigantic tree.

This enormous, ancient tree towered up so high that it seemed as if it were supporting the very Heaven. And it was golden!

If you looked closely, the tree was not made from wood, but rather, metal. At the very top of the tree was a gigantic Golden Crow, standing there, staring at Meng Hao. 2

At the bottom of the tree was a corpse, leaning up against the tree and facing a decrepit pill furnace.

There was no one and nothing else in the area, only the great tree and the Golden Crow. No lives were present, nor any life force... nor any presence of death.

Everything was quiet, so quiet that many people would find it terrifying.

Meng Hao focused on the great tree and the Golden Crow. Then he looked at the corpse and the pill furnace. Were it not for the corpse and the pill furnace, Meng Hao would have come to the conclusion that everything Yan Song said was incorrect.

Thoughtfully, Meng Hao flew forward toward the great golden tree.

As he neared, the Golden Crow atop the tree suddenly moved its head. A golden gleam could be seen in its eyes.

Meng Hao stopped and stood stock still. He could sense that it was the golden tree upon which the Golden Crow stood that was calling him.

The Golden Crow glanced at Meng Hao, then closed its eyes. Meng Hao clasped hands in a bow, and then neared it.

He didn't examine the great tree first. Instead, he looked down at the corpse. There in the corpse's hand was a jade slip.

Meng Hao picked it up and scanned it with Spiritual Sense. Three characters suddenly appeared in his head.

"Spirit Severing Pill!"

His eyes glittered as he looked down at the pill furnace. As soon as he did, a strange expression could be seen on his face. There on the back of the furnace was a large hole.

Within the pill furnace, no medicinal pill could be seen. However, even though countless years had passed, as a Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy, Meng Hao could tell from the residue left behind that before being destroyed, there had indeed been a medicinal pill inside.

Looking at the hole, he suddenly had the sense that whatever pill had

been concocted inside in ancient times, had burst out of its own accord. “It definitely is of the ancient Dao of alchemy, something from primordial times. But... where did the pill go?

*

1. As you might be aware, Chinese characters go back for thousands of years. According to my research, the type of “ancient character” mentioned to by Er Gen here refer to the most ancient of Chinese characters. The ancient character for wood looks like this:



It’s quite a bit different from the modern version, which looks like this:
木.

2. The Golden Crow is a Chinese mythological creature related to the sun.

Chapter 429: The Golden Crow and the Great Tree

Meng Hao looked around, muttering to himself. He then scanned the area with Spiritual sense. However, other than the golden tree and the Golden Crow, there was no trace of anything else.

“Could it have left this place entirely?” thought Meng Hao. As a Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy, he had concocted sentient medicinal pills before, the kind that attempted to wrest away luck from Heaven and Earth, the type that the Heavens attempted to destroy with Tribulation.

Lost in thought, Meng Hao considered how most such ancient medicinal pills had withered up long ago, and were no doubt nothing more than dust. “Most likely it already shrivelled away into ashes.”

Meng Hao couldn’t imagine how a pill that could break out of the furnace in such a manner could possibly still exist after so many years had passed. He put the matter aside and turned his head to look at the great tree.

After a long moment, he reached out his hand and placed it softly on the surface of the tree.

The instant he touched it, it began to vibrate and slowly emit a golden light. At the same time, the Wood totem tattoo on Meng Hao’s forehead began to emit a green light.

There was no communication or interaction. Instead, there was a sliver of will that had existed for who knew how long in this great tree that, at this moment, was set free. It had encountered something similar to itself that it approved of, and had decided to say its final goodbyes.

Meng Hao looked at the tree and could see that it no longer had any life force left in it. The only thing that remained were the traces of the passage of time.

After a long moment passed, Meng Hao sighed.

“So, this is the place that Yan Song and the others are dying to get to.... No medicinal pill, only a corpse and the remains of a great tree. Even the pill formula in the jade slip is of ancient times. Nowadays, you wouldn’t even be able to find the right medicinal plants. The only thing here worth looking at is that Golden Crow.” Meng Hao looked up at the bird sitting on top of the tree overhead.

Finally, he shook his head and was about to pull back his hand, when suddenly a tremor ran through his body. The previously closed eyes of the Golden Crow snapped open. Powerful life force streamed out, entering into the great tree. Suddenly, power seemed to emanate out from the tree, as if it was... still alive.

Because Meng Hao’s hand was touching the tree, he was able to sense the power of the life force. In that instant, his eyes went wide with disbelief. He looked up again at the Golden Crow, his mind blank. It was an ancient sacred relic of the Crow Divinity Tribe, something that had existed for many years, and was powerful enough to give birth to an entire Tribe.

Nowadays, that once powerful Tribe was fading away and had already begun to split apart.

“This life force....” Meng Hao was struck dumbfounded for a long moment. Finally, he took a deep breath. As a Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy, he was very familiar with medicinal pills. Just now, he could tell that the life force emanating from the Golden Crow actually contained... the Qi of a medicinal pill!

It was not emanating life force, but rather, the power of a medicinal pill!

“Is it because it consumed the medicinal pill, or... is IT the medicinal pill?!” The possibility of the latter sent Meng Hao’s mind and heart reeling. Before coming to this place, he could never have imagined that the Golden Crow of this once powerful Tribe... originated from what had started out as a medicinal pill.

He was a Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy, and as such, could accept that lakes and mountains could become Demons. However, perhaps his

own deep knowledge of alchemy covered over his own eyes in a way that made it impossible for him to conceive of the same thing happening with medicinal pills.

He began to breathe heavily. He was now almost certain that of the two different possibilities he had just considered, it was virtually impossible for the first one to be correct. After consuming a medicinal pill, its Qi could not exist for a very long time.

The only correct conclusion was that the medicinal pill had turned into a Demon, which then could exist forever!

Panting, Meng Hao looked up at the Golden Crow and the great tree. Suddenly, an image appeared in his mind. Within the image was an ancient Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy, sitting beneath a Greenwood Tree, preparing to pass away in meditation. As death neared, he produced the most glorious pill he had ever concocted.

Unfortunately, by the time the pill emerged, the Grandmaster had already breathed his last breath.

Years later, when the sentience of the pill reached a certain point, it suddenly broke out of the pill furnace. It seemed as if this action might even have had something to do with the Greenwood Tree. From the moment it appeared in the world, its only friend and partner was none other than the Greenwood Tree.

Year after year passed. After the passage of an innumerable amount of time, when the pill had matured and risen to prominence, it founded the Crow Divinity Tribe. Many more years passed. Eventually, the Greenwood Tree's life began to waste away, and it died.

The medicinal pill could not accept that the tree had perished. It used its powers to transform its color, and every so often, it would sacrifice some of its own life force to feed the tree.

However... the tree truly had perished. Regardless of what was done, the only thing that could be brought back was something empty, lifelike though it might seem.

Even still... although the medicinal pill understood this, it refused to give up.

Meng Hao considered all of this for a long moment, and then let out a soft sigh. His hand dropped to his side as he stepped back a few paces. He clasped his hands and bowed deeply to the great tree and the Golden Crow.

He could see that the Golden Crow was currently growing weaker and weaker. Soon, its life force would be exhausted, and it would transform into dust on the wind. When that happened, the great tree would have nothing to support its empty but lifelike existence, and it too would transform into dust.

Perhaps both of them were simply waiting for that moment when they both turned into dust together, and could drift up into the empty sky.

Meng Hao looked at the Golden Crow and the great tree. He wasn't sure why, but for some reason the look in the eyes of the Golden Crow reminded him of certain aspects of Grandmaster Pill Demon. The crow stood atop the great tree; Pill Demon stood on his short mountain. The crow gazed upon the tree; Pill Demon gazed upon the statue of Violet East.

It was a strange feeling that caused Meng Hao to stand there thoughtfully for a moment before sighing.

"Since I'm here, I might as well employ some of my power...." He lifted his right hand into the air and performed an incantation. Then, he took a deep breath and pointed at the tree.

"By my command as the Ninth Generation Demon Sealer, I bequeath you with Righteous Bestowal!" Immediately, a tremor ran through Meng Hao's body, and he spat out a mouthful of blood. When it landed on the tree, a strange light began to glow in the Golden Crow's eyes, and it stared at Meng Hao.

"Righteous Bestowal causes your path to become that of a Demon!

"Righteous Bestowal causes your Dao to become unceasing!

"Righteous Bestowal causes your spirit to return from emptiness to

become a Demon!

“My approval represents the approval of the League of Demon Sealers.... This is Righteous Bestowal, a true blessing.”

Such was the true usage of Righteous Bestowal. After being enlightened regarding it, Meng Hao had never truly used its full power on any Demon. At the most, he had used only some of its bestowing power.

Righteous Bestowal was a type of approval. Any Demon of Heaven and Earth that received the approval of a Demon Sealer would be able to temporarily absorb some of the essence of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Even if that Demon were dead, its soul would not disperse.

This Golden Crow had not done any favors for Meng Hao. However, its emotions and thoughts had stirred Meng Hao. They touched him in a way that made him believe that providing assistance with Righteous Bestowal... was the right thing to do.

After the power of Righteous Bestowal was manifested, Meng Hao took a deep breath. He looked at the great tree and the Golden Crow and then turned to leave. It was at this point that the Golden Crow suddenly emitted a sound. This was the first sound it had made since Meng Hao entered this place, a shrill cry.

This cry sounded something like the grating of metal against metal. Meng Hao looked back to see the Golden Crow shaking. As it shook, ghost images sprung up, and a golden light surged out. The light slammed into Meng Hao's torso, transforming into a gold-colored brand.

It was a totem tattoo that was somewhat similar to his previous totem tattoo of the Greenwood Tree, an image of a Golden Crow. This was a Metal-type totem, which, if Meng Hao was lucky and could accomplish an Ancestral Awakening, might eventually turn into the ancient character for metal!

After sending out the totem, the Golden Crow seemed to have been weakened by at least half. Its body shook on the verge of collapse for a moment before it collected itself and then looked at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao opened his mouth to say something, although he wasn't sure what. However, it was at this exact moment that, within this world of grayness, a boom echoed out from the mouth of the seventh volcano. Four figures suddenly became visible.

“Hahaha! We're here!”

Chapter 430: Battling the Nascent Soul Stage

The booming sound echoed out through the air as four figures shot out from the mouth of the seventh volcano. In the lead was a man wearing a long white robe. His hair whipped about him, and his eyes flickered as if with lightning. His expression was one of excitement. This was none other than Yan Song.

Behind Yan Song was Li Tian, whose eyes shone brightly with vigilance. He whistled through the air like a Black Dragon, his black robe flapping in the wind. He really did look like a dragon; the sight was incredibly imposing.

Behind him were Mo Li and Eccentric Wang.

When the four of them appeared, they were instantly filled with interest regarding this gray world. The next thing they saw was the great tree, plus Meng Hao and the corpse beneath it!

What caught their attention more than anything else, though, was the pill furnace!

“So, it is here!” said Yan Song, his eyes flickering with coldness. Next to him, Li Tian’s eyes were grim as he hovered in mid-air and stared at Meng Hao.

Mo and Wang also floated in mid-air, glancing around with flickering eyes. After seeing that Meng Hao was the only person present here, their eyes filled with a strange light.

“Fellow Daoist Meng, you’re so fast,” said Li Tian, laughing mirthlessly. “You’re not wearing your mask today, but we’re all old friends, right? There’s no need for any disguises. You beat us here, which is well and good, but according to our previous agreement, please produce whatever treasures you’ve acquired. It’s time to split our shares.” As he spoke, he moved forward toward Meng Hao. Yan Song, Mo and Wang also neared, surrounding Meng Hao.

Meng Hao frowned as he looked at the approaching Nascent Soul eccentrics. His face grew dark and he let out a cold harrumph, then suddenly kicked out with his right foot, sending the pill furnace flying into the air.

The instant his foot began to move, Li Tian's right hand shot up and he pointed at Meng Hao.

"Fellow Daoist Meng, what are you doing?!" A black blur shot out from his finger. As it flew out into the air, it transformed into a rotating black flower with five petals. Each petal of the flower looked like a sinister face. They emitted mournful cries as they shot toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao waved his right hand. A bloody light erupted up as the air in front of him turned the color of blood and a massive hand appeared. It instantly shot toward the black flower, slamming into it. A massive explosion ensued.

As the sound of the explosion rippled out, Meng Hao retreated backward. Yan Song and the others continued to approach. It was at this time that Meng Hao finally spoke.

"Fellow Daoist Li, I would like to ask YOU a question. What exactly are YOU doing? Why don't the lot of you go look at that pill furnace!"

He flicked his sleeve, his expression grim. Having heard his words, Yan Song and the others suddenly stopped moving. Li Tian's eyes narrowed and came to fall on the pill furnace. The others looked over as well, and instantly saw the hole in it.

The hole was obviously not recently made. Yan Song and the others were all wily old foxes, and it only took a glance for them to realize that the hole had been created long, long ago, not recently.

"This is...."

The four of them frowned and breathed with seeming difficulty.

Meng Hao's expression was one of extreme displeasure, even rage. "I haven't been here for long. After coming to this tree, I saw only this corpse and that damaged pill furnace!"

He had noticed earlier that the weakened Golden Crow had long since concealed itself atop the tree. Even if you looked closely, you wouldn't be able to see it.

"If I said I didn't find anything, you wouldn't believe me. Well, I did find something!" Laughing coldly, he lifted his right hand up to reveal a jade slip. As everyone watched, he took out another jade slip, a white one, and then branded the information from the first one onto it. After that, he threw the first jade slip out in front of him.

Yan Song caught it, then looked at it with furrowed brow. He then handed it to Li Tian and the others, who also examined it and began to frown.

They should be able to tell at a glance whether the jade slip was real or a fake. But even Yan Song, an expert in the Dao of alchemy, was unfamiliar with most of the ancient medicinal plants listed therein.

Meng Hao's face was dark, even filled with rage. His wording sharp, he said, "You want to cause a big fuss over a single jade slip? How disappointing! I'll take my leave now. From now on, my path is not connected to any of you!"

His awe-inspiring display and sharp words left Yan Song and the others incapable of offering any sort of response.

Meng Hao gave a cold snort. Then, his body flickered as he turned into a beam of colorful light and shot off into the distance.

Before he could get very far, Li Tian suddenly disappeared. When he reappeared, he was directly in front of Meng Hao.

"Fellow Daoist Meng, why are you in such a hurry to leave? Exactly what else did you acquire? Don't expect that a few trite words will convince us that you didn't take the medicinal pill that burst out of that pill furnace."

Meng Hao stopped. Now, his expression was no longer grim, but calm. His eyes were ice cold as he looked at Li Tian.

"Well, Fellow Daoist Li, what brilliant opinion do you have?"

“I won’t dare to use the word brilliant, Fellow Daoist Meng,” he replied slowly, staring Meng Hao in the eye. “But since you got here before us, it will be difficult for you to avoid suspicions. Just hand over your bag of holding and let us search it, that should be enough.”

Meng Hao looked back at him, then started to chuckle. His chuckle turned into uproarious laughter, that eventually began ripples that shook everything in the area. Li Tian’s face flickered; Yan Song and the others suddenly looked very serious.

“You want to search my bag of holding? Li Tian, have you suddenly reached the Spirit Severing stage?!” Killing intent blazed within Meng Hao’s eyes. He began to lift his right hand, but even as he did, Li Tian flashed an incantation gesture with both hands and then shoved them forward.

As he shoved his hands forward, a black mist surged up, which then transformed into a long black spear. Rumbling filled the air as the spear shot toward Meng Hao. It moved with incredible speed, but even as it neared Meng Hao, the Wood totem tattoo on his forehead glittered. Suddenly, an enormous Wood character appeared in front of him.

Simultaneously, boundless Wood-type Qi erupted out. Instantly, the approaching spear began to shake.

Rumbling filled the air as Meng Hao’s body shot backward at high speed. His left hand slapped his bag of holding, and Wooden Time Swords flew out to form the Lotus Sword Formation. The formation rotated in mid-air, its appearance like that of an enormous lotus!

This formation embodied both the shape and the will of a lotus. In addition, it contained the natural properties of intelligence embodied by a lotus, something that Meng Hao had come to gain enlightenment regarding throughout his years of observing lotuses.

Propelled by the power of the Wooden Time Swords, the glowing, ten-meter wide lotus shot through the air toward Li Tian, rumbling the entire way.

“Time!” said Meng Hao softly, his expression cold.

Immediately, the shocking power of Time emanated out toward Li Tian. Li Tian's face fell as he suddenly sensed his body growing older. Everything within the region of the lotus experienced the passing of time. Everything seemed to be moving faster than the world around it; in the blink of an eye, an entire sixty-year cycle was gone.

Li Tian had never encountered any magical technique like this before. His face flickered, and he flashed an incantation gesture with his right hand. As he waved his hand, black light poured out from his body to resist the Wooden Time Swords. He performed a minor teleportation, reappearing several hundred meters away.

Even as he tried to flee, Meng Hao's eyes flashed with killing intent. He took a step forward and then utilized the Bloodburst Flash. Moving such a short distance made it seem almost like he had used minor teleportation, and he was suddenly directly in front of Li Tian. His right hand clenched into a fist and he punched out.

A boom echoed out. Li Tian's face fell and he spit out a mouthful of Nascent Soul Qi. The brightly colorful Qi transformed in mid-air into the image of a small person that looked exactly like Li Tian. The figure let out a sharp cry as it shot toward Meng Hao.

BOOM!

Meng Hao's body trembled as he retreated seven or eight paces, his face ashen. As for Li Tian, he retreated about four paces, his face flickering. His expression was one of ferocity, but fear glimmered within his eyes.

"Fellow Daoists Yan, Mo and Wang," he said. "What are you standing there watching for!? If you're really willing to let this guy leave, then I'll hold back."

Before Yan Song and the others could even react to Li Tian's words, Meng Hao laughed coldly and once again shot forward.

"It's too late to hold back now!" Five figures appeared around Meng Hao that looked identical to him. These were none other than Meng Hao's Blood Clones, each of which could wield an untold amount of Meng Hao's.

Simultaneously, a golden glow sprang into being around Meng Hao. The full power of the great circle of the Gold Core exploded out. Up above Meng Hao's head appeared an ancient starry sky. Within this starfield magically appeared a shocking great Greenwood Tree.

Meng Hao's Cultivation base was at the great circle of the Gold Core stage. However, even with only the Wood-type power he possessed, he could fight back against the early Nascent Soul stage. Now that he had acquired Metal-type power as well, there was very little difference at all between him and the early Nascent Soul stage, although there were some divine abilities he could not employ.

Moving forward rapidly, Meng Hao pointed out with his right index finger. The Blood Finger, Blood Palm and Blood Death World, along with his starfield Core Qi and Wood-type totem, all fuelled the Lotus Sword Formation. In the blink of an eye, its power was increased exponentially.

It droned as it rotated through the air. At the same time, Meng Hao cried out, "Time!"

"This magic again!?" Li Tian's face flickered. Although his Cultivation base was higher than Meng Hao's, and he had more divine abilities at his disposal, there was little he could do when facing up against the magic of Time. He didn't even dare to near it. His longevity was already nearing its end as it was. To him, this art was like Death itself. Feeling his Qi being ruined, he had no choice but to retreat.

Seeing the rotating Lotus Sword Formation about to fall, Yan Song and the others finally took action. They shot forward to appear near Li Tian. The mighty pressure of the Cultivation bases of four Nascent Soul Cultivators emanated out like a flash flood.

"Fellow Daoist Li, Fellow Daoist Meng, please let me say a word!" said Yan Song, looking directly at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's expression was as calm as ever, but inwardly he heaved a sigh of relief. Even if he put on the blood-colored mask, he was no match for four Nascent Soul Cultivators all at the same time. However, based on the current situation, he had no choice but to fill the others with

misgivings by putting on the air of someone who others did not dare to provoke.

“There’s no harm in speaking your mind, Fellow Daoist Yan,” he said, his voice cold.

Chapter 431: Prelude to a Funeral

“I believe what you said to be true,” Yan Song said quickly. His words caused Li Tian to frown. The eyes of Mo and Wang flickered. “That’s because the treasure is in fact here! It hasn’t gone anywhere!”

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever, but his heart filled with vigilance.

“If you’re talking about the Spirit Severing Pill,” said Li Tian grimly, “then where exactly is it?!”

“It will appear on its own,” said Yan Song. He suddenly turned, his eyes glowing with avarice. He was looking in the direction of the great tree. He suddenly lifted his right hand up, within which appeared a jade bottle. He crushed it, causing a black liquid to emerge from within, along with a rotting stench.

Within the black liquid could be seen a maggot-like bug roughly the size of a finger. Its segmented body was wriggling, and as soon as it appeared, it lifted its head up and let out a shrill cry. Its body turned into a black streak that shot toward the top of the tree.

The sight of the thing shooting toward the treetop caused Meng Hao’s face to flicker.

Suddenly, a sound could be heard like that of metal scraping against metal. It drifted out from the top of the tree along with a billowing golden light. The weakened Golden Crow suddenly flew out to meet the black bug and prevent it from getting near the great tree. A rumbling sound filled the air as the Golden Crow opened its mouth. A golden glow appeared that surrounded the black bug. It shrieked as it was submerged and then crushed into ash.

The Golden Crow’s body was now flickering, clearly weakened further. However, its eyes were filled with sharpness and dignity as it glared around at everyone. Behind it was the great tree, which it apparently would sacrifice anything to protect.

“The legendary Golden Crow Pill is real!” said Yan Song, laughing. “After it was created that year, it acquired a spirit and transformed into a Golden Crow. At one time it had the chance to achieve Immortal Ascension, but in the end it chose to grow weak. Instead, it used its life force to protect a great, dead tree!” His eyes glittered with greed as he stared at the Golden Crow.

Li Tian’s eyes also glittered, and by now, he was completely ignoring Meng Hao. His breathing came in pants as he stared at the Golden Crow. In his mind, he was looking at a Spirit Severing Pill from ancient times, something that could arouse a wild frenzy among countless Cultivators.

The eyes of Mo and Wang were also shining brightly.

“It’s been weakened to the point that it resembles little more than the Nascent Soul stage,” said Li Tian. In a meaningful tone that lacked his previous hostility, he continued, “Fellow Daoists, this is luck for us. Let’s catch it quickly and then discuss how to divide it up. Don’t let it get away!” Laughing loudly, he strode forward.

Yan Song chuckled. “The pill won’t flee, not with the tree here. Even though it’s dead, the pill won’t leave it.” He, too, began to walk forward. Mo and Wang transformed into beams of light as well. All four began to converge on the Golden Crow.

At this point, none of them were paying any attention at all to Meng Hao. He remained off in the distance, a complex expression on his face. He could leave now, and no one would stop him. However... he was currently hesitating.

Booming sounds filled the air as the four ganged up on the Golden Crow. It let out a metallic cry which turned into a golden shield that enveloped the area around itself and the great tree.

The booming sounds were coming from the attacks the four levelled against the golden shield. Blow after blow was causing the shield to slowly shrink. A look of exhaustion filled the eyes of the Golden Crow. Its life force was simply too faint. It looked back at the great tree, a look of profound longing in its eyes.

More booms could be heard, and the shield shrank even further, forcing the Golden Crow to back up. Even the tree seemed to be decaying; its illusory life force was fading, and it was now starting to look more and more like nothing but a dead, dried-up tree.

“Look!” called Yan Song. “The only thing it can do is protect the tree. Be careful, though. Logically speaking, the Golden Crow can’t possibly be THIS weak. Something strange is going on....” Booms continued to echo out.

However, the four attackers all had various thoughts running through their heads. Also, they were clearly not attacking with full strength, but were rather being guarded in their moves. They seemed to fear this Golden Crow. Such a bizarre spirit would no doubt attack back before it died, most likely with ferocity that could leave them dead.

The Golden Crow looked at the withering tree and seemed to sigh. It flew up to perch at its top, trying once again to use its life force to restore the tree. Unfortunately, it just didn’t have enough life force at its disposal. Its actions caused the golden shield to grow even weaker and weaker. Its body trembled.

Meng Hao’s hands clenched into fists, and veins of blood appeared in his eyes.

“It’s weak because of me,” he thought. “Otherwise Yan Song and the others could never force it down to this degree. If I leave, I’ll be safe. But if I did that, I would be letting myself down!” He looked at the bird. It was in a grave situation and was about to perish, but it was still watching the great tree. Meng Hao saw its medicinal pill aura waning, and once again thought of his Master.

He wasn’t sure why he suddenly thought of Master a second time, but as of this moment, his eyes filled with determination.

“There are some things that rationally speaking you shouldn’t do, but you still do them anyway....” He lifted his head up and then slapped his bag of holding. The blood-colored mask appeared. He placed it onto his face and immediately a bloody aura billowed out. A blood-colored mist

roiled into being around Meng Hao, turning into red sea. As the seawaters undulated, a shocking killing intent exploded out of Meng Hao.

“Without a face, a single word, flames of war unify!” As Meng Hao strode forward, he lifted his right hand. Behind him, an enormous face appeared. Its closed eyes snapped open, along with its mouth, as it uttered a soundless song of mourning. It then shot toward Yan Song and the three others.

Almost the instant the face began to fly forward, Yan Song and the others looked back.

Considering that the shield was just about to burst, Li Tian’s eyes instantly filled with coldness and killing intent. “Are you looking to die!?”

The group of four exchanged glances and then began to unleash divine abilities toward Meng Hao.

As soon as the divine abilities shot forward, the face collapsed into pieces. It was incapable of resisting the power of four Nascent Soul Cultivators. However, it was at this moment that Meng Hao wave his right hand. The flag of three streamers temporarily unraveled from around the body of Ji Nineteen. It unfurled behind Meng Hao, long and black. Immediately, one of the streamers spread out. It was old and dilapidated, but it transformed into a massive black canopy that swept out.

The overwhelming aura caused the faces of Yan Song and the others to flicker. Li Tian’s pupils constricted. Mo and Wang began to pant in shock. All three of them could instantly feel a sudden, intense sensation of deadly crisis.

A massive rumbling filled the air as the black streamer shot forward. Blood sprayed from Yan Song’s mouth as he was sent tumbling backward, his face filled with astonishment.

Li Tian’s right arm was instantly torn into shreds. Blood spouted from his mouth as he shot backward in retreat, face pale and filled with disbelief.

Blood-curdling shrieks could be heard from Mo and Wang; blood shot

out from their torsos as they were slammed into each other. Their wounds immediately healed, but their faces were devoid of blood. They shot backward in retreat, staring at Meng Hao with shock.

Thanks to the blood-colored mask, Meng Hao's Cultivation base had climbed up much higher. Now he could fully utilize the power of the first of the flag's three streamers. Although he had not been able to slay any of his four opponents with the attack, it was stunning enough to shake Heaven and Earth.

It came at a price, though; Meng Hao's hair was once again white. However, because of the boundless life force of his Wood character totem, he was not injured on a fundamental level. His face was pale, and blood seeped out of the corners of his mouth. Despite the injuries, after his attack swept Yan Song and the others away, Meng Hao stood with his back to the tree.

Li Tian gritted his teeth against the pain of his lost arm. Wiping the blood from his mouth, he grimly said, "Fellow Daoist Meng, you certainly have some wild ambitions. You want to kill the four of us and then take the medicinal pill for yourself." Just now, he had attempted to directly stand up to the attack, and had thus received this serious injury.

"Fellow Daoist Meng, you're going against our agreement," growled old devil Wang, his eyes thick with killing intent.

Yan Song looked thoughtfully at Meng Hao for a long moment before finally saying, "Fellow Daoist Meng, why are you doing this?"

"This pill has already achieved Demonic Ascension, and yearns for the great tree," said Meng Hao calmly. "Even if you consume it, it will do you no good. It has no medicinal strength left, because... it's not a medicinal pill anymore."

"Pills are pills," said Yan Song gruffly. "And what's this talk of Demons? At the most, it has a spirit. Fellow Daoist Meng, you're a Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy and have concocted many pills and consumed even more. Don't you understand? Pills will forever be nothing more than pills!"

Meng Hao was silent as he thought about Grandmaster Pill Demon for a

third time. The feeling he got from the Golden Crow continued to seem more and more like... the same feeling he got from Pill Demon.

“There are some things I hesitate to do, but after I do them, I feel no regret.” Meng Hao said these words in a somewhat hoarse voice. As they echoed about, he offered no explanation as to their meaning.

What Meng Hao didn't notice was that behind him, a strange light had appeared in the eyes of the Golden Crow. A soft, warm look could be seen in its eyes. It was no longer as cold and emotionless as it had been earlier. There was a warmth present that hadn't been there even when it gave Meng Hao the Metal-type totem as repayment for his Righteous Bestowal.

That act had been one of exchange; the Golden Crow did not want any Karma to exist between itself and anything else other than the great tree. As of this moment, the warm glow in its eyes was very different.

Suddenly, it spoke. Its voice was that of a woman, ancient and gentle. “I can sense upon you the Qi of a life force the same as mine....

“As for you and me, we have seen very different lives.... Thank you for using Righteous Bestowal on the Greenwood Tree, and for standing up for us.

“When I was born, the Greenwood Tree was here to keep me company. When I was happy, he was here. When I was confused, he was here. It doesn't matter if he dies, I will always be by his side, this life, or in the next life. When living, when dying... we will be together.

“That is my Dao. I will never become a phony Immortal who shall exist as long as the Heavens exist. I will walk my own path.... I will be myself....

“In a thousand years, no one would be here to witness our funeral. Because of you, our time together has been reduced by a thousand years. However... the Greenwood Tree and I are deeply grateful to have you here to observe our death. As for these other people, they can accompany us in death!

“As means of repayment, I will give you my Golden Life Tattoo!”

Chapter 432: Because of Meeting You....

As the voice of the Golden Crow echoed out, an intense glow began to emanate from its body. It was so bright that it made it seem like the only thing in this entire world of gray, was this one beam of golden light.

At the same time that Meng Hao turned around in response to the voice of the Golden Crow, the beam of light fused into the Metal-type totem tattoo on his chest.

As it did so, Meng Hao's body trembled, and he was locked in place, looking backward. A roaring sound filled his head as boundless, indescribable Metal-type power burst into him.

Now, the Metal-type totem tattoo on his chest was experiencing the same type of transmogrification that the Wood-type totem had!

"This is my Golden Life Tattoo," said the Golden Crow in its soft voice. "With it, you will forever be able to wield the complete power of Metal."

Yan Song and the others watched in astonishment as the transmogrification occurred. Suddenly, an unprecedented feeling of crisis exploded out within them.

Li Tian was panting, and his pupils were tiny dots. He had spent most of his life on the run, and had keen intuition. Heart pounding, he instantly burst into motion. He did not move forward, but rather, began to flee in the direction of the seventh volcano.

Yan Song hesitated for a moment. Next to him, Mo and Wang exchanged a glance and then began to retreat.

Right at this moment, a sigh suddenly came from atop the golden tree from the Golden Crow. At the same moment, the golden glow that could be seen with the naked eye suddenly vanished, as though all of it had suddenly been retracted away, starting from the roots of the tree and condensing at its crown.

As the golden light flowed upward, the original color of the tree was slowly revealed. It was a grayish color, the grayness of death.

Soon, all of the golden light from the tree had coalesced onto the body of the Golden Crow. Now, the Golden Crow emanated a shocking golden glow.

Within the glowing goldenness, the body of the crow began to change. Soon, it was a young woman wearing a long, golden robe. Despite her young appearance, she emanated an aura of ancientness. She stood there at the crown of the tree, looking down with an expression of grief.

“Ashes to ashes, dust to dust....” she murmured. Then she stepped forward. As she moved, ripples spread out through the air. Each move she made caused change. Everything began to turn to gold; even the sky seemed to become solid. The whole place was turning into a world of metallic gold.

As of this moment, every part of this world—every life, all existence—became a part of this golden metal.

Currently, Li Tian was fleeing at top speed, and had almost reached the mouth of the seventh volcano. It was at this point that his face suddenly filled with complete terror and astonishment. Despite the fact that the woman-form Golden Crow didn’t seem to be moving very quickly, she suddenly appeared directly in front of him.

“You....” Li Tian began to pant, and his pupils constricted. A sudden, intense feeling of grave crisis swept over him like floodwaters. Without a moment’s hesitation, he began to flash an incantation sign. A vast quantity of magical items burst forth from his bag of holding. He shoved his hands out, using all the power he could muster to summon a black fog that emanated terrifying ripples.

“If you’re gonna die, then just die! You’re not taking me with you!” he roared. However, even as his divine ability manifested and a shocking aura emanated out, a golden hand shot through the air. It pierced through the black mist, distorting the ripples. The hand was then right in front of Li Tian. A finger tapped down lightly on the top of his head.

The woman turned to look at Meng Hao. Her voice soft, she said, “Remember, this is the first wyrd of my Golden Life Tattoo. Convergence

Wyrd. Any life that I touch will turn into gold.”

Li Tian’s entire body shook in response to her touch. Suddenly, a golden light began to emanate from his forehead. His eyes went wide as the light covered his entire body. His face distorted with terror and then, his entire body turned into a statue of gold.

Even his Nascent Soul had no time to escape, and was sealed within him. The Metal-type power flowed into it, and it was transformed into a Gold Soul.

All of this happened in the space of an instant. The speed was so shocking that no one had a chance to react. In the blink of an eye, an awe-inspiring Nascent Soul eccentric, a person who could shake the outside world wherever he went, a top-notch expert....

Disperse the aura, exterminate the Qi, eliminate the body!

A clattering sound could be heard as the golden statue of Li Tian fell to the ground. It was completely incapable of movement, and the look of shock on its face was permanent as it stared off toward the withered great tree.

This turn of events made Yan Song, Mo, and Wang feel as if thunderbolts were slamming around inside their hearts. Their faces immediately fell. Yan Song, his mind spinning, immediately shot backward. His right hand slapped his bag of holding to produce a command medallion which he then crushed.

As for Mo and Wang, the glow of a spell appeared around them, wrapping around them with layer after layer of brilliant light. It seemed to invoke some sort of pulling power that instantly caused ghost images to spring up around them. It looked like they would shoot up into the sky at any moment.

The entire time, Meng Hao stood there motionless as the Metal-type power continued to roar into him. Within the golden light around him appeared a massive, life-like Golden Crow.

As the golden light continued to flicker and the Metal-type power flowed

into him, Meng Hao could sense the transmogrification, as well as the increase of his Cultivation base.

Then he saw Li Tian die, and watched as Yan Song and the others made to flee. Silently, Meng Hao looked up into the sky.

Up in mid-air, the woman's body looked blurry, as if she might disappear at any moment. The golden glow around her was fading, and she wasn't looking at Yan Song and the others as they fled. Instead, she gazed at Meng Hao.

"Next, my Golden Life Tattoo's second wyrd. I call it Net of Heaven." With that, the woman extended her right hand and pushed it down toward the ground. Immediately, the golden ground began to quake, and cracks spread out. As the land began to crack and break, countless fragments flew up into the air, each and every one made of pure gold. It transformed into a rain of gold that shot toward Mo and Wang.

At the same time, this entire world, with the exception of the area occupied by Meng Hao and the great tree, began to collapse. All of the rocks, plants... everything fell into pieces. These tiny chunks of gold then coalesced into countless oddly-shaped blades that began to spin around to form a towering tempest.

Caught within the tempest, the faces of Mo and Wang filled with despair. The golden tempest seemed to have them trapped, motionless and ready to collapse.

The two of them roared as they went all out in their attempt to activate their spell, causing a rumbling sound to fill the air. However, no matter how they fought back with their spell or the power of their Cultivation bases, they were incapable of resisting this massive golden tempest formed from the land itself!

The giant golden tempest swept over them, and the golden rain formed something like a massive net that no one could break through. When the net finally dissipated, nothing was left of Mo and Wang except two skeletons.

Not far away from their bodies, their Nascent Souls were attempting to

flee. However, they couldn't get far enough away, and were also destroyed by the tempest.

Turn the world gold and collapse the land into a tempest. Use this power to form the Net of Heaven, which can exterminate all wills.

"There is a third wyrd, called... If Not a Pill." The woman was now very faint and blurry as if she were about to disappear. In unison with the softly spoken words, her graceful hand pointed at Yan Song, whose body was almost transparent as he utilized the power of a jade slip to escape.

He screamed as something like a giant invisible hand wrenched him back out from the void he was disappearing into. His previously transparent body instantly became clear as he was pulled back into the golden world.

His face was pale, and his eyes were filled with madness.

"If I'm going to die!" he howled, "I will choose the way I perish!" Suddenly, his body burst into flames and the power of self-detonation appeared.

The self-detonation of a Nascent Soul Cultivator unleashes intense, indescribable power.

However, the instant in which he seemed about to self-detonate, the woman-form Golden Crow softly said, "If Not a Pill...."

At the same time, she waved her hand, causing the golden shrapnel tempest to shoot toward Yan Song, where, shockingly, it formed into... a gigantic pill furnace, with Yan Song inside!

Caught within the pill furnace, the force of Yan Song's self-detonation was not only blocked, but turned into transformative power!

Meng Hao began to pant with shock.

He could clearly see that within the pill furnace, the force of Yan Song's exploding body was turned into a vortex that spun rapidly within the pill furnace. Incredibly... it was transformed into a single, blood-colored medicinal pill!

Concoct a person into a pill, be nostalgic of one's past. If Not a Pill.

The pill furnace vanished, and the blood-colored medicinal pill flew over to land on the woman's hand. She looked down at it, then crushed it into ash.

By this point, her body was clearly about to dissipate. She turned, not even looking at Meng Hao, but rather gazing at the withered, dead great tree as she walked toward it.

As she neared, her body continued to fade away. With each step, more of her life force disappeared. As for the great tree, it began to rot away and turn into dust.

"Live together, die together," the woman murmured as her body disappeared.

The tree had completely rotted into floating ash.

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust....

In that instant, everything in front of Meng Hao grew blurry. He was no longer locked in place, but could move once again. Suddenly, in the void in front of him, he saw a man wearing a long green robe. Next to him was a golden woman. They were smiling and laughing as they stepped out into the nothingness.

You are a pill and I am a tree. The year you appeared before me... my life became more than just greenness.

I am a pill and you are a tree. The year I opened my eyes for the first time, I saw you and... my life was no longer lonely.

Sometimes, the meaning of an entire life can be only because of a chance meeting.

His expression serious, Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed deeply toward the two departing figures.

As he bowed, the golden light around him shrank down, and the golden world around him began to collapse. At the same time, the Metal-type totem tattoo on his chest transformed into a character.

Metal! 1

*

Note from Er Gen: Regardless of whether or not you're talking about love or friendship, many things in life happen because of a chance meeting.

I have been very lucky in my path of writing to meet all of you.

Thank you for your support and thank you for willingness to meet me.

Note from Deathblade: Isn't Er Gen awesome?

*

1. In Chinese, the character used for “metal” in the five elements is the same as the character for “gold”.

Chapter 433: Enemies Approach

When the Metal-type totem tattoo reached its zenith, the ancient character for “metal” appeared! 1

The character was branded onto Meng Hao’s chest, right over his heart. In fact, his heartbeat caused it to undulate. It let out a golden glow similar to that emitted by his Gold Core. In this instant, his Cultivation base suddenly exploded up. He was still in the great circle of the Gold Core, but his true battle prowess had now climbed up until it was truly analogous to the Nascent Soul stage.

When it came to the path of concocting a Five-Colored Nascent Soul, if you considered it to have five stages, then as of now, Meng Hao had completed two!

He took a deep breath as he looked up. The crumbling world of gold was now gone. He was back in the Crow Divinity Holy Land. Everything around him was colorful again; however, the entire place was now showing signs of collapse.

Rumbling sounds echoed out in the air, and the seven volcanoes were beginning to break apart. The powerful neo-demons that still existed in the area were roaring and out of control. The shocked members of the five great Tribes were now doing everything they could to flee.

Meng Hao’s sudden appearance didn’t attract any attention. All of the Cultivators present were flying at top speed toward the exit.

Meng Hao joined the crowds, his eyes glittering. Booms echoed out constantly as the land began to crumble and the mountains began to fall. Suddenly, lava erupted out from the seven volcanoes and black smoke filled the sky. Everything around was now choked with dust. The ground quaked and the neo-demons roared.

Meng Hao flew at top speed along with the crowd. The Crow Divinity Holy Land seemed on the verge of complete destruction. When he reached the exit, his body grew blurry, and then he was outside of the great golden doors.

The members of the five great Tribes all wore looks of astonishment. The Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather caught sight of Meng Hao. Sighing inwardly, he flew over.

Rumbling sounds could now be heard from within the golden glow as the great doors shattered into small pieces. At the same time, the golden light winked out.

The members of the five great Tribes were all crying out in alarm. This sudden turn of events had completely shocked them. They were pale-faced and panic-stricken.

“The Holy Land.... The Holy Land collapsed!”

“The Holy Land is gone! Our Crow Divinity Holy Land has fallen. Could it be some inauspicious portent!?”

The Greatfathers and Priests of the Five Tribes had grim expressions on their faces, and their hearts were filled with uneasy feelings. The Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather’s expression fell, and he ceased his approach toward Meng Hao and instead went to confer with the other Greatfathers and Priests.

Meng Hao floated in mid-air, staring thoughtfully at the fading golden glow. He thought of the Crow Divinity Holy Land concealed within the mountain range. He also thought of the Golden Crow and the great tree, and after a long moment, he sighed.

As he sighed, the voice of the parrot suddenly sounded out next to him as the man-form Outlander beast appeared.

“Dammit. That Ji Clan guy tried to wipe out my memories again. Lord Fifth won’t stand for it!! I’m going to screw the Heavens of Ji! Screw the Heavens!” From his tone of voice it seemed like this had become his new purpose in life.

Meng Hao turned to look at the big man and frowned. “Who exactly are you? The parrot, the meat jelly or the Outlander Beast?”

“Obviously I’m Lord Fifth, bitch!” said the man, a conceited expression appearing on his face. “Listen, Meng Hao, I’m issuing you a staunch

warning. From now on, you're not allowed to call Outtie the 'Outlander Beast.' She's become my beloved concubine. From now on you have to call her Lady Fifth!"

Seeing the look on the big man's face, Meng Hao glared at him and said, "Screw off!"

"You, you, you... I can't believe you dare to disrespect Lord Fifth!! Even worse, you disrespect Lord Fifth's beloved concubine, your Lady Fifth! Don't tell me... don't tell me you want to steal Lady Fifth away from Lord Fifth!" Having suddenly reached this conclusion, the parrot was furious.

Even as the parrot's ire was provoked, the Greatfathers and Priests of the five great Tribes split apart, their expressions serious. They made their way back toward their respective Tribes, followed by the other Tribe members.

The Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather and Sky Priest approached Meng Hao, bitter smiles on their faces.

It was the Greatfather who spoke first. "The Crow Divinity Holy Land has collapsed and the protection of the Ancestor has disappeared. Such an event is impossible to cover up. It won't be long now before other Tribes in the region find out."

The Sky Priest then continued, "There are large and powerful Tribes that have had their eyes on us for a while, but were frightened off by the Holy Land. They will certainly be itching to cause trouble. For us five Tribes, this is a huge catastrophe. If we can't hold out against them, our Tribes will be completely wiped out.

"You two are the most powerful vassals in the Crow Scout Tribe. At this moment of crisis for our Tribe, I truly hope that you will be kind enough to provide assistance. The Crow Scout Tribe will definitely provide liberal compensation."

With that, the two of them clasped hands and bowed to Meng Hao and the man-form Outlander Beast.

Meng Hao said nothing in response. Instead, he transformed into a

beam of light and followed the other Crow Scout Tribe members as they returned to their Tribe. After reaching the rear mountain district, he entered his courtyard.

As soon as he did, he slapped his bag of the Cosmos, causing Big Hairy and the rest of his neo-demon horde to fly out. Then he looked down into the bag at the collection of other neo-demons inside.

They included the black crows, the group of fierce mosquitos, the crimson crocodile and the enormous lizard, all the other neo-demons he had acquired in the Crow Divinity Holy Land.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he examined them.

"If I can really absorb all of these neo-demons into my collection, then my status in the Western Desert as a Grand Dragoneer will be much more valid." Having reached this conclusion, he slapped the bag, causing a black crow to fly out. Eyes glittering, he pointed his finger out.

Immediately, the Demonic Qi in the area congealed onto his finger, transforming into pressure that weighed down onto the black crow.

Time slipped by. Meng Hao sent some of his neo-demon horde outside to prevent anyone from interfering with his seclusion. A month passed.

During that month, everyone in the five Tribes of the Crow Divinity were all on edge. The strife and struggle that had existed previously between the Tribes had vanished. The Greatfathers and Priests had frequent talks behind closed doors. In the end, they chose to stand together and form an alliance.

At the same time, the vassals from the various Tribes came to the realization that the collapse of the Crow Divinity Holy Land was going to lead to all sorts of trouble. Gradually, they began to leave.

They were only vassals, not true Tribe members. Faced with imminent disaster, it was only natural that they would be unwilling to stay behind. In less than half a month, more than half of the vassals were gone.

However, the alliance between the five Tribes had restored some of the former grandeur of the Crow Divinity Tribe. Furthermore, although many

vassals had departed, the Tribes still had many powerful experts, and their overall power actually increased. As for the leadership of the five great Tribes, including the Greatfather of the Crow Scout Tribe, their attention was now focused primarily on Meng Hao.

As a Grand Dragoner, Meng Hao had already astonished them. A Grand Dragoner might not personally be very strong, but the power he wielded in battle was very important.

To the Five Tribes, although Meng Hao was an injured Grand Dragoner and didn't have a large quantity of neo-demons, it didn't really matter. If necessary, they could vastly increase the size of Meng Hao's neo-demon horde, which could in turn win them a victory in battle.

As of now, the entire region behind the mountain now belonged to Meng Hao. Even Tribe members were prohibited from entering; the entire district had become like a restricted area. This applied to the Crow Scout Tribe as well as the other tribes in the alliance.

Because of Meng Hao's standing, he didn't need to take the initiative to ask for this. The five great Tribes took the initiative to offer it up willingly. Even more respectful of Meng Hao was Gu La. He had moved over to the Crow Scout Tribe, and now sat cross-legged outside of Meng Hao's district behind the mountain. It was as if he was standing guard. The Wild Giant was there too, and it would occasionally let out shocking roars that shook Heaven and Earth.

As for the big man who was actually the parrot and the others, he stuck around at first, but after awhile ended up venturing out, to return only occasionally. After some time passed, the Wild Giant, who found it hard to stay in one place for a long time, would join Big Hairy and the others when they went out into the mountains.

Another half month passed, and Meng Hao was still in seclusion. It was at this point that a long beam of light flew through the air in the sky outside of the mountain range occupied by the Five Tribe Alliance.

Within this beam of light were 32 gigantic spiders. Each one was hundreds of meters long, and completely fierce in appearance. They were

brightly colored, making it obvious that they were extremely poisonous. At first it looked like they were flying, but actually, an enormous web filled the sky wherever they went.

The web glowed with a mysterious light that made it stand out in contrast to the blue skies and white clouds. Seated cross-legged atop the 32 gigantic spiders was a group of people wearing identical robes, whose bodies were festooned with totem tattoos.

Behind the 32 spiders was a massive round, stony meteorite. A hole had been excavated in the middle of the gigantic rock, revealing an interior of crystal that looked like agate. It glowed with a violet light, and even seemed to have liquid circulating about inside.

Slouching there was a middle-aged man in a long white robe. He was surrounded by several coquettish women who were currently massaging his shoulders.

This man's features were handsome, but he had a large black mark on his face that completely changed his appearance.

Lines of silk attached the gigantic meteorite to the 32 spiders, who were pulling it through the air. Behind them all, the sky was darkened with a vast quantity of spider neo-demons.

On the back of one of the giant spiders up ahead was a young man. Looking back at the agate meteorite, he clasped hands and bowed toward the white-robed man. In a loud voice, he said, "Your excellency Dragoneer, up ahead are the ruins of the Crow Divinity. It is currently occupied by the five lesser Tribes."

"The old fogeys back in the Tribe are being too cautious," said the man languidly, his expression proud and aloof. "These trifling Five Tribes only managed to gasp their way until now because of the protection of the Crow Divinity. The Priests figured out that the Crow Divinity is gone now, so what's the point in mobilizing such a big force to destroy them!? And how come I got sent to probe them out!?"

"Whatever. Since I'm here, I'll handle things like I usually do. Before they die, I'll offer them a little bit of hope, and then crush it! My

Demonspiders love to eat the flesh of depressed humans. Spider Apprentice, bring forth the Crimson War Declaration!” It seemed that to this white-robed man, considering his identity, being dispatched to this place was somewhat of a humiliation.

The man’s voice echoed out to the Western Desert Cultivators who sat on top of the 32 giant spiders. When they heard the Crimson War Declaration mentioned, their vicious faces filled with the thirst for blood. They licked their lips.

The eyes of the youth who had spoken moments before turned red, and his lips twisted into a vicious smile. The Crimson War Declaration had only one purpose.

It meant that the entire Tribe, including Tribe members and vassals, would have three chances to fight. If they were defeated three times in a row, the result was a slaughter and the complete destruction of the entire Tribe!

*

1. The ancient character for metal in China looked like this:



Chapter 434: Eyes Open!

The sky overhead was instantly filled with bright colors, as well as wailing cries. The faces of the members of the five Tribes flickered as they looked up.

The Greatfathers, Priests, and Grand Elders of the five Tribes made up quite a group of Nascent Soul experts, more than twenty in total. In the Southern Domain, they would count as a mid-sized Sect. Of course... without a Spirit Severing Cultivator, they couldn't be considered a great Sect.

In the Western Desert, the Five Tribe Alliance could be considered a powerful force, equivalent to a mid-sized Tribe. However... all of the powerful experts were looking up at the enormous spiders in the sky, and their faces grew dark.

"That's... the great Five Poisons Tribe!"

"To be able to control such a large number of spiders, that guy must be... Zhou Ye, rank 9 Dragoneer from the Spider Branch!"

"I've heard that he's haughty to the extreme. His Cultivation base is only in the mid Core Formation stage, but as a rank 9 Dragoneer, he controls a vast amount of neo-demons, plus 32 level 10 giant neo-demons who are comparable to the Nascent Soul stage! In recent years, he single-handedly exterminated quite a few Tribes!"

At the same time that the faces of the members of the Five Tribes fell, and the Nascent Soul experts' hearts sank, the cries from up above grew even more intense. Tens of thousands of ferocious spiders poured down from above to hover in mid-air. The savage aura that emanated from this black mass spread out to cover the entire mountain range.

At the same time, the 32 level 10 neo-demons, each of them hundreds of meters long, whistled through the air emanating a powerful aura similar to a Nascent Soul Cultivation base. The explosive power of it shook everything.

In addition to the 32 level 10 spiders, there was the gigantic meteorite that flew along behind them. It was about three hundred meters up in the air, its exterior pitch black, but its interior lit with a violet glow that made it seem as if the man sitting inside was completely violet.

Powerful pressure emanated out, causing the members of the five great Tribes to grow pale as they looked up into the sky. Wu Ling, Wu Chen and the others began to breathe heavily, and their faces filled with fear.

The young man atop the huge spider who had spoken earlier, suddenly called out in a sharp voice: "My Lord, the exalted Dragoneer Zhou Ye of the Five Poison Tribe's Spider Branch, desires to battle any Cultivator in the world! You have three chances to win. If you fail, your five Tribes will be washed clean with blood!" His expression was one of arrogance as his voice echoed out in all directions. He waved his right hand, causing a red jade slip to shoot down toward the ground. It suddenly exploded and transformed into a red mist that billowed out to form a red battle platform three thousand meters wide.

"You have the space of twenty breaths. If no one steps forward to fight, it will be taken as a forfeiture, and the cleansing by blood will begin!" The young man licked his lips, and a bloodthirsty glint appeared in his eyes. Around him, the 32 gigantic spiders with Cultivation bases similar to the Nascent Soul stage had cold-blooded expressions and emitted vicious auras.

The Five Tribes were silent. The twenty or so Nascent Soul Cultivators, including the Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather, all exchanged glances.

Considering the combined might of the Five Tribe Alliance, it would be impossible for trifling Zhou Ye to exterminate them, even with his 32 level 10 neo-demons. Whether in terms of the five Tribes' defensive spell formations or their Sacred Ancients, they were more than enough to handle this one crisis.

However... what they truly were worried about was the fact that Zhou Ye represented... the Five Poisons Tribe.

Considering these Nascent Soul eccentrics were all Greatfathers, Priests,

and Grand Elders, it was obvious that they were wily old foxes. They could immediately tell what was going on. “They’re probing us out!”

“The Crow Divinity Holy Land just collapsed, so the Five Poisons Tribe is a bit hesitant in coming here. Therefore, they decided to feel us out!”

“That’s right. If we fight and win, then perhaps we can frighten them. Then we’ll have a bit more time. Even better would be if we won and killed him. That would be perfect. Alternatively... we could just not fight; we could immediately activate the protective spell formation and let them attack us. The latter has various advantages and disadvantages. The former would be the most direct route.”

The Nascent Soul Cultivators were silent for a moment. Glances were exchanged, and many of their gazes came to fall on the Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather. Since Meng Hao was a Grand Dragoneer, that put the Crow Scout Tribe in a high position within the Five Tribe Alliance.

“Constantly running away from conflict reveals your weakness to the enemy,” he said. “The great Five Poisons Tribe isn’t stupid, and will be able to see the true situation. Then, when the true conflict begins, we would really be weak. This battle... must be fought! Furthermore, that man must be killed. If we strike like lightning and exterminate him, it will give rise to fear!”

A gleam of ruthlessness appeared in the eyes of the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather. “Fight!”

Just when the Five Tribes Alliance was preparing to attack, a howl could be heard from the mountainous forest off in the distance. Big Hairy suddenly shot out carrying a small, dead animal in his mouth. In the blink of an eye, he was in the area locked down by the myriad of spiders overhead.

Behind Big Hairy were the rest of the Greenwood Wolves, all of whom were dashing along at top speed carrying animals in their mouths. They often went hunting for food, and after having fun for a while would return to rest outside the courtyard where Meng Hao was currently in seclusion. At this exact moment, they were returning from such a jaunt.

Their appearance was quite sudden, and immediately caused a disturbance among the spiders. As for the 32 giant spiders, their auras suddenly retracted, and cold looks appeared in their eyes.

“Eee!” said Zhou Ye, a look of surprise on his face as he sat up straight inside his meteorite, his eyes glittering as he looked at Big Hairy.

“That’s... a Wolf King! Furthermore, it’s been mutated! Excellent, excellent. I never imagined that I would find a neo-demon like that in this place. The ones behind it aren’t as good, but still not bad.” Even as Zhou Ye was muttering to himself, the ground suddenly shook and a roar could be heard from within the forest. Then, the Wild Giant appeared, crashing out from the trees.

Its enormous frame was shocking to the extreme, and the instant it appeared, the surrounding spiders emitted strange calls. Even the 32 giant spiders were shrieking and assumed vigilant and threatening postures.

“That’s... a Wild Giant!!” said Zhou Ye, his eyes going wide. “There’s actually a Wild Giant here!” He stood up, a look of disbelief on his face. His eyes shone with fervor and greed as he stared at the Wild Giant.

“According to legend, the blood of a Wild Giant can increase the bizarre power of secret Dragoneer arts. Furthermore, when mixed with neo-demon food, it can have an amazing effect on their progress! Even more important, if I can subjugate a Wild Giant, then my status and position in the Tribe will be completely different!”

Zhou Ye started laughing uproariously. Eyes shining, he pointed at the Wild Giant.

“Bring me that Wild Giant and those Greenwood Wolves immediately!” By now, he had completely forgotten about the Crimson War Declaration. As soon as his words rang out, the surrounding spiders shot through the air toward Big Hairy and the others.

Shocking, ferocious power emanated out from the 32 giant spiders as they shot spiderwebs out toward the Wild Giant. In addition, the Five Poisons Tribe members on their back flew forward in attack.

As for Zhou Ye, he immediately sent his meteorite flying forward, completely ignoring the members of the Five Tribe Alliance.

When this happened, the Five Tribe Alliance members all stared in shock. The Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather and the others exchanged delighted glances.

“Of all the people to provoke, this Zhou Ye picks Grandmaster Meng!”

“It seems we won’t have to do a thing today. This Zhou Ye will definitely be thwarted!”

Big Hairy swallowed the animal he held in his jaws and then howled. His body suddenly expanded, and his eyes filled with savagery as he charged toward the incoming spiders. Hairy #2 and the others also let off successive howls. The Wild Giant’s eyes went wide as it roared and attacked.

Instantly, roaring sounds echoed out in all directions. Facing an onslaught from so many spiders, which included the 32 terrifying giant spiders, Big Hairy, the Greenwood Wolves and the Wild Giant were all in great peril.

Huge webs descended onto Hairy #2 and the other Greenwood Wolves, making it impossible for them to even struggle. No matter how they howled, they couldn’t shake off the webs.

Big Hairy lifted his head up and let out a powerful howl. Now, the level 10 spiders turned their attention to the Wild Giant. After being covered with hundreds of huge webs, it let out a cry of pain. As for Big Hairy, his eyes were red as he glared at Zhou Ye sitting there in his flying meteorite. Big Hairy’s body flickered as he dodged one of the giant webs. Then, he turned into a beam of white light that shot directly toward Zhou Ye.

Zhou Ye stood in his meteorite, laughing as Big Hairy approached. He raised his right hand and gestured forward.

“Secret Dragoneer art, Burst the Void!”

Immediately, the indistinct image of a huge spider magically appeared in the air in front of Zhou Ye and then slammed into Big Hairy.

Big Hairy let out a miserable shriek as all of the white fur on his body suddenly burst into flames. These flames were not red, but rather black, and seemed to be poisonous in nature. Big Hairy's body shook and blood sprayed out of his mouth. Looking suddenly dispirited, he spun around and then transformed into a beam of light that shot off into the distance.

"You seem quite intelligent, but now that you've been poisoned by my secret Dragoneer art, where do you think you're going to flee to? Based on neo-demon behavior, you'll most likely go looking for your master. Very well, I'll kill him and use his blood to sever the connection between the two of you." Laughing, Zhou Ye flicked his sleeve, causing the countless spiders to fly with him in pursuit of Big Hairy.

The sight of it was quite impressive as they took up the chase.

Big Hairy's expression was dismal as black Qi emanated off of his body. Had he not consumed a real Demon Nurturing Pill, then he would have already been transformed into a pool of blood. Right now, his body was trembling and he let out growling howls as he shot through the air. After circling around the mountain, he neared the area that had been surrounded by mist for the entire past month.

Gu La was also sitting there cross-legged. Suddenly, his eyes opened and he saw what was happening. His face immediately fell.

Big Hairy, his eyes filled with grief and sorrow, howled disconsolately as the massive spider horde closed in on him.

The instant the shocking howl echoed out, deep within the mist, Meng Hao, who sat cross-legged in his courtyard, suddenly opened his eyes.

At the same time, thousands of other pairs of eyes within the mist suddenly opened as well.

There were more than ten pairs among that group which emanated shocking auras!

Chapter 435: Big Hairy Tattles!

“Is this where your Master lives?” asked Zhou Ye, smiling calmly within his meteorite. His expression was one of extreme aloofness, as all living things were nothing more than insects in his eyes, and few things existed that could catch his interest.

His eyes then flickered over toward Gu La.

“A rank 7 Dragoneer? Presumably this is your Master.” With a smile, Zhou Ye neared the seemingly weak and dying White Wolf, and then shook his head.

He was surrounded by more than ten thousand spiders, all circulating around his body and even blotting out the sky. A shocking aura spread out, especially from the 32 giant spiders who continued to emanate ripples comparable to the early Nascent Soul stage that caused the auras in the area to change.

Gu La began to breathe heavily as he stared at the scene. When his eyes came to rest on Zhou Ye, he gasped. It wasn't too difficult to identify the man. Based on the power emanating from him, if he wasn't a Grand Dragoneer, then he was definitely a rank 9 Dragoneer.

“Sticking with a rank 7 Dragoneer like that can't compare to following me,” said Zhou Ye, his eyes flickering with contempt. He waved his right hand, and instantly one of the three hundred meter large spiders flew toward Gu La, emanating killing intent as it neared him.

“First I'll exterminate your Master,” Zhou Ye said coolly, “and then use his blood to sever your bond. From now on, you're going to be with me.”

As the words left his mouth, the three hundred meter large spider descended upon Gu La. As it did....

A cold snort suddenly echoed out from within the mist. It started out very faint, but in the blink of an eye it transformed into something like thunder. It then began invisible waves that shot toward the incoming spider.

This giant spider, whose power was similar to the early Nascent Soul stage, instantly began to tremble. It let out a miserable shriek and then, astonishingly, retreated. Before it could move more than a few meters, however, it began to shake so violently that its body exploded into bits.

A simple sound caused a three hundred meter large spider to collapse into pieces. Zhou Ye's facial expression completely changed, filling with grave astonishment.

At the same time, Meng Hao's figure slowly became visible as he walked out from within the roiling mists. His pace was slow, but as he walked, the mists seethed, making it seem almost like he was cloaked in the stuff. His powerful aura soared up into the Heavens.

After acquiring two totem tattoos, Meng Hao's Cultivation base was powerful enough to tangle with the early Nascent Soul stage, but certainly not so strong that he could kill an early Nascent Soul Cultivator with a single snort. Unfortunately for the spider, it was a neo-demon, not a Cultivator!

As a Demon Sealer, Meng Hao was innately capable of emitting pressure upon neo-demons. This was a technique he had come to master during the past month in which he took command over all the neo-demons in his bag of holding.

Meng Hao had come to call it... Demonic Pressure!

Now that he could use Demonic Pressure, Meng Hao was a Grand Dragoner in more than just name only!

As he strolled out, Zhou Ye's face flickered again. Without even realizing it, he backed up a few paces. The more than ten thousand spiders around him began to tremble. It was as if to them, Meng Hao was the most powerful neo-demon in the world. In addition to trembling, some of them even let out miserable shrieks.

"Grand Dragoner!!" Zhou Ye was panting as he looked at the reaction of the neo-demons around him. A buzzing sound filled his mind, a feeling that he had experienced before only when meeting Grand Dragoners in his Tribe.

Despite his change in facial expression, Zhou Ye abruptly said, “Well, so what if you’re a Grand Dragonner? How many neo-demons do you have, you....”

Before he could finish his statement, droning sounds could be heard from the black mist behind Meng Hao as nearly a thousand green mosquitos appeared.

Each of the mosquitos was about three meters long and had long, sharp mouthparts. Their bodies were covered with bristly fur, and they looked matchlessly malevolent as they blotted out the sky.

“Demonsquitos!!” gasped Zhou Ye, his eyes growing wide. Such creatures were rare in the Western Desert. In fact, in his entire life, Zhou Ye had only ever seen ten in total. Not only did they have the fearsome ability to drain the blood of the bodies of creatures vastly larger than them, but even more shocking, they were extremely poisonous!

Actually, in some aspects their poison wasn’t really a poison, but a plague!

These Demonsquitos were incredibly divine and mighty, and the shocking fact that there were over a thousand of them caused Zhou Ye to breath deeply.

Simultaneously, the ten thousand spiders in the area began to shriek, and some of them even fell prone on the ground, not daring to move.

Behind the thousand Demonsquitos, a black light appeared. Within the black light were countless black crows flying through the air. Their eyes emanated a shocking, bright red glow.

“Those are... Demoncrows!” Zhou Ye’s brain was once again filled with a buzzing sound. Crows such as these were not often seen in the Western Desert. Most frightening of all were the legends told about them. Supposedly, these Demoncrows had some connection with the dead! According to the stories... they could bring dead people back to life!

Some of the spiders next to Zhou Ye were now completely ignoring any of his commands. They prostrated themselves on the ground, not daring to

move even a muscle.

Next, even more neo-demons appeared behind Meng Hao. Each one that did caused Zhou Ye's expression to flicker. When the red crocodile appeared, Zhou Ye gasped and his face filled with unprecedented astonishment.

"Searing Demondile! That's... a neo-demon from ancient times, a Searing Demondile! They're born at level 8, within the depths of volcanoes!"

After that, the giant lizard crawled out. As soon as it appeared, it let out a bellowing roar that caused the surrounding black mist to congeal and be sucked into its mouth.

"That's... that's... another ancient neo-demon! Heaven Slaughtering Lizard!!" Zhou Ye's entire body was shaking. By this point, each and every one of his spiders were frightened to death. Even the three hundred meter large spiders were trembling and prostrating themselves, not daring to move.

"Who... just who exactly did I manage to provoke...? A Grand Dragoner with so many fearsome neo-demons.... Dammit, even the Grand Dragoners back in the Tribe don't have neo-demons that can compare to these!"

Zhou Ye's face was ashen as he said, "Sir...."

Before he could finish, Meng Hao, his face expressionless, flickered forward with incredible speed to appear next to Big Hairy.

Completely ignoring Zhou Ye, Meng Hao squatted down and gently petted Big Hairy's back. As he did, the poison completely vanished from within him. After the space of a few breaths, Big Hairy was completely back to normal. He rose to his feet and let out some yipping sounds as he rubbed Meng Hao with his huge head.

"I understand," said Meng Hao, nodding his head. He then pointed out with his finger, causing one of the nearby three hundred meter long spiders to instantly explode. Then he pointed at another one. It too exploded.

One after another, Meng Hao exterminated six of the three hundred meter large spiders. Those were the ones who had injured Big Hairy. Now they were nothing more than ash floating in the wind.

“Any more?” asked Meng Hao, looking at Big Hairy. Big Hairy nodded and let out a few more yips.

Seeing this, Zhou Ye’s scalp went numb. He was now scared out of his mind.

“I’m from the Five Poisons Tribe, I...” Even as he began to speak, Meng Hao suddenly looked over at him.

Meng Hao stepped forward, and in the blink of an eye was directly in front of Zhou Ye’s meteorite. He reached out and slapped it lightly.

The slap caused a roaring sound to fill the air. The meteorite tumbled backward, emanating cracking sounds as it did. Huge fissures covered its surface. Although it didn’t break into pieces, a deep palm print was now clearly visible on its surface.

“Hmph,” said Meng Hao, his eyes glittering.

Zhou Ye’s mind and heart were reeling, and blood sprayed from his mouth. His eyes were filled with disbelief and complete astonishment. This meteorite was a precious treasure of the Dragoneers in his Tribe. Dragoneers of the Western Desert seem powerful because they can control large quantities of neo-demons; however, they have a fatal weakness.

That weakness is the fact that Dragoneers generally lack a powerful Cultivation base!

Because of that weakness, they can be easily killed. That is why Dragoneers in the Western Desert take special care to protect themselves. This meteorite was exactly such a precious treasure, capable of withstanding a blow from the early Nascent Soul stage without being harmed.

However... just now Zhou Ye could clearly sense that his precious treasure had been cracked. That could only mean one thing. This Grand

Dragoneer had a Nascent Soul Cultivation base!

“The Grand Dragoneers in my Tribe are only of the great circle of Core Formation. Grand Dragoneers who have Nascent Soul Cultivation bases, are... almost completely invincible!! They are rare in the Western Desert and their secret Dragoneer arts are capable of summoning Spirit Severing neo-demons!!” Zhou Ye was so scared that his whole body was shaking. He let out a shriek as he pushed his meteorite to go even faster. Clearly, he was planning to flee.

By this time, the members of the Five Tribe Alliance, including the Nascent Soul eccentrics, had arrived on the scene. Seeing everything that had happened caused them to gasp. They knew Meng Hao was strong, and had assumed that if they all joined forces they would be able to suppress him if necessary. Now, their faces fell and their hearts filled with foreboding as they realized that their lack of action before had led to the White Wolf and the Wild Giant being injured.

Before they could even begin to think of how to make up for their actions, Meng Hao’s body shot forward toward Zhou Ye. His right hand formed a fist, which punched out. A boom filled the air, and more cracks appeared on the meteorite.

“Senior, please spare me! Sir, everything just now was an accident, a misunderstanding....”

Shocking roars filled the air as Meng Hao punched out three times in succession. Finally, a splintering sound could be heard as the meteorite disintegrated into pieces. Zhou Ye was pale faced and incapable of fleeing. Meng Hao reached out and grabbed him by the neck.

He then looked back at Big Hairy. “Was it this arm?” he asked.

Big Hairy nodded, letting out some more yips as he recalled the humiliation he had endured.

Meng Hao nodded and grabbed hold of Zhou Ye, who let out a bloodcurdling scream as his arm was directly ripped off of his body and transformed into a haze of blood and gore. Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever as he hovered there in mid-air. He was just about to

release Zhou Ye, when he suddenly noticed the Wild Giant, Hairy #2 and the others who were currently bound up and injured within the spider webs.

Seeing this, a cold light appeared in his eyes. He suddenly clenched his fist. A cracking sound could be heard as Zhou Ye's neck was instantly crushed. His eyes went wide, and he was dead.

Meng Hao released Zhou Ye and then turned to face the Nascent Soul eccentrics of the Five Tribe Alliance.

“Well, hello,” he said.

Chapter 436: Good Faith

Even as Meng Hao spoke, he waved his right hand, causing a gale force wind to sweep across the land. It only took a moment for the wind to sweep the spider webs off of the Wild Giant, Hairy #2 and the others. The webs became nothing but ash. Having been freed, the Wild Giant lifted its head up and roared.

In turn, all of the neo-demons that belonged to Meng Hao began roaring. The spiders who remained in the rear mountain district all continued to remain prone on the ground, not daring to even lift their heads.

At this moment, Meng Hao's might billowed to the Heavens as he hovered there in mid-air glaring coldly at the Five Tribe alliance.

Facing up against his power, and hearing his words, the Greatfathers, Priests, and Grand Elders of the Five Tribe alliance felt shaken inwardly. Their breathing became ragged in pants. The strength of this Grandmaster Meng vastly exceeded their expectations. Furthermore, they had no idea when he had unexpectedly acquired so many neo-demons.

Not only was this group of neo-demons large in number, but they all looked very familiar. Upon closer inspection, they were shocked to find that these were neo-demons from the Crow Divinity Holy Land.

"Grandmaster Meng...." said the Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather with a wry smile. Before he could finish, Meng Hao pointed toward the ground, causing invisible Demonic Qi to rise up from the earth below.

The appearance of the Demonic Qi caused the surrounding neo-demon hordes to roar with even more intensity. That was even more true of the more than ten thousand spiders. Now, they were no longer suppressed. Instead, Meng Hao's Demonic Qi exerted incredible attractive force on them. Following the lead of the twenty or more three hundred meter large spiders, they filled the sky as they flew over to Meng Hao, circling around him with expressions of submission on their faces.

Meng Hao floated in mid-air, surrounded by a mixed neo-demon horde nearly twenty thousand in number. Their aura billowed to the heavens as

they let out unceasing roars. Meng Hao didn't look angry, and yet radiated power. Some of his Grand Dragoner aura suddenly exploded out, causing everything nearby to shake.

The Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather gasped, incapable of continuing to speak. The faces of the other Nascent Soul Cultivators from the Five Tribes fell. As of this moment, Meng Hao was vastly more powerful to them than Zhou Ye had been!

"Fellow Daoists," said Meng Hao flatly. "Ever since I arrived in your Tribe, I have abided by your rules. Never have I offended anyone or violated any laws. Therefore, I don't understand why, when my neo-demons were being captured, not only did you do nothing to stop it, you even facilitated the matter.... I require an explanation within three days. If I don't get it, then my close relationship with the Five Tribes of the Crow Divinity will end, and I will leave this place." With that, he and his twenty thousand strong neo-demon horde whistled through the air as they left. The black mist once again appeared, billowing up into the sky like a hurricane. It was visible even from a great distance away as it stretched up above.

Seeing Meng Hao leave did not cause the pressure weighing down on the Five Tribes to lessen. Rather, it grew even stronger. The Greatfathers and Priests exchanged glances. Bitter smiles appeared on their faces as they began to confer with each other using Divine Sense.

They had no desire whatsoever to offend Meng Hao or cause him to leave. A Grand Dragoner with so many high-level neo demons among his horde of twenty thousand, was indescribably important to the Five Tribes.

It wasn't just their Tribes that would feel this way. Any tribe would place great importance onto a Grand Dragoner like this. Even a great Tribe would feel this way.

It must be known that for a Tribe to be classified as a great Tribe, they not only had to have a sufficient population and number of neo-demons, but another critical factor was that they had to have a Grand Dragoner.

The Five Tribes discussed the matter until dawn of the next day. Then,

the Nascent Soul Cultivators all went to stand outside the black mist in the rear mountain district. They clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“We humbly request an audience with the Grand Dragoneer, Grandmaster Meng.”

They stood there listening to the sound of their voices echoing into the roiling black mist. After a moment passed, Gu La strolled out, his jaw set with pride and condescension, his hands folded behind his back.

He was followed by the roaring Wild Giant, as well as a vast collection of spiders, which flew out to surround the Greatfathers, Priests, and others.

The indistinct shape of some gigantic spiders became visible, their power comparable to a Nascent Soul Cultivation base. There was also the red crocodile, which emanated viciousness as it crawled out. Further back, black crows whistled through the air followed by the green mosquitos.

The sight of all this caused the faces of the Greatfathers and Priests to fill with serious expressions.

“The Young Master is currently practicing cultivation. Before going into seclusion, he made it clear that if the Five Tribes came without sufficient intention for reconciliation, then when he emerged from seclusion, he would depart this place and sever all ties with you!” Gu La looked them over, feeling extremely excited and complacent. The feeling was much greater than the feeling he’d gotten after acquiring power on his own. This surpassed that by far.

As of this moment, he was quite happy to be a follower of Meng Hao.

The Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather smiled wryly, but gave an inward sigh of relief. He was well aware that their actions yesterday had in fact been a way of forcing Meng Hao’s hand. After exchanging glances with the others, the Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather stepped forward.

“First of all,” he said with a slight smile, “we would like to congratulate Grandmaster Meng on recovering all of his powers as a mighty Grand Dragoneer. Regarding the slaying of Zhou Ye, we Five Tribes will stand as witnesses of the event. Furthermore, each of our Tribes would like to offer

you a congratulatory gift of two thousand neo-demons, a mix of levels 3 to 7.”

Hearing this caused Gu La’s heart to begin to beat wildly.

Two thousand neo-demons wouldn’t count for much to a great Tribe, but to a small Tribe, it was an incredible show of good faith. After all, neo-demons were the most important thing for Dragoneers.

Dragoneer cultivation was not based on personal strength, but rather, controlling neo-demons. Neo-demons were the basis of power, and for each of these Tribes to give two thousand meant that it was a total of ten thousand. Such a vast number caused Gu La to begin to breathe heavily.

“Well....” said Gu La, hesitating for a moment.

“Grandmaster Meng is a Grand Dragoneer, and we feel very honored that he picked our Five Tribe Alliance. We know that the position of Grand Dragoneer is an esteemed one, so each Tribe is also willing offer him 300,000 Spirit Stones in order to help facilitate his daily cultivation. That will only be the first payment! From now on, the Five Tribe alliance will provide him with an equal sum every three months as compensation for his assistance.” With that, the Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather once again clasped hands and bowed deeply.

Obviously, he wasn’t bowing to Gu La, but toward the churning black mist.

Gu La’s eyes were wide, and he couldn’t stop himself from panting in nervousness. His eyes began to glow, and his mind was reeling, filled with nothing but the thought of Spirit Stones. If each Tribe provided 300,000 Spirit Stones every three months, that was a total of 1,500,000. Essentially, that meant that every month Meng Hao stayed in the Five Tribes Alliance, he would get 500,000 Spirit Stones.

That was a vast number that Gu La had a hard time even imagining. Of course, he had no way of knowing that if it wasn’t for the imminent danger facing the Five Tribe Alliance, they would never possibly offer up such an unimaginable number.

“This matter....” Gu La’s mouth and tongue were almost too dry to speak, and he didn’t know what to say. Despite the fact that he had actually come prepared to strike out with deadly force against these people, he could never have predicted that before he even struck a threatening pose, such incredible gifts would be offered.

“Furthermore,” continued the Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather, “considering that Grandmaster Meng is a Grand Dragoneer and vassal of the Crow Scout Tribe, we would like to earnestly request that he assume the position of Grand Elder of the Five Tribe Alliance, a position equal to that of us Greatfathers!”

Gu La was panting and his mind was shaking. A position like that, equal to that of the Greatfathers of the Five Tribes, was incredibly high and vastly meaningful.

Suddenly, the Greatfather of the Crow Scout spoke again: “All of the resources of the Five Tribes Alliance will be poured into fulfilling Grandmaster Meng’s needs. Furthermore any spoils of war will be split six ways, with one part of that belonging to Grandmaster Meng.”

These words only served to add to the roaring that filled Gu La’s head until it was on the verge of exploding.

This last benefit seemed almost unreal. In fact, though, it was real, and vastly exceeded anything from before. This truly was good faith on the part of the Five Tribes Alliance, to split all future spoils with him.

At the same time, it would also tightly bind Meng Hao to the Five Tribes.

“In addition,” said the Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather, continuing on with the last item the Five Tribes had agreed to offer, “if Grandmaster Meng becomes the Grand Elder, then the Five Tribes agree to provide food for all of his thirty thousand neo-demons!”

Gu La didn’t know what to say. Thirty thousand neo-demons could eat a small mountain of beasts in a very short time. That amount of food was no small number, and when you added it all together, could easily drain a small fortune.

That was why Grand Dragoners usually attached themselves to a great Tribe; both benefited from such an arrangement.

Gu La subconsciously looked back toward the black mist. The Greatfathers and Priests of the Five Tribes also looked toward the black mist, awaiting Meng Hao's response.

"Lastly, as a show of good faith, if Grandmaster Meng agrees to all of this, and the Five Tribe Alliance survives for the next year, then we are willing to allow Grandmaster Meng to be our sole representative to enter the Bridge of Immortal Treading!" The person who uttered these words was not the Greatfather of the Crow Scout Tribe, but rather that of the Crow Soldier Tribe. He was the only of their number to have a Cultivation base at the mid Nascent Soul stage, and was their most powerful expert.

Almost the same moment that he finished speaking, the mist began to seethe, and then shrink back. The surrounding neo-demons quickly retreated along with it. In the space of time of a few breaths, the mist had completely vanished, along with neo-demon horde.

Now, all eyes were focused completely on the person slowly walking toward them.

It was Meng Hao, wearing a long black robe. His hair fluttered in the wind, and his eyes were cold. On his skin could be seen a dense, endless amount of totem tattoos. They even existed on his face. Each and every one of these totem tattoos depicted neo-demons.

20,000 neo-demons, all transformed into totem tattoos, branded onto Meng Hao's body. His aura was thoroughly Demonic at this point, filled with a barbaric savagery that drifted slowly out from his body.

If the people in the Southern Domain who were familiar with Meng Hao were to see him now, it would be difficult for them to recognize him. As of this moment, anyone who looked at him would take him to be a powerful Western Desert Cultivator!

Such power, although it wasn't of the Nascent Soul stage, was enough to slaughter anyone of the early Nascent Soul stage!

Chapter 437: Bridge of Immortal Treading!

“The first kindness shown to me by the Crow Scout Tribe was the Greenwood Tree totem,” said Meng Hao as he strolled out. His voice contained a certain bizarreness, as if it were filled with the indistinct sound of countless beasts roaring in unison. “The second was the water of destiny of the Crow Divinity Tribe, which raised me to the full circle of Wood-type power. Within the Holy Land, I encountered the Crow Divinity and acquired a Metal-type totem tattoo. That was the third kindness.

“Meng Hao clearly distinguishes between gratitude and grudges in taking action. You tested me out and even allowed enemies to attack me. However, it was all for the safety of your Tribe, and you had no choice. That, I can understand.

“I don’t want your Spirit Stones. As for your neo-demons, they will definitely be much more powerful if they are under my control. However, if the Five Tribes still exist after the fighting is over, then I will return them to you.

“Regardless of splitting spoils, or anything else, I, Meng Hao, will stand by your sides during this war, Fellow Daoists. The reason I shall do so... is because of those three kindnesses. Therefore, please, no more investigations and no more incidents like that which happened yesterday. Otherwise, I will truly sever the relationship forged through those kindnesses.”

Having finished speaking, he clasped hands and bowed deeply to the various members of the Five Tribes.

They looked back at him in stunned silence for a moment. Then their faces filled with shame. At this point, it was impossible for them to not realize that all of this had been a warning, not a request for payment. The only thing Meng Hao wanted was the proper attitude.

I will help you in order to pay a debt of gratitude. The only price I demand... is respect!

That was what Meng Hao wanted, and also the reason why he had not

appeared, but rather sent Gu La out to meet them.

“In addition,” Meng Hao continued, “I would like to hear more about this Bridge of Immortal Treading that the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather referred to.”

Meng Hao’s body was covered in totem tattoos, and he had the aura of a powerful expert. Having heard his sincere words, the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather slowly said, “The Bridge of Immortal Treading is a stretch of ruins. According to legend, there used to be nine bridges in the great lands of the Western Desert. As for who built them, it is impossible to determine. Some people say that they formed naturally from soil that came from the stars.

“As for these bridges, they were used for Immortal Ascension. By treading on three of them, you could form an Immortal Body. By treading on six of them, you could form an Immortal Soul. By treading on nine of them, you could achieve Immortal Ascension.

“Allegedly, these bridges were connected to the stars, and were located next to a mountain and a sea.... Unfortunately, these bridges met with great Tribulation. The Heavens were not pleased, and destroyed them with lightning. The roaring lasted for 937 years before the bridges finally collapsed and transformed into a world. Later generations called that world... the Realm of the Bridge Ruins!

“Within the Realm of the Bridge Ruins is the wreckage of the Bridge of Immortal Treading. There is also Celestial soil which contains Immortal Qi. To us Cultivators, such Immortal Qi is like a rare tonic, far superior to all medicinal pills. Also available in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins are high grade Spirit Stones, to which nothing on the outside can compare.

“Furthermore within the wreckage of the Bridge of Immortal Treading that exists in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins can be found countless Celestial magics and divine abilities. There are even creatures which have been extinct in the outside world since ancient times. The Realm of the Bridge Ruins is one of the most precious treasures of the Western Desert!”

Up to this point, Meng Hao’s expression hadn’t changed, and he

continued to listen calmly.

“The Realm of the Bridge Ruins opens every thousand years. When it does, people from the Southern Domain, the Eastern Lands and the Northern Desert cannot enter it! Only Western Desert Cultivators with totems are capable of entering this world and seizing the luck therein!

“However, not every Western Desert Cultivator can enter. According to information in the ancient records, throughout the generations, there have only ever been twenty three spots. That is because in ancient times, there were twenty three Tribes which were officially recognized as great Tribes. Though they have long since fallen into decline, their bloodlines still survive!

“When the time comes for the Realm of the Bridge Ruins to open, an Immortality Bridgestone will descend to each of those great Tribes, which thus allows them to enter!

“The Crow Divinity Tribe was once one of the approved great Tribes of the Western Desert. Therefore, we have always had a spot to be able to enter the Realm of the Bridge Ruins.

“As long as the blood of our Tribe continues to exist, that spot will also be. It is also another reason why the Five Poisons Tribe stirred into action when the Crow Divinity Holy Land collapsed.

“If they can enslave us, consume our totems, and imprison our Tribe members, then... they will be able to secure the Crow Divinity Tribe’s spot in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins.” The Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather made no attempt to conceal any of the facts. He was telling Meng Hao everything, including secret matters known only to them.

As Meng Hao listened to the explanation, his eyes began to shine brightly. He could tell that what the man was saying was most likely true. Furthermore, the mention of Celestial soil had definitely sparked his interest.

“Based on our calculations, there is about one year left until the Realm of the Bridge Ruins opens. Before that happens, an Immortality Bridgestone will fall down to us. If you help us, Grandmaster Meng, then

we will deliver that stone to you in one year!” With that, the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather clasped hands and gave Meng Hao a deep bow.

Meng Hao was silent for a moment as he pondered the so-called Celestial soil. He already had a collection of Black Lands Celestial Talisman soil.

“In terms of my five elements totems,” he thought, “I’m currently missing Water, Fire and Earth. I need them to reach the level in which they manifest an ancient character; then I can concoct my Five-Colored Nascent Soul. I wonder if the Celestial soil in this Realm of the Bridge Ruins... could be used for one of my totem tattoos?”

Meanwhile....

If you left the mountain range containing the five Crow Divinity Tribes and flew about a month’s time, you would reach an area that was still considered the Western Desert North region, but was actually nearing its Central region.

There were no mountains here, only a vast plain called the Blood Wastes. The reason for the name was that the soil of this plain was red in color.

Within the red soil grew tens of thousands of varieties of poisonous grasses. During the rainy season, poisonous mists would fill the sky, turning the area into a sort of prohibited zone for Cultivators.

There were also vast quantities of enormous, poisonous neo-demons here, which made this plain somewhat like a pit of poison.

It was difficult for Cultivators to exist in a place like this. That is, except for... the largest of the Western Desert North region’s two great Tribes, the great Five Poisons Tribe!

It was a huge Tribe divided into five branches, each one named after a different poisonous creature. They were like an enormous black flower with five petals, spread out in terrifying fashion over the plain.

Each of these branches were equivalent in size to a medium sized Tribe. Together, they formed the great Five Poisons Tribe, whose name rocked

the entire Western Desert North region.

They were very different from the five Crow Divinity Tribes. These Five Poisons Tribes were not fractured. Rather, because of the different totems they possessed, they were organized into five different auxiliary Tribes called branches. In the central-most location in the plain was a Sacrificial Rites Assembly Hall, where fifteen High Priests would make decisions regarding important matters to the Five Poisons Tribe.

The branches themselves did not have Chieftains, only Priests. As far as Chieftains went... there was only one in the entire Five Poisons Tribe.

In past times, the Western Desert North regions had three great Tribes, the Crow Divinity, the Five Poisons, and the Scorching Ice. After all these years, the Five Poisons and Scorching Ice still existed; in contrast, the Crow Divinity was in decline. After having been split into the five sub-Tribes, they were much weaker and reduced to an inferior position.

Were it not for the existence of the Crow Divinity Holy Land, they would long since have been picked apart, their totemic power stolen, and the Tribes themselves forced to become auxiliary branches of other stronger Tribes.

Unfortunately, the Crow Divinity Holy Land had fallen. There was no need for word to be spread about this. Totemic Sacred Ancients could sense each other; therefore, the Poison Patriarchs that the Five Poisons Tribe had worshiped for the past ten thousand years immediately sent their will out to inform members of the Tribe that the Crow Divinity Holy Land was destroyed. The Crow Divinity... was dead!

Despite that, one of the reasons the Five Poisons Tribe had survived for such a long time was because of their cautious nature. They didn't immediately just go to war, but rather decided to feel out the Crow Divinity Tribes first. That was why they had dispatched rank 9 Dragoneer Zhou Ye from the Spider Branch.

The instant Zhou Ye died, his Lifesoul jade slip shattered. The Spider Branch immediately sensed this; roars of rage filled the air to echo about in all directions. The Five Poisons Tribe immediately called a Sacrificial

Rites Assembly.

During their meeting, the fifteen High Priests from the five Branches decided to dispatch the Spider Branch to declare war on the five Tribes of the Crow Divinity.

After three days, the official resolution was issued, and the entire Spider Branch began to make preparations for war. More than three thousand Totem Cultivators, three rank 9 Dragoneers, and a vast quantity of neo-demons entered a teleportation portal in the Blood Wastes and headed toward the Crow Divinity Mountains.

By using a teleportation portal, they were able to save quite a bit of time. The month-long journey was now reduced to only seven days.

That was how the war began!

Of course, this war attracted the attention of other Tribes within the Western Desert North region. Many eyes turned to observe. Wars between tribes were common in the North, but... the five Tribes of the Crow Divinity had once been a great Tribe. As such, this particular war was of much more interest than normal.

This was especially true when it came to the other great Tribe in the area, the Scorching Ice Tribe. They were paying very close attention. Were it not for the fact that they were much farther away than the Five Poisons Tribe, they too would have participated. Others might have thought such actions would be taken in an effort to grow their own Tribe. However, the Scorching Ice Tribe knew that the main purpose the Five Poisons Tribe had for going to war... was for the spot in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins.

Seven days later, war loomed over the five Tribes of the Crow Divinity.

On that day, Meng Hao sat cross-legged in his courtyard behind the mountain. In front of him were three flickering totems. One was a Flame Thrush, the other a Water Drop, the third a Stone Golem.

These totems came from the Crow Flame, Crow Gloom and Crow Fighter Tribes respectively.

Comparatively speaking, they didn't match up at all to the Greenwood

Tree that Meng Hao had acquired before. Nor were they even comparable to the earliest seed of the Metal-type totem that the Golden Crow had given him. That was why Meng Hao was hesitating about whether to fuse with them.

The seed would determine what type of transmogrification the totem could manifest later. In making his selections, how could Meng Hao not be careful?

After a long moment, his eyes filled with determination. He gathered up the totem seeds and put them away. If he really couldn't get any better totems in the future, then he would have no other choice but to use them.

After putting the totem seeds away, his eyes flickered and he lifted his head. He could see that a seething mist was suddenly beginning to spread out through the previously clear and boundless sky. The mist was enormous, covering everything, and rapidly approaching as it expanded out.

From a distance, it was still possible to see that, shockingly, this boundless mist was actually made up of incomparably fierce spiders.

At the same time, a rumbling sound filled the sky, shaking Heaven and Earth, causing even the mountains to tremble. Any vegetation that the mist touched instantly withered and died.

"Well, they arrived quickly!" thought Meng Hao, his eyes glittering coldly.

Chapter 438: Zhao Youlan [1]

Almost at the exact same time as the mist neared, five beams of light shot out from five different directions within the mountain. All of them were different colours; these were none other than the totemic Sacred Ancients that resided in the tallest peaks of the mountains of the Five Tribes.

Simultaneously, five protective shields sprang up, covering the entirety of the Five Tribes, cutting them off completely.

Next, the members of the Five Tribes unleashed the power of their various totems. Their eyes were bloodshot and filled with vigilance; clearly these people were prepared to die for their Tribe. The Greatfathers, Priests, and Grand Elders from the Five Tribes, all of them Nascent Soul Cultivators, emanated intense killing intent. Their faces were grim as they looked out at the churning black mist.

It was at this point that the black mist slammed into the protective shield. Booming sounds filled the air, and the ground quaked. The once emerald forests in the areas withered and turned black.

Miserable shrieks could be heard from the various beasts that lived in the area. Their bodies began to rot and they turned into pools of black liquid.

It only took a few moments for the entirety of the Crow Divinity Mountains to be filled with Death Qi.

Suddenly, a sinister voice echoed out from within the churning black mist. "Five Tribes of the Crow Divinity, we are the Five Poisons Clan Spider Branch. You may surrender... or die!" The voice rolled out in all directions, transforming into a thunderous roar. A powerful, domineering will could be sensed within this voice; this was the power of a mid Nascent Soul Cultivation base. It echoed into the ears of the members of the Five Tribes, causing the blood to drain from the faces of many. Even with the protective shield in place, it still caused blood to ooze out of their mouths.

"To the death!" cried the Crow Gloom High Priest. He was a middle-aged

man with a look of keen wit shining in his eyes. His words rang out, filled with determination. This was all the answer they needed to provide to the Five Poisons Clan.

“To the death!!” All the members of the Five Tribes joined their voices into a powerful roar.

“TO THE DEATH!!” the shocking sound transformed into grim, cold determination. It rose up into the sky and charged into the black mist, and the ears of each and every Cultivator of Spider Branch of the Five Poisons Tribe.

Among the three thousand Cultivators of the Spider Branch, twenty were Grand Elders and one was a green-robed High Priest. All of these people were currently looking at a young woman who was surrounded protectively by more than ten cold-faced Cultivators, all of whom had green totem tattoos on their faces.

The woman appeared to be a little more than twenty, with long, beautiful hair and a bright red robe. She was beautiful, and her red robe could not hide the voluptuous curves beneath. Her beauty almost seemed demonic; her eyes were cold and seemed completely ruthless. This ruthlessness was quite a contrast to her beauty, causing her to be even more sexually attractive.

On her forehead was a white spider totem tattoo; as it glittered, the spider it depicted almost seemed to be moving.

This woman was one of the five Holy Daughters of the great Five Poisons Clan, Zhao Youlan of the Spider Branch.

The white spider on her forehead was called Wisdom Spider; only natural born Holy Daughters could acquire it.

“Revered Priest,” she said lightly, “commence with the attack! First, deal with the shield. Call forth the totemic Sacred Ancient!” Just like her name, her voice was like an orchid, beautiful but cold.

This particular High Priest of the Spider Branch was an old man in a long green robe who held a black, wooden wand in his hand. Having heard

Zhao Youlan's words, he nodded and then pointed the wand out. Instantly, the surrounding mist began to roil and then transformed into a gigantic spider that shot toward the shield.

A boom filled the air, and the shield rippled. However, it did not fall. The High Priest frowned, and then flashed an incantation with his right hand. The gigantic spider dissipated and then reformed into five black spears, each of them three hundred meters long. He waved his wand, causing the five spears to scream through the air toward the five beams of light shooting up from the five mountains in the area.

"Five Tribes totemic Sacred Ancients, please appear!" cried the Crow Gloom Tribe Priest. A jade slip appeared in his hand, which he crushed. Immediately, roaring sounds could be heard from the five mountains. The Sacred Ancients immediately emerged: the Crow Scout Tribe's Treant, the Flame Sea of the Crow Flame Tribe, as well as the others. However, the instant they appeared....

Spider Branch Holy Daughter Zhao Youlan, behind her ring of guards, looked at the Crow Gloom Tribe Priest, her phoenix-like eyes glittering. Their gazes locked, and it was clear that both were aware of the identity of the other. These were the two in charge of this battle.

"Summon the Spider Sacred Ancient!"

A thunderous roaring sound filled the air as the clouds up above began to roil, and a massive crack appeared in mid-air. Five colossal spider legs, each one several thousand meters long, suddenly emerged from within the crack. It was impossible to see what existed past the crack; in any case, as soon as the legs appeared, they shot toward the five mountain peaks. In the blink of an eye, massive explosions could be heard as the spell formations cracked. The earth quaked and the mountains shook.

All of the totemic Sacred Ancients of the five Tribes roared and flew directly up into the sky. Then, up high in the sky, a shocking, bright red spider shot forward to slam into them.

"Spider Branch Battle Cultivators," said Zhao Youlan softly, "there's no need for battle formations. Use the totemic Demonspider webs to seal this

entire area!”

“The Holy Daughter’s commands shall be followed!” cried the three thousand Spider Branch Cultivators, their eyes shining with savagery. They lifted their heads up to the sky and roared as the radiance of their totems exploded out. Immediately, illusory Demonspiders appeared, and the air filled with countless strands of silk that flew out in all directions. Hissing sounds filled the air as they shot toward the glowing shield; it seemed these threads also contained poison.

“Elders, please join forces to destroy the spell formation,” said Zhao Youlan, toying with her hair. “Get the Greatfathers of these Five Tribes to show their faces!”

“The Holy Daughter’s commands shall be followed!” Immediately, a dozen or so old men shot out from within the Spider Branch forces. The totems on their body glowed brightly, exploding with the power of the Nascent Soul stage. The ripples merged together to form a strange pattern, a spell formation that then shot directly toward the Five Tribes’ protective shield.

Just as it was about to impact, the Crow Gloom Priest’s eyes flickered.

“Greatfathers of the Crow Scout and Crow Flame Tribes, please lead the Priests and Grand Elders of the other three Tribes into battle!”

Immediately, the Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather roared and charged forward. He was followed by more than ten Priests and Grand Elders, as well as the Crow Flame Greatfather. They shot forth to intercept the incoming Cultivators, intent on preventing them from collapsing the protective shield.

It was at this point that the Crow Gloom Priest suddenly began to bark orders: “Members of the Five Tribes. According to our pre-war strategy, form into fifty-man squads. Five squads will form a company. Five companies will form a battalion! 1st Battalion will defend the northwest, 2nd Battalion the northeast, 3rd Battalion due north! Slay them with extreme prejudice!

“Remember, do not fight to the death! If you are injured, return

immediately to the area behind the shield for healing.

“4th Battalion, 5th Battalion, please rotate in and out of the battle as needed. 6th Battalion, stand guard within the shield! This battle will not be concluded quickly. Tribe members, we fight for the Crow Divinity!” Immediately, thousands of Five Tribes Cultivators shot out of the shield, their eyes bloodshot.

“FOR THE CROW DIVINITY!” the roared as they charged to meet the incoming three thousand Cultivators from the Spider Branch.

The flames of war instantly raged into the Heavens. Magical techniques flared up everywhere. High up in the sky, the Five totemic Sacred Ancients were locked in battle with the Spider Branch’s Sacred Spider. That battle was something that far exceeded the Nascent Soul stage. Ripples spread out to cover the entire scene, making it impossible for anyone down below to see how the battle was faring.

Below them, the Nascent Soul Cultivators were locked in vicious combat. Mist spread out in all directions, making it difficult to see anything other than shadows. However, there was no doubt that the fighting was deadly.

Even further below, outside of the shield, thousands of Cultivators from both sides had created a rain of blood. To the Spider Branch, this was a battle to defend their pride as undefeated conquerors. They must win!

For the members of the Five Tribes, though, they were fighting for their home and their people. They could not retreat, and could not lose. If they did have to die, they would fight to the bitter end. That was because... behind them, beneath the protection of the shield, their fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters, and other relatives were all watching.

“Fight!!”

“To the death!!”

“For the Crow Divinity and for our Tribes!” Fierce cries echoed out. This lowest level of the battle was the fiercest. Bloodcurdling screams and blood flew about in all directions.

Inside the shield, the rest of the members of the Five Tribes were

watching with clenched fists. Children were crying out in fear, and girls were weeping. Mothers' hearts were breaking, and tears rolled down the faces of fathers.

Much further outside the shield, within the Spider Branch forces, Zhao Youlan gave a soft sigh. For a moment she looked disturbed. However, the negative emotions drifted away with her sigh. The right and wrong of war all depended on your perspective.

“Dragoneers! You are aware of the mysterious Dragoneer described in our top secret documents, the one who slaughtered Zhou Ye. The time has come to draw him out from within the Five Tribes!”

Among the Spider Branch Cultivators were three Dragoneers, located at the back of the battle group. They wore black robes and emanated gruesome auras. Furthermore, all of them were surrounded by various protective items that would shield them from any deadly attacks in battle.

Having heard Zhao Youlan's words, the three smiled and flicked their sleeves. Immediately, the roar of neo-demons filled the air and beam after beam of light appeared. Roaring filled the air as a horde of nearly ten thousand neo-demons appeared next to each of these people.

When the Crow Gloom Tribe Priest saw this his face began to flicker. Something about the rhythm of this battle seemed off, but he really had no other choice at the moment. Turning toward the rear mountain district, he clasped hands and bowed deeply. “Grandmaster Meng, your assistance is requested!”

Meng Hao was sitting cross-legged in his courtyard, observing the battle. He had seen everything happening in the sky overhead, as well as the storm of blood on the battlefield. It made him think of the battle of Holy Snow City back in the Black Lands.

Then he thought about the Golden Crow and the great tree.

After a long moment, he sighed.

“Because of your kindness... I will do my best to ensure that the Tribe you created continues on into the future.” Sighing softly, he rose to his feet

and walked out of his courtyard. He was followed by the Wild Giant, who lifted its head to the sky and roared, a bloodthirsty look in its eyes. Battles like these were exactly where Wild Giants liked to be!

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1. Zhao Youlan's name in Chinese is 赵幽兰 zhào yōu lán – Zhao is a surname. Youlan means “orchid.”

Chapter 439: Exotic Heartdevil Flower!

Outside of the shield, the three rank 9 Dragoneers from the Spider Branch began to attack. Vast numbers of neo-demons blotted out the sky and land. There was something very special about these Dragoneers; their neo-demon hordes all consisted of a single type of neo-demon.

One of them possessed a huge flock of vicious gray seabirds that whistled through the air. Bizarrely, each of these birds had three claws and the image of a human face on its chest.

Astonishingly, another of the Dragoneers was surrounded by multiple giant ants. The largest of these ants were roughly six meters long; as for the small ones, there were too many to even count. They looked savage as they swarmed forward, blanketing over everything.

The final Dragoneer was an old man with a proud expression on his face. Nine wasp nests floated in the air around him, and he was surrounded by a cloud of poisonous wasps. The shocking sound of their buzz was enough to cause anyone's scalp to go numb.

Uniform neo-demon hordes were the standard for orthodox Dragoneers. These were the types of Dragoneers who each benefited from a legacy. Many such legacies had been passed down through various Dragoneer bloodlines for generations.

Considering that they could summon vast hordes of uniform neo-demons, it was very easy to see the difference between them, and Rogue Dragoneers, most of whom had mixed neo-demon hordes.

After seeing these three Dragoneers appear, Meng Hao's face was calm as he stood atop the Wild Giant's enormous frame. It howled as it charged forward, instantly attracting the attention of everyone outside of the shield.

His appearance immediately caused Zhao Youlan's expression to flicker. She examined Meng Hao closely for a moment and then frowned.

At the same time, the three rank 9 Dragoneers from the Spider Branch

looked over at Meng Hao, then exchanged glittering glances. They all began to flicker incantation gestures, causing several thousand neo-demons from each of their hordes to suddenly shoot directly toward the shield.

These three groups of three different types of neo-demons formed together to make a neo-demon horde nearly ten thousand in number. Their shocking roars lifted up to the Heavens as they advanced. Meng Hao gave a cold snort. The howling Wild Giant suddenly leaped up into the air, shooting out through the shield, its eyes filling with the thirst for blood as it charged toward the incoming neo-demon horde.

In mid-air, Meng Hao's right hand waved, causing the totem tattoos on his right arm to begin to glow. Suddenly, intense light shot out, flickering into a flock of black crows.

The instant the black crows appeared, they let out piercing cries. Suddenly, all the corpses on the battlefield began to emanate wisps of black Qi, which was then sucked upward toward the black crows. It was like a black mist that swirled around the crows and then shot toward the incoming neo-demons.

Simultaneously, a green light began to flicker around Meng Hao. Big Hairy and the rest of the Greenwood Wolfpack appeared, along with the Black Bat. They too shot out in attack.

As for the Black Bat, it almost appeared like Meng Hao didn't care about it; in reality, he attached a lot of importance to the creature. It was a neo-demon that had been suppressed by a wooden sword. He was quite certain that the power it was revealing now was not the full extent of what it was capable of. Either it was intentionally holding back, or needed more time to recover from the serious injury.

If it was the latter, then that meant it was very weak right now. Even still, its weakness allowed it to employ a Cultivation base of roughly level 7.

Shocking booms filled the air as the two neo-demon hordes slammed into each other and then dissolved into fierce fighting.

Meng Hao himself had attracted quite a bit of attention on the

battlefield. Dragoneer battles were large in scope, and gave rise to powerful auras. Within the blink of an eye, this Dragoneer showdown had turned into the fourth of the great battles occurring.

One of the three Spider Branch Dragoneers let out a cold laugh and then said, “You trifling Rogue Dragoneer. You killed Zhou Ye by a fluke! Your mixed neo-demon horde might have some fantastic neo-demons in it, but you don’t stand a chance against the three of us!”

Meng Hao was their only enemy, and their only mission was to draw him out and kill him.

Seeing him fighting back against them, the three exchanged another glance, then all began to flash incantation gestures. Immediately, the rest of the neo-demons around them lifted their heads up and roared, then charged forward.

The impressive sight and the thunderous roaring caused many of the surrounding combatants to suddenly look over to watch this part of the battle.

Laughing coldly, the three Spider Branch Dragoneers performed more incantations, causing the totems on their bodies to begin to shine. Suddenly several hundred level 10 neo-demons magically appeared in the air around them. In unison, they charged toward Meng Hao.

“We will help you to understand the truly crushing power of Dragoneers!” Even as the words left their mouths, their neo-demon hordes, nearly thirty thousand in number, closed in on Meng Hao. It truly seemed as if Meng Hao’s own neo-demon horde would have difficulty fighting back. They would surely be completely consumed.

His face as calm as ever, Meng Hao’s cold eyes glanced over the incoming neo-demons. With that, he casually shook his arms and legs. Immediately, totemic light began to emanate out from him. Within the glowing light were several thousand howling Greenwood Wolves, as well as Flame Thrushes and Stone Golems. There was also an innumerable group of neo-demons whose bodies were surrounded by rippling shields of water.

A shocking roar then filled the air as the savage red crocodile crawled out onto the battlefield.

Then, a shriek could be heard as black mists billowed up. Within the black mist crawled a black lizard that looked like it had just emerged from the yellow springs of the underworld. Its appearance immediately caused the air to vibrate.

Next, a droning sound could be heard as the fierce, green Demonsquitos appeared around Meng Hao.

As one neo-demon horde after another appeared, the faces of the three Spider Branch Dragoneers instantly fell. At the same time, Meng Hao began to stride forward. As he did, the air around him rippled as twenty of the three hundred meter large spiders appeared, along with over ten thousand smaller spiders. They whistled throughout the air, a vast horde of nearly thirty thousand neo-demons that caused everything to shake. They instantly charged toward the three Dragoneers.

As soon as Meng Hao's neo-demons slammed into the hordes from the Spider Branch, miserable cries filled the air. The three Dragoneers' hordes were completely incapable of blocking Meng Hao's. Facing the slaughter and injury, they tried to fall back. Unfortunately for them, Meng Hao's neo-demons quickly surrounded them.

The three Dragoneers' faces fell and grew ashen. At the same time, Zhao Youlan's eyes went wide and filled with an expression of disbelief. Then, her soft voice could once again be heard.

"High Priest, it seems that if we wish to kill this man, we will first need to draw out their most powerful expert, the Greatfather of the Crow Soldier Tribe. Only when he is also present can I execute our plan to completely exterminate these Five Tribes. High Priest, please take action!"

The Spider Branch High Priest, the old man in the green robe, smiled in response to her words. He waved his wooden wand, and then employed minor teleportation. When he reappeared, he was directly in front of Meng Hao. As soon as he arrived, Meng Hao's eyes flickered. Having sensed the man's imminent arrival, Meng Hao was ready. He shot

backward, his eyes cold.

Back inside the shield, the Crow Gloom Priest could tell that something fishy was going on, but he wasn't sure exactly what. Unfortunately, there was no time to analyze the situation to try to figure out the source of his strange feeling.

Gritting his teeth, he said, "Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather, please intercept that High Priest to buy some time for Grandmaster Meng!"

Next to him, the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather's eyes glimmered with coldness. His body disappeared in a minor teleportation. When he reappeared, he was blocking the Spider Branch High Priest, preventing him from nearing Meng Hao. The two looked at each other, and, without a word, instantly employed divine abilities. Booming sounds filled the air as the fifth major encounter began on the battlefield.

As for Meng Hao, he also could tell that something strange was going on. He had participated in a similar Cultivator war back in the Black Lands. Based on how that war went, it could be said that such wars were usually not finished in a short period of time. Usually, protracted battles went on for days before the situation began to favor one side or the other.

Unless one side was clearly in a position of superiority in terms of power, allowing them to crush the other side, then the only option was to try to slowly weaken the other side.

However, despite clearly not being in the position to crush the Five Tribes, the Spider Branch, after not even a single day of battle, was using this strange tactic to try to force the Five Tribes to play their trump cards.

It appeared as if the Spider Branch were going all out, regardless of being assured of victory. Such impulsive attacks must surely be a part of some greater plan.

"There must be some deadly gambit waiting to be sprung. If I were them, what would be my tactic?" Meng Hao controlled the neo-demons surrounding the hordes of the three Dragoneers and simultaneously glanced around the battlefield. The first thing he took note of was the rippling scene up above. That was where the Five Tribes' Sacred Ancients

were locked in battle with the fearsome Demonspider that was attempting to emerge.

“It most likely won’t involve them.... The totemic Sacred Ancients are not Cultivators, but rather powerful neo-demons who can spawn totems. Their battle exceeds my understanding.” Frowning, Meng Hao looked at the thousands of battling Cultivators, then back at the shield. Finally, he looked up at the battling Nascent Soul Cultivators.

“Then there’s me. I count as one of the major parts of the battle. However, if they wanted to kill me specifically, they would do so with decisiveness. If you look at it that way....” Meng Hao’s face suddenly flickered. Without hesitation, he shot backward, both hands flickering an incantation. Flickering protective shields immediately appeared around him.

Almost at the exact moment that Meng Hao began to retreat, Zhao Youlan’s eyes began to glow with a cold light. She took a deep breath as she carefully lifted up her right hand to reveal a wooden box.

When she opened the box, a black glow instantly emanated out. At the same time, a tremor ran through Zhao Youlan’s body. She bit her tongue with her beautiful teeth and then kneeled down on one knee, holding the box up above her head with both hands.

As soon as she lifted the box up, the black glow spread out in shocking fashion. A painful radiance appeared which seemed capable of consuming and replacing all other light.

The Spider Branch Cultivators all suddenly produced black, pasty medicinal pills which they then consumed. After they did, their eyes suddenly turned completely black.

The Cultivators from the Five Tribes suddenly felt something pulling at them, causing them to involuntarily look over.

The instant that they did, their hearts all began to tremble.

The faces of the Tribe members within the shield flickered. They could feel nothing; only those outside the shield could sense the pulling power

of the black glow. However, it was this very fact that made the Crow Gloom Priest's face suddenly go pale white.

His voice hoarse, he said, "Exotic Heartdevil Flower!!"

Meng Hao's pupils constricted. However, he was already on guard. A bloody glow surrounded him as he directly employed the Blood Death World to defend against the calling of the black glow.

It was at this point that Meng Hao's face flickered. This was because it was at this very moment... that the Resurrection Lily chose to explode out with power.

Meng Hao instantly sent his will out to call all of his neo-demons. They immediately began to rush back toward him.

Chapter 440: Tragic!

Inside the shield, the Crow Gloom Priest's face went pale and he began to murmur. "Exotic Heartdevil Flower!!

"The Five Poisons Tribe wants to exterminate the five Crow Divinity Tribes so bad they're using the Exotic Heartdevil Flower! It must not be looked at! Looking at it causes a Heartdevil to rise up, which then transforms into a devilish will that burns you away...."

How could he not understand that he had been defeated from the very beginning...! Played and defeated. He had known something was off, but hadn't been able to put the pieces of the puzzle together.

Exotic Heartdevil Flowers were rare. During Spirit Severing, if a Cultivator had such a flower, the chances of success were greatly increased, which made it an extremely precious treasure.

Furthermore, the flower itself was extremely brutal. Anyone under the Spirit Severing stage who looked at it would lose virtually all life force and then be burned alive by a devilish will. The end result was always death.

In some ways, though, the flower was weak. Although it was difficult for a person to defend against it, the Tribe's protective shield was enough to keep its power on the outside. None of the Tribe members inside would be affected.

However, as soon as the Exotic Heartdevil Flower appeared outside, everyone on the battlefield suddenly stopped moving, with the exception of the totemic Sacred Ancients and the Sacred Spider.

After consuming the special medicinal pill, the Spider Branch Cultivators were temporarily safe from the effects of the flower. However, they were forced to first sit cross-legged in meditation. The members of the Five Tribes, on the other hand, began to scream in pain.

Almost immediately, more than three hundred members of the Five Tribes began to tremble. Blood oozed from their eyes, nose, and mouth as something like an invisible fire raged in their bodies, withering them up. It

took only a moment for their life force to be extinguished, and their bodies transformed into desiccated corpses. In the last moment before death, they let out tragic, blood-curdling shrieks.

After that, more and more of the Tribe members began to scream and die. It was a massacre. No enemy made a single attack, and yet the ruthlessness of scene exceeded the previous fighting by a hundredfold.

The members of the Five Tribes within the shield looked out at their fellow Tribesmen dying, and could only tremble. Their eyes turned bloodshot, and they howled in anguish. Unfortunately... they could not charge out to provide aid.

As soon as they left the shield, they too would die. Not only would they be incapable of helping their fellow Tribe members, but they would be charging to their death!

The Grand Elder of the Crow Scout Tribe was shaking, and he coughed up blood as his body withered up. Even Nascent Soul Cultivators were incapable evading. In front of him, he saw a shapeless form, laughing ruthlessly as it sucked away his life force and consumed it.

As the members of the Five Tribes died, the black light emanating out from Zhao Youlan's wooden box grew even more intense. It seemed that after consuming enough blood, it was turning violet.

Everything was going according to Zhao Youlan's plan. The slaughtering, the attack on the shield, all of it had been a ruse to draw out the powerful experts. Once they were out of the shield... she would exterminate them with the Exotic Heartdevil Flower.

At the moment, Zhao Youlan's face was pale as she held aloft the Exotic Heartdevil Flower. A strange look appeared on her face as she spit out a mouthful of blood. As the blood flew out, it transformed into strands of Blood Qi, which spread out toward all of the Spider Branch Cultivators who sat cross-legged meditating on the battlefield.

"Nascent Soul seniors," said Zhao Youlan softly, "I cannot exempt you from the effects of the Exotic Heartdevil Flower. However, all other ordinary Cultivators, my mouthful of Heartdevil Blood can temporarily

allow you to move about freely.”

With the exception of the Nascent Soul Cultivators, all of the other Tribe members whom the Blood Qi entered suddenly shook. They opened their eyes, and the lucidity therein instantly transformed into savagery. They leaped up roaring, and began to slaughter the surrounding Five Tribes members, who were now powerless to fight back.

Now the true massacre had begun.

Mournful cries instantly could be heard from within the shield.

“NOOOO!!”

“Five Poisons Tribe, you are now the arch nemesis of the Crow Divinity Tribe! We two cannot exist under the same sky!!”

The surviving Five Tribes members within the shield were trembling, and their eyes were bloodshot as they felt their hearts tearing apart. They could do nothing but watch on helplessly as the Tribe members outside the shield were being slaughtered. The tearing pain within them caused their voices to be filled with indescribable grief.

In the blink of an eye, hundreds of Five Tribes Cultivators were viciously cut down by the Spider Branch. As for Meng Hao, he immediately attracted the attention of the Spider Branch Cultivators. However, the vast quantity of neo-demons surrounding him caused them to hesitate.

It was at this moment that the three Dragoneers opened their eyes from meditation. When they saw Meng Hao’s current position, they went wild with joy and immediately sent forth all of their neo-demon hordes to slaughter his.

It was in this fashion that the cruel Spider Branch Cultivators descended upon Meng Hao.

Meng Hao was sitting there meditating, his eyes closed tightly and his body trembling.

His thirty thousand neo-demons were situated around him on the battlefield. All of them began to roar. The Exotic Heartdevil Flower had

little effect on them. Therefore, they immediately began to fight back against the enemy Cultivators and neo-demons.

Instantly, booming sounds filled the air, although Meng Hao was incapable of paying any attention to it. At the moment, his body was shaking as the Resurrection Lily unleashed all of its power against him in its attempt to take over his body. In return, Meng Hao was using all the strength he could muster to suppress it.

The inward struggle raged on. By this point, eighty to ninety percent of the Five Tribes Cultivators had been massacred. Blood soaked the ground, which was littered with corpses. The reek of blood rose up into the sky. The Five Tribes within the shield felt their hatred for the Five Poisons Tribe growing to an indescribable level.

It was at this point that the Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather coughed up a mouthful of blood. He laughed bitterly as his body withered up. Facing up against an Exotic Heartdevil Flower without making advanced preparations, even Nascent Soul Cultivators would find it difficult to resist it. They wouldn't even be able to self-detonate. They could only stand there and be consumed by the flower.

In the moment before he died, the Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather bit the tip of his tongue. A green light began to shine out from all of the totems on his body. Fatally damaging his own body and spirit, he sent some of his life force shooting back toward the Crow Scout Tribe Priest.

"We can't... all perish here!" cried the Greatfather. He continued to laugh bitterly as his body withered up completely. He was unable to extricate himself, but what he was able to do was impart some of his boundless life force to his fellow Tribe member. The stream of life force entered the person behind him. Unfortunately, he was not able to extricate himself from the power of the Exotic Heartdevil Flower either. Merging his own life force with that of the Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather, he sent it out to the next person. And so it went on....

The Crow Flame Greatfather, Priest and Grand Elder and other Nascent Soul Cultivators outside of the shield all perished, more than ten in total.

They died laughing bitterly, and hearts filled with rancor. Before withering away in death, the last person in line took all of the combined life force and passed it on to the most powerful expert of the Five Tribes, the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather.

The life force fused into the body of the gray-haired Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather, who was currently fighting back against the Exotic Heartdevil Flower. It was a final gift from his fellow Tribesmen upon their death. Within the life force was also their combined hatred of the Five Poisons Tribe. It combined together to form one word.

“REVENGE!!”

The Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather lifted his head to the sky and roared. His eyes were completely bloodshot, but at this moment, the power of restoration flowed through him. He shook off the glow of the Exotic Heartdevil Flower. Coughing up a mouthful of blood, he unhesitatingly fell back at top speed. Even as the power of the flower once again attempted to envelop him, he shot back through the shield, and then immediately sat down cross-legged to heal himself. His expression was one of extreme malevolence, but in fact, his heart felt as if it were breaking.

Beneath the dim light cast out by the Exotic Heartdevil Flower, all of the Five Tribes members had perished except for Meng Hao. The tragic turn of events caused the hearts of the Tribe members inside the shield to fill with thoughts of despair. The shadow of genocide loomed over them, and they began to weep.

As of now, the Five Tribes only had seven Nascent Soul Cultivators left inside the shield. They immediately went to stand guard around the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather. They said nothing, but within their bitterness, hatred boiled up into the sky. The Crow Gloom Tribe Priest laughed woefully and then muttered to himself, “Defeated... thoroughly defeated....”

Back outside the shield, Zhao Youlan opened her eyes and looked out at the blood-soaked, corpse-filled battlefield. When she saw that the Crow Soldier Greatfather had escaped with his life, she let out a soft sigh. A

sliver of pity appeared in her eyes, but she quickly shook her head and it disappeared. Then her phoenix-like eyes fell upon Meng Hao, who was still sitting cross-legged in meditation.

“Spider Branch Cultivators, hold nothing back! Cooperate with our three esteemed Dragoneers to slaughter the Five Tribes’ Dragoneer!”

In response to her words, the more than three thousand Spider Branch Cultivators shot toward Meng Hao. As for the Grand Elders and High Priest, they simply sat there with legs crossed. Considering their status, they completely ignored Meng Hao, and instead looked with glittering eyes at the Five Tribes’ protective shield.

“Seniors,” said Zhao Youlan in her soft voice, “please exert full power to destroy the shield. We will allow the glow of the Exotic Heartdevil Flower to shine inside, whereupon today’s battle shall be concluded. The Spider Branch has suffered few losses, and secured victory. My trial by fire is over, and the Tribe can be notified.”

Booms filled the air as the powerful experts of the Spider Branch, including the High Priest, levelled attacks against the shield. Meng Hao’s neo-demons fought fiercely against the three Dragoneers and the rest of the three thousand Cultivators who surrounded them.

The injuries they were sustaining grew more severe, and the tide was turning against them. Without Meng Hao and his Demonic Qi, their battle prowess was significantly lessened.

The Five Tribes’ shield was rumbling and showing signs of breaking. At this point, Big Hairy let out a sad howl and coughed up some blood.

Just when it seemed everything was going to go wrong, Meng Hao’s eyes suddenly opened. They were completely bloodshot and radiated intense killing intent. Despite the Resurrection Lily’s fierce struggles, Meng Hao had once again managed to suppress it.

Chapter 441: Execution!

As soon as Meng Hao suppressed the Resurrection Lily, the Exotic Heartdevil Flower suddenly had no effect on him whatsoever. Perhaps this had something to do with the Resurrection Lily itself, although it was impossible to say for sure.

The instant Meng Hao opened his eyes, his neo-demons all let out powerful roars. The eyes of the three Dragoneers narrowed, and the hearts of the surrounding three thousand enemy Cultivators trembled. However, they continued to attack as relentlessly as before.

Meng Hao looked around thoughtfully. He saw the thousands of corpses of the Five Tribes members, and also noted that the shield was about to collapse. Of his original group of thirty thousand neo-demons, more than half were dead.

Although he had witnessed the desperate war in Holy Snow City, seeing this scene caused his heart to fill with the same grief as the rest of the Five Tribes.

“Considering that the battle has reached this point, I should really leave,” he murmured softly. “However... I have no desire to do any fleeing today!” He lifted his right hand and pushed down onto the ground.

“Demonic Qi, art of Righteous Bestowal!” Immediately, endless amounts of Demonic Qi erupted up in all directions. He waved his hand, causing the invisible Qi to immediately fuse with the more than ten thousand neo-demons of his that remained.

The neo-demons' bodies all began to tremble. The Demonsquitos swelled to several times their original size and emitted a shocking aura. In addition to emanating Demonic Qi, an aura of transmogrification suddenly appeared.

Under the power of this aura, the Demonsquitos suddenly grew an extra pair of wings. In addition, the tails of the mosquitos sprouted green spikes!

The sight of it was incredibly fearsome!

As for the black crows, they trembled and then emitted fierce cries. They glowed with a black light, and the fierceness of their auras grew exponentially. Not only did their bodies grow larger, but ghost images sprang up around the Demoncrows, forming what looked like mirror images behind each one.

This ghost image was a result of the transmogrification, a sort of evolution. With the ghost image there, it was like each crow had two life forces.

Big Hairy howled into the sky as his body grew to three hundred meters in size. He already had Demonic Qi within him, but this addition didn't just cause him to grow larger; his blood began to pump harder and the image of a floating moon appeared above his head. Beneath the light of this moon, his coat of white fur suddenly turned silver. He was now a Silver Wolf!

As for the spiders, they let out fierce cries as their bodies grew more powerful and their appearances even more savage. On their rear torsos, the images of human faces could suddenly be seen. Their fangs grew even longer until they looked like giant pincers!

The red crocodile's scales grew bigger, and its head began to change shape to look more like a dragon. The flesh on its back began to bulge out and then suddenly, two wings appeared. It flew into the air, no longer a crocodile, but rather, something like a red Flying Rain-Dragon!

Although it didn't form the spitting image of a Flying Rain-Dragon, its aura was extremely similar.

Roaring, the lizard's body grew until it was the size of a small mountain. Black smoke poured out from its mouth, as though fire burned in its belly, just ready to be shot out.

It now looked completely different than it had before; its aura was vastly more powerful.

The Wild Giant let out an intense roar as its body grew even burlier. It lifted its hand into the air, and shockingly, a bolt of lightning descended from the sky. As the Wild Giant grabbed it, it transformed into a lightning

whip, shocking to the extreme.

All of the neo-demons experienced transmogrification. Such changes were things that since ancient times had happened only occasionally in the Western Desert. To see all of these transmogrifications occurring simultaneously was unprecedented.

The scene immediately caused the neo-demons of the three Dragoners to be shaken. Looks of fear appeared in their eyes and they didn't dare to move forward.

The three thousand Spider Branch Cultivators' minds were filled with a buzzing sound. To suddenly see more than ten thousand neo-demons experience transmogrifications that turned them into a mutated horde filled them with incredible fear.

Zhao Youlan's eyes were wide and filled with a bright glow. Meng Hao's sudden explosion of power left her shocked.

It wasn't just her. The Spider Branch High Priest and Grand Elders, who were currently attacking the shield, suddenly looked back. When they saw Meng Hao and his neo-demons, their hearts and minds trembled.

The faces of the Spider Branch's three Dragoners filled with disbelief, and they began to pant. Shock completely filled their hearts and they gave out hoarse cries of alarm.

"Grand... Grand Dragoner!"

"He's a Grand Dragoner! Only Grand Dragoners could wield such a fearsome secret Dragoner art!"

Suddenly, Meng Hao's eyes swept over them, and their faces went deathly pale. Scalps numb, they retreated at top speed.

Even as they began to fall back, Meng Hao's neo-demons let out shocking roars and then fell upon the Cultivators and neo-demons who surrounded them.

Amidst the thunderous roaring, Meng Hao also moved forward with incredible speed, using a Bloodburst Flash. His body seemed to disappear.

As it did, all of the neo-demons and Cultivators between him and the nearest of the three Dragoneers suddenly exploded into a cloud of blood and flesh. Meng Hao reappeared directly in front of the Dragoneer.

The speed with which this happened was incredibly shocking. It wasn't a minor teleportation, but rather, an explosive burst of speed over a short distance, leaving behind a path of destruction and death.

"You...." The Dragoneer's face fell, and his mind filled with a buzzing sound. He was just about to shoot back when Meng Hao's hand snapped out and latched onto his throat. A cracking sound rang out as Meng Hao, his face completely expressionless, crushed the man's neck.

When he dropped the Dragoneer, a thorn-covered vine suddenly snaked out from the Wild Giant. In one giant gulp, it swallowed the body of the Dragoneer. The ferocious vine then began to spin around Meng Hao, turning into what looked like a gigantic sphere of thorns that swept about in all directions.

This single kill instantly shook the entire battlefield. The faces of two of the Spider Branch Nascent Soul Elders who were attacking the shield, flickered. Without hesitation, they performed minor teleportations to suddenly reappear near Meng Hao.

The instant they reappeared, a group of Demonsquitos screamed through the air to defend Meng Hao. The two Nascent Soul Elders combined forces to attack, which instantly defeated the Demonsquitos. However, by this time, a bloody glow had appeared around Meng Hao and he once again Bloodburst Flashed. This time, he appeared next to the second fleeing Dragoneer. He waved his hand, causing a golden light to surge forward. The man screamed as the golden light completely surrounded his body. After the space of a few breaths passed, the light faded, revealing that the man had been completely turned into gold. He slowly fell down out of the sky.

The last Dragoneer was an old man who was currently scared witless by Meng Hao's unprecedented ferocity. He immediately began to tremble violently.

“Save me!!” he cried, shooting as fast as he could toward Zhao Youlan.

“What incredible guts!” cried one of the two Nascent Soul Cultivators. The fact that Meng Hao had killed another rank 9 Dragoneer right in front of them, filled them with fury. Their bodies flickered as they once again shot toward Meng Hao, their killing intent billowing out. Even before they neared him, divine abilities were magically appearing.

“My guts are actually pretty ordinary....” said Meng Hao lightly. As the Nascent Soul Elders neared, he lifted his right hand and pointed toward the two. The Eighth Demon Sealing Hex was immediately unleashed. Invisible strands of Demonic Qi shot toward the two men, instantly binding them.

The two Nascent Soul experts’ faces fell. Although it wouldn’t take long for the explosive power of their Cultivation bases to free them, their brief moment of shock allowed Meng Hao to once again use the Bloodburst Flash. A bloody glow surrounded him as he shot toward the final Dragoneer.

“How dare you!” cried another of the Nascent Soul Elders. He immediately teleported away from the shield to appear next to the old Dragoneer. Roaring, he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing a colorful glow to spread out toward Meng Hao.

“No one can save someone that I want to kill,” said Meng Hao calmly. Without a scrap of hesitation, he clenched his right hand into a fist and struck out toward the Nascent Soul expert.

A boom filled the air. Meng Hao’s body trembled and he fell back three paces. The Nascent Soul Expert’s face fell and blood sprayed from his mouth. He fell back seven or eight paces, disbelief shining in his eyes. He watched in shock as Meng Hao approached the Dragoneer. Before the Dragoneer could do anything at all, Meng Hao grabbed his neck and crushed it.

Completely surrounded by an army of thousands, Meng Hao slaughtered three Dragoneers. Not even three Nascent Soul Elders could do a thing to stop him. In fact, one of the Dragoneers had been slain directly in front of

one of the Nascent Soul Elders. This scene caused everyone to be filled with shock, not just the Spider Branch Cultivators, but also the members of the Five Tribes within the shield. All of a sudden their blood began to boil as their despair turned into hope!

“Grandmaster Meng!!”

“Grandmaster Meng!!!”

Cries rang out from within the shield, carrying with them the hope and excitement of the surviving members of the Five Tribes.

Zhao Youlan was panting as she looked at Meng Hao. His actions completely exceeded her anticipations, and as of now, he was turning into a critical factor in the battle.

“Grand Dragoneer.... One who can directly shake a Nascent Soul Cultivator.... This man has to die!” Even as killing intent sprang into her eyes, her heart trembled and a feeling of grave danger filled her. That was because she had just seen Meng Hao’s eyes!

In this moment, Meng Hao’s gaze passed over the battlefield, soaring over the vast gulf created between him and her by the three thousand Cultivators.

His gaze was filled with killing intent. And it was directed at her!

“He wants to kill me? Those three Dragoneers were too close to him, making them easy targets. He’s much too far away from me, plus there are three thousand Cultivators between us. I have more than ten bodyguards, plus the High Priest and the Elders. How exactly... does he plan to kill me!?”

Chapter 442: A Figure Leaping, Sailing Over Three Thousand Cultivators!

“There’s no need to even think about it,” continued Zhao Youlan. “With a barrier of three thousand Cultivators, he’ll get tangled up before he can even get close to me. Unless he can perform minor teleportation, it won’t do him any good. Even relying on that Blood Qi art won’t get him across such a distance!

“If he flew, it would require incredible speed to break through three thousand Cultivators. Having seen his speed just now, I can tell it’s not sufficient.” It was at this point in her train of thought that Zhao Youlan saw Meng Hao lift his head up and let out a long cry.

In response to the cry, the Wild Giant came running. It roared as its muscles swelled and its body grew to the height of three hundred meters. The muscles on its right arm began to writhe, as if all the blood in its entire body was being collected there. The arm continued to grow in a bizarre and exaggerated way; soon it comprised more than half of the Wild Giant’s entire body!

The arm was completely out of proportion to the rest of its body. Blue veins popped up all over the surface of the arm, and it looked like it was almost about to explode. There appeared to be terrifying physical power filling the arm. The sight of it was completely shocking. The Wild Giant snatched up Meng Hao with its arm and hurled him into the air in the direction of Zhao Youlan.

All of the fearsome power contained in the body of the Wild Giant was now transferred to Meng Hao, causing him to shoot through the air like a lightning bolt. As he sped through the air, the power of the Wild Giant bolstered his innate speed, causing his figure to rip through the air... like a blazing sun!

At the same time, a cloud of Demonsquitos circled around him, transforming into a vortex. Black crows also approached, turning into a mist. The red crocodile also approached, becoming a giant wing. The

enormous lizard transformed into a body, and the Black Bat became another wing. Meng Hao's speed once again increased explosively as the neo-demon horde pushed him forward.

A shocking drone spread out in all directions as Meng Hao shot through the sky surrounded by his vast neo-demon horde. He sailed over the three thousand Cultivators, who stared up, their minds spinning, too shocked to react. It was at this time that...

Meng Hao's neo-demon horde transformed into a long, sharp arrow, with Meng Hao as the arrowhead. They shot forward, filled with the desire to kill and emanating fierce killing intent. It was with explosive speed that they shot through the sky toward Zhao Youlan, seemingly capable of ripping open the Heavens.

In this moment, the members of the Five Tribes within the shield couldn't even breathe. The Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather, now recovered from his injuries, stared with wide, bloodshot eyes. The other seven Nascent Soul Cultivators next to him were panting.

In this moment, three thousand Spider Branch Cultivators watched on with red eyes that were filled with shock.

In this moment, the expressions of the Nascent Soul Elders outside of the shield, as well as of the High Priest, completely changed!

Zhao Youlan's phoenix like eyes went wide and she began to pant as she stared at Meng Hao. In this moment, Meng Hao's figure could be seen reflected in her eyes as it was burned deeply into her mind and heart.

A figured leaping, sailing over three thousand Cultivators,

A demonic arrow, shooting directly toward Zhao Youlan!

The incredible speed made the over one thousand meter distance between the two of them suddenly less than three hundred! The Cultivators with the green tattoos who surrounded Zhao Youlan braced themselves to contend with this formidable foe. Killing intent could be seen in their eyes.

Zhao Youlan held the Exotic Heartdevil Flower up above her head. As

she stared at Meng Hao, her expression grew calm, and her eyes filled with coldness. At the moment, she couldn't move. If she did, it would cause the power of the Exotic Heartdevil Flower to dissipate. Once that happened, the remaining Five Tribes Cultivators within the shield would charge out. Including the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather, that would be eight Nascent Soul Cultivators, more than enough to entangle the Spider Branch Elders.

Such a circumstance would put them in truly grave danger.

"I bet... he won't make it!" thought Zhao Youlan, her heart filling with decisiveness.

The rest of the Spider Branch Elders now abandoned their attempts to destroy the shield and exterminate the Five Tribes. More important to them was their Branch's Holy Daughter.

Three of the nine Elders immediately teleported toward Meng Hao, their bodies exploding with power. The other six began to fly forward without hesitation.

The three Elders suddenly appeared next to Meng Hao's shocking figure. They immediately began to perform incantation gestures, causing totemic light to spring out from their bodies. It transformed into a massive, illusive figure which shot toward Meng Hao.

"Back off, you!" The growling roar of the three Nascent Soul Cultivators was like thunder.

"Screw off!" replied Meng Hao, accompanied by a howl that sounded like the combination of the howling of all the neo-demons that surrounded him. The sound of it shook Heaven and Earth, and pressed down onto the three Nascent Soul Cultivators. Suddenly, the flock of black crows, the cloud of Demonsquitos, as well as the red crocodile all changed direction and shot toward the three.

Amidst the thunderous roaring, Meng Hao continued onward, not pausing even a tiny bit. The neo-demon horde obstructed the path of the three Nascent Soul Cultivators, allowing Meng Hao to pass by them unhindered.

He was now only about two hundred meters from Zhao Youlan!

Furious roars could now be heard as the other six Nascent Soul Elders appeared near Meng Hao. They employed the full power of their Cultivation bases, causing totemic divine abilities to manifest. Roaring filled the air as the power of these six men combined to create an enormous golden bell that shot toward Meng Hao, preparing to crush him.

As the golden bell flew forward, massive pressure filled the air, along with an ear-splitting rumble. Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he suddenly waved out with both hands. Big Hairy and the gigantic lizard, as well as all of the other neo-demons, shot through the air toward the incoming golden bell.

From a distance, Meng Hao's neo-demon horde appeared to transform into something like a black wind that swept out from his body. Now Meng Hao was completely visible there in mid-air.

Without hesitation, he lifted his right hand up, within which appeared a blood-colored mask. He slipped it onto his face, and a rumbling sound could be heard as a shapeless Blood Qi exploded out from his body. It shot out in all directions, completely shocking all the onlookers.

The Blood Qi billowed out, transforming into an enormous red vortex with Meng Hao in the middle, flashing an incantation gesture. Suddenly, the rapidly spinning vortex changed into the image of a face.

The face shot out from behind the neo-demon horde, directly toward the golden bell and the six Nascent Soul Cultivators.

A massive, shocking boom shook everything. The neo-demon horde scattered and the golden bell shattered. The faces of six men immediately turned pale with astonishment as they retreated backward.

Meng Hao spat some blood out of his mouth; his speed now increased as he Bloodburst Flashed away from the six Nascent Soul Cultivators to appear only a hundred meters away from Zhao Youlan. The two of them could see each other very clearly, even down to the threads in their clothing.

Zhao Youlan's expression was the same as ever, and her eyes were filled with coldness. Even Meng Hao had to admire such a mental state. However, his killing intent grew even thicker as he flickered toward her through the air.

The more than ten Cultivators with green totem tattoos immediately shot forward, transforming into a green light that charged toward Meng Hao.

Zhao Youlan's expression didn't change in the least as she looked at Meng Hao approaching her. She saw his mask, his green robe rippling in the wind, and his white hair whipping in the wind. But her eyes were like deep, still waters, filled with coldness.

Surrounded by an army of thousands, he had come alone. Nine Nascent Soul Elders were incapable of hindering him in the slightest. The image of a person like this would forever be imprinted in Zhao Youlan's heart.

You could say that in terms of this great battle between Tribes, Zhao Youlan had calculated all possibilities. The only thing she hadn't calculated... was Meng Hao.

Meng Hao raised a fist and slammed it into the chest of one of the green-faced Cultivators. The man's Cultivation base was immediately suppressed. His body didn't explode immediately. Instead he was thrown backward, where he slammed into the person behind him and they both exploded into a cloud of blood and gore.

Meng Hao's body flickered, and he reappeared behind another of the Cultivators. He didn't strike out. Instead, he flashed an incantation gesture, and sounds rang out like the crunching of bones. A golden light appeared, and three of the people were instantly transformed into statues of gold.

Efficient, clean extermination, without any messiness. Having accomplished this, Meng Hao took a deep breath and increased his speed, passing through the surviving five Cultivators as he closed in on Zhao Youlan.

The surviving green-faced Cultivators let out successive roars, their eyes

filling with determination as they opted to... self-detonate!

Booms filled the air as five Cultivators of the great circle of Core Formation exploded. Such power would cause even Meng Hao to be shocked if it hit him. However, his expression didn't change in the least bit. Even as the power of the self-detonation swept toward him, layers of silk threads appeared around him. This was... Eyeless Larva silk!

The silk whistled through the air as it surrounded Meng Hao. The silk was indestructible, therefore, Meng Hao sustained no injuries. He shot onward like lightning, bursting out from within the self-detonation explosions. He was now only thirty meters away from Zhao Youlan.

By this point, everyone in the area was completely astonished!

It was at this moment that a tall figure suddenly appeared in front of him. Something like a green boulder and a black wooden branch seemed to step out from the void. A wand pointed toward Meng Hao.

"Begone!" The voice was archaic and booming, and belonged to none other than the High Priest of the Spider Branch. He glared at Meng Hao, gripping a wand in his hand that contained power seemingly sufficient to crush mountains. Meng Hao was incapable of dodging, and the power of the wand slammed into the silk of the Eyeless Larva.

His eyes flickered as the nine Nascent Soul Elders behind him managed to shake off the neo-demon hordes and close in on him with murder in their eyes.

When Zhao Youlan saw the High Priest appear, she heaved a sigh of relief. The fact that Meng Hao had made it within thirty meters of her had filled her with an unprecedented sense of crisis.

A boom filled the air and Meng Hao's body trembled as the silk of the Eyeless Larva continuously fought back against the explosive power of the mid Nascent Soul Cultivation base power from the High Priest. Blood seeped out of the corners of Meng Hao's mouth and he was forced to retreat several paces.

However, that was the extent of it; a bit of blood seeping out, and a

retreat of a few steps. This was all that happened in the face of an onslaught from the full power of a mid Nascent Soul stage attack.

The Spider Branch High Priest's pupils constricted.

“Just what magical item is that!? Well, it doesn't matter how powerful your magical item is, if you think you can get past me, you're dreaming!”

Chapter 443: Soul-stirring!

“Mid Nascent Soul stage!” thought Meng Hao, his eyes narrowing. Of the Cultivators he had personally battled with, the highest Cultivation base he had faced was that of Eccentric Li Tian. Even Li Tian had only been at the peak of the early Nascent Soul stage. There was a vast difference between that and the mid Nascent Soul stage.

The difference between the various levels of the Nascent Soul stage was far greater than the difference of the various levels of the Foundation Establishment or Core Formation stage. Meng Hao possessed two totems and was wearing the blood-colored mask, which enabled him to slay early Nascent Soul stage Cultivators; however, battling the mid Nascent Soul stage would be very difficult.

However, considering that he had chosen to attack Zhao Youlan, how could he not have been on guard against the Spider Branch’s High Priest? At the same time that he backed up, both hands flickered in an incantation gesture, and then he pointed forward.

“Eyeless Larva!” he said coldly. Immediately, the Eyeless Larva silk surrounding him opened up, and the Eyeless Larva itself appeared in front of Meng Hao. It flickered, then shot toward the High Priest. As it did, massive amounts of silk appeared, wrapping around the High Priest, entangling him.

“You’re right, I can’t beat the mid Nascent Soul Stage,” said Meng Hao coolly. “But that doesn’t mean I can’t tie you up!” The High Priest frowned, and he prepared to perform a minor teleportation. But then, Meng Hao waved his hand.

“Eighth Demon Sealing Hex!” he cried. Immediately, Demonic Qi covered over everything, rumbling as it shot toward the High Priest. The High Priest’s face fell; although he could shake off the effects of the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex rather quickly, the slight delay was all the time the Eyeless Larva needed to wrap him up in layer after layer of silk. Soon, he was almost completely covered.

Booming sounds could be heard as the High Priest employed divine abilities. However, the Eyeless Larva was incredibly powerful, and its silk was indestructible. The silk whipped around faster and faster, completely covering the High Priest.

Meng Hao coughed up a mouthful of blood; this was the power of the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex backfiring on him because of exceeding the limits of his Cultivation base. However, Meng Hao ignored it, shooting past the High Priest even as the nine other Nascent Soul Elders closed in on him from behind. He was now directly approaching Zhao Youlan.

Zhao Youlan's face finally flickered, and she began to breath heavily. Now that Meng Hao was almost upon her, she finally moved, shooting backward. She continued to hold the Exotic Heartdevil Flower above her head so that it could emit the power of its blooming.

She was well aware that she could not allow the glow of the flower to fade; if that happened, she would truly be on the path to death. Her current situation seemed dangerous, but she knew that all she had to do was hold out for the space of a few breaths. Once the nine Nascent Soul Elders caught up, the situation would be resolved.

As she retreated, she began to speak the words of some bizarre spell.

The spell caused the air in front of her to distort and turn into ripples that spread out in all directions. These ripples suddenly caused a dozen or so different images of her to appear in front of Meng Hao. It was almost impossible to tell the difference between any of them.

Meng Hao gave a cold snort. Not pausing for even a moment, he lifted his right hand. At the same time, golden light erupted out from the Metal-type tattoo on his chest, which caused his entire right hand to turn into the color of gold. He pointed toward the ripples, sending out a will of gold which infected the ripples, dyeing them the color of gold.

The golden color rapidly spread out to the dozen or so retreating images of Zhao Youlan. Each time the gold completely covered a figure, it would shatter.

In the blink of an eye, the figures disappeared. Then, the distorted

ripples popped like a bubble, revealing a shocked Zhao Youlan. She coughed up a mouthful of blood.

Meng Hao's body flickered as he shot forward. He was now about ten meters away from Zhao Youlan. The incredible pressure and feeling of imminent death felt by Zhao Youlan was greater than any she had experienced in her life. Her face was pale and her lips quivered. Suddenly, a white glow emanated out from her, transforming into a protective shield that began to surround her....

Meng Hao snorted coldly, pulled his right arm back, and then unleashed a punch. A massive boom filled the air as the white shield collapsed into fragments. Some of the pieces shot backward, slashing across Zhao Youlan's body and leaving behind bloody cuts.

When the shield shattered, more blood sprayed out of Zhao Youlan's mouth. However, she continued to hold up the Exotic Heartdevil Flower. As Meng Hao closed in, she flickered an incantation with her right hand. Then, her phoenix-like eyes flickered with killing intent as the white spider totem tattoo on her forehead began to emit a white glow.

As the glow emanated out, a spider magically appeared. It imitated a shrill call which transformed into a raging wind that swept across everything. Meng Hao's body trembled, and it felt like his soul was about to be ripped out of his body by the wind.

However, it only took a moment for Meng Hao to suppress the feeling. He was capable of suppressing the Resurrection Lily, so some trifling Soul Extermination wind was like nothing. Had Meng Hao not dealt with suppressing the Resurrection Lily in the past, or if the wind was created by someone with a higher Cultivation base, it might have been a different story. His soul would immediately have been absorbed, and he would have been left in a trance.

However, because of the various factors in play, this totemic divine ability, which only a Holy Daughter of the Spider Branch could gain enlightenment of, was incapable of shaking Meng Hao in the least.

He flicked his wide sleeve, causing Wood-type totemic power to

manifest. A green glow shot toward the white spider, slamming into it. The white spider let out a miserable shriek and then turned into a white beam of light that returned to Zhao Youlan's forehead. Once again, Zhao Youlan coughed up some blood. For the first time, despair appeared in her eyes.

It quickly vanished, though. She bit the tip of her tongue to spit out a glob of blood. The blood instantly began to emanate a thick odor of gore. Zhao Youlan suddenly looked older than before. She watched listlessly as a bloody aura rose up into the sky.

Meng Hao suddenly felt an intense feeling of crisis. Behind him, the nine Nascent Soul Elders were howling as they began to teleport toward him. Then, they stopped all of a sudden, shocking Meng Hao. However, it was at this time that, up in the sky, a huge roar could be heard from the area where the totemic Sacred Ancients of the Five Tribes were locked in battle with the Holy Spider.

In concurrence with the roar, an enormous black shadow suddenly appeared as something began to descend from the sky toward the area Meng Hao was in. If you looked closely, you could see that it was nothing other than a spider leg!

It moved with incredible speed as it approached. Meng Hao sensed grave danger, and could feel everything shaking. An aura of death filled the area fifteen hundred meters in every direction.

It was at this same moment that Zhao Youlan took her chance. Utilizing the power of the blood she had spit out, she rapidly increased her speed as she retreated. Considering how fast she was moving, she would be able to escape the danger zone in the blink of an eye.

Her body began to grow blurry, as if she were being stretched out. Meng Hao now had two choices. The first choice was to abandon his pursuit and dodge the attack of the fearsome Holy Spider. The other choice... was to continue to try to kill her.

The situation was urgent, and there was no time to sit around thinking. Meng Hao's eyes gleamed with coldness and he suddenly shot forward. He

lifted his hand and grabbed onto Zhao Youlan's slender arm, the one that held aloft the Exotic Heartdevil Flower.

Her arm was as graceful and smooth, but also so ice-cold that touching her was shocking. Nonetheless, killing intent glittered in Meng Hao's eyes.

"Get back here!" he said, wrenching her arm violently and at the same time flooding it with power so strong it could crush Cultivation bases.

Up above, the sky seemed to fill with dark clouds as the leg of the Holy Spider descended like a gigantic sickle. It moved with incredible speed, and seemed as if it were cutting open the very air.

Zhao Youlan's face flickered in surprise. However, this was a critical moment, and her eyes filled with vicious determination. She suddenly lifted her left hand, within which appeared a flying sword. She knew that she was no match for Meng Hao, so when she chopped down, she did not target him, but rather, her own arm, which he was holding. It was already numb, and filled with terrifying power that threatened her entire being.

The sword fell and blood sprayed everywhere. The instant the exterminating power from Meng Hao appeared, Zhao Youlan had made the difficult decision to sever her own right arm. Her body suddenly shot away at incredible speed. Soon, she was fifteen hundred meters away, where she coughed up eight mouthfuls of blood. Her face was pale, and the flesh and blood contracted around the stump of her severed arm. Her aura was weak and her Cultivation base in decline. This was the most severe injury she had ever received in her entire life; she had narrowly escaped death!

Her hair was in disarray; her entire person in extremely poor straits. Her beauty was now twisted because of the pain of having her arm severed; it was almost enough to render her unconscious. She lifted her head and glared at Meng Hao, her entire body shaking.

"I will pay you back ten times over for this!"

The nine Nascent Soul Elders teleported into being next to her to protect her as she retreated. All of them were staring at Meng Hao with intense killing intent in their eyes.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered. He knew that as of this moment, it was highly unlikely that he would be able to kill her. Her determination made an intense impression on him; from the time he had begun to practice Cultivation until now, he had not run into many people who could show such decisiveness at a key moment.

If she had hesitated for even a moment longer, or reacted slightly slower, then the only thing she would have found was death.

Meng Hao's eyes narrowed as he gestured with his right arm, causing Zhao Youlan's severed arm to fly over. She obviously had a very high position in the Five Poisons Tribe; perhaps he would be able to benefit from studying the totemic power contained within the arm.

Now that enmity existed between the two of them, he would no doubt need to figure out how to kill not just her, but her entire Tribe. In the Cultivation world, the law of the jungle prevails. When fighting against Heaven and Earth, when forcing one's will upon the masses, soft-heartedness gets you nowhere.

It was without hesitation that, in addition to the severed arm, Meng Hao also collected up the box containing the Exotic Heartdevil Flower. He immediately closed it, causing the glow of the flower to cease. This instantly affected the entire battlefield. Without hesitation, he put the destructive precious treasure into his bag of holding.

Precious treasures like that were not frequently seen in the world. As a Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy, Meng Hao would no doubt make significant progress by studying it. Perhaps he could even concoct medicinal pills with similar properties. There was no way he would pass up such an opportunity.

Meng Hao looked up at the gigantic black shadow descending toward him and at the same time pointed toward the bound up High Priest.

The Eyeless Larva silk suddenly dissipated, revealing the shocked High Priest. He had used virtually every method he could think of but had been astonished to find that he wasn't able to even make a mark on the silk.

The silk rapidly shot back toward Meng Hao and began to wrap around

him. He stood there, his hands clasped behind his back as the black shadow loomed over him. He flicked his sleeve, and his eyes filled with coldness.

“My Eyeless Larva can stand up to Tribulation Lightning. I don’t care how profound your Demonspider’s Cultivation base is, do you really think it can measure up to Tribulation Lightning?”

Chapter 444: Funeral Dirge

Up above, the sky looked like it was filled with black clouds as an enormous spider leg descended upon this fifteen hundred meter area.

The ground trembled as massive pressure bore down in all directions. All life forms within the fifteen hundred meter area were completely incapable of evasion. Everything was crushed into nothing more than ash beneath the shocking power.

“He’ll die for sure!” thought Zhao Youlan. She was surrounded by the nine Nascent Soul Elders, but her face was completely white. Suddenly, she frowned.

Her frown was because of the pain of her severed arm. The pain not only caused her face to pale, but affected her mentally. It took all the effort she could muster to ignore the pain of her lost arm and focus on analyzing Meng Hao.

“That silk of his can bind up even the High Priest, which shows how powerful it is. All of his hope rests on that silk, and he probably knows exactly how powerful it is. Therefore, he’s actually most likely NOT going to die!

“His Cultivation base is profound, he’s as clever as a fox, and is extremely decisive too. He’s the type of person who is calculating and vicious. As a Grand Dragoner, any Tribe should be wary of provoking him....” Zhao Youlan sighed lightly. Had she known that the five Tribes of the Crow Divinity had the backing of someone as powerful as Grandmaster Meng, then she would have adjusted her plans.

“Actually, it doesn’t really matter if he lives or dies. The blood I spat out just now will notify the Tribe that my trial by fire has failed. The main forces from the Tribe will be arriving soon.”

Even as she mused regarding these things, the spider leg arrived at Meng Hao, slamming into the tightly sealed silk cocoon surrounding him. From a distance, the leg looked like an enormous black sickle.

However, when it was about ten meters away from Meng Hao, it was suddenly obstructed by the Eyeless Larva silk. A massive boom echoed out, transforming into a shockwave which swept out across everything. A massive wind kicked up, battering into the surrounding Cultivators and forcing them backward.

Meng Hao's body trembled and he coughed up blood. The black sickle pushed down from the ten meter position, slowly nearing Meng Hao. Despite its slowness, it still emanated intense, destructive pressure that pushed down onto Meng Hao.

His body trembled as the sickle reached the five meter mark.

Four meters, three meters, two meters, one meter, half a meter....

Meng Hao looked up at the sickle as it approached, his eyes radiating coldness. Although his body shook as he gazed up, when you compared this pressure with that of Heavenly Tribulation, it was simply...

"Too weak!" said Meng Hao coolly. The sickle was now only three inches away from the top of his head.

That three inch gap was like the difference between Heaven and Earth. It was an unbridgeable gap! The Eyeless Larva silk was wrapped too tightly. Nothing in Heaven or Earth could destroy it!

No matter how the sickle tried to break it, it couldn't. Soon the sickle began to tremble. In the blink of an eye, all of its power was gone, and it transformed into ash, right there, three inches away from Meng Hao.

A howl drifted down from up above in the sky. Everything grew dim and the clouds seethed as a gigantic spider with legs like sickles magically appeared up above. It seemed to rip itself out from the void, followed by the roaring totemic Sacred Ancients of the Five Tribes, who were pestering it in a way that made it impossible for the thing to descend any further.

The instant that the black sickle disappeared, the members of the Five Tribes within the shield let out powerful roars. There were seven Nascent Soul Cultivators, as well as all the other surviving Tribe members.

The archaic Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather, who had the combined

desire for revenge of more than ten fellow Nascent Soul Tribe members imprinted on his heart lifted his head up, his eyes bloodshot, and roared:

“Revenge!”

All of the members of the Five Tribes who charged into battle screamed with rage and sadness.

“Revenge!!”

“REVENGE!!!”

Led by the Greatfather, the rest of the Tribe members charged out of from behind the shield.

Their world was now a world ruled by revenge as they charged toward the three thousand Spider Branch Cultivators. Their bodies exploded with a madness that made it clear they would bring the Spider Branch to ruin even if it meant they died in the process.

A moment later, the close-quarter fighting began. Unfortunately, the deaths of the three Dragoneers had been quite a blow to the morale of the Spider Branch.

Meng Hao’s intrepidity had also left a deep impression on their hearts. He had slaughtered his way through thousands, then soared overhead above the crowds to pursue the Holy Daughter. Nine Nascent Soul Cultivators were incapable of stopping him, and even the High Priest had been captured. People could only watch on wide-eyed, as their lofty, sacred Holy Daughter’s face filled with despair and her arm was severed, after which she fled in a panic.

All of it had been a huge blow to the Spider Branch Cultivators. Meng Hao was now not simply burned into their mind, but indelibly fused there!

If that was all there was to it, it wouldn’t be a very big deal. However, even the fearsome attack of the Holy Spider, which they assumed would surely destroy Meng Hao, did nothing. They had seen with their own eyes that the Holy Spider was incapable of exterminating him.

As of now, Meng Hao was like a nightmare to them. An unbeatable,

invincible nightmare!

Now, just when their confidence and morale was lowest, the members of the Five Tribes fought back with full force. Their hatred and killing intent boiled up to the sky. Earlier, they had watched with wide eyes as their fellow Tribe members were slaughtered. The dead included children, parents, and other relatives. Right now, the eyes of the surviving Tribe members were bloodshot, and they seemed on the verge of weeping. Within the redness of their eyes, living fury could be seen. That was because... the time for revenge had arrived!

When the two sides slammed into each other, there was no leadership, nor any tricks. It was mutual slaughter.

A boom suddenly filled the air. One of the Five Tribes members slaughtered one of the enemy, but was mortally wounded in the process. Laughing madly, he chose to self-detonate. Even as his body exploded, a vicious smile twisted his face as he saw that his self-detonation would kill three of the enemy in front of him.

Booms continued to sound out in the air as one member of the Five Tribes after another, after having reached their final moment in battle, chose to use self-detonation. This was their way of sending a message to the Spider Branch: observe the staunch vengeance of the Five Tribes of the Crow Divinity!

One of the Five Tribes members lost his legs, and an arm. Even his dantian region was damaged beyond repair, making it impossible for him to self-detonate. But he still had teeth. Soon, his entire body was destroyed, and yet, his teeth were still clenched viciously into the throat of the enemy. Regardless of anything, mutual destruction would be achieved!

In a very short period of time, the Spider Branch had already lost over a hundred members. The viciousness of the scene, the explosive madness of the members of the Five Tribes to get revenge even in defiance of death, thoroughly shook the hearts of the Spider Branch Cultivators.

They were scared witless, and began panting. Facing the savagery of the Five Tribes suddenly filled them with feelings of cowardice!

They began to retreat. Off in the distance, the nine Elders watched on with wide eyes. They too were moved, but before they could even think about the situation, the seven Nascent Soul Cultivators from the Five Tribes were shooting toward them.

The High Priests, the Greatfather of the Crow Soldier Tribe, and the others, all had eyes filled with blood as they whistled through the air. This... was truly a war between two Tribes. It was different than the killing before. This... was a deadly massacre.

Meng Hao looked around at everything that was happening. He saw the Five Tribes rise up, and saw their determination to exact vengeance. It was at this time that an undulating sound could be heard. This was not the sound of war bugles, but rather, the voices of all members of the Five Tribes who had stayed behind within the protection of the shield. There were less than a thousand of them, but their voices joined together and drifted out onto the battlefield.

Most of this group of nearly a thousand people were children. The rest were the elderly. The majority of them did not have Cultivation bases; they were simple, ordinary Tribe members. However... considering all the sacrifices that had been made by the five Crow Divinity Tribes, they were hope. They were the hope of the Tribe.

Nearly a thousand people began to weep. As they wept, their feet stamped the ground and they began to sing. This song was the Tribe's funeral dirge, the song sung to accompany the soul of any Tribe member into death.

A thousand voices joined together, filled with the sound of youth, filled with tears.

"Perhaps you are still here. Perhaps you are watching your family. Perhaps you will return....

"We hope that the Heavens will not obstruct your path. Let the land guide your way. The living, golden light of the Crow Divinity will cause your glorious bloodlines to remain in the world....

"We hope to prevent you from being buried by the sands of Time, to

prevent the devils from snatching you away, to prevent the Demons from frightening you, to prevent any living thing from disturbing your rest....

“You are the warriors of the Crow Divinity! You are the pride of the Crow Divinity! You will exist forever in the lands of the Crow Divinity... we... will await your return!”

The song echoed out across the battlefield, and as it did, Meng Hao could almost make out the image of countless souls appearing. They seemed to be slowly looking back at their home, their Tribe.

As the sound of the funeral dirge rose into the air, the members of the Five Tribes who were locked in battle found that tears were flowing down their faces. They began to laugh madly and slaughter with even more savagery. Their laughter and their tears caused the faces of their enemies, the Cultivators of the Spider Branch, to fill with dread. In the past, they had slaughtered Tribes, but never before had they seen the type of explosive insanity that they were seeing now.

Now, they were scared.

Chapter 445: A Drop of Violet Rain!

“For the Crow Divinity!” This was the end of the funeral dirge sung by the nearly one thousand Tribe members within the shield. Outside the shield, their fellow Tribe members roared as they fought on, laughing madly.

“For the Crow Divinity!” murmured Meng Hao. He lifted his right hand, and a cold glow appeared in his eyes. He suddenly looked at Zhao Youlan, who was still fleeing under the protection of the Nascent Soul Elders.

Her face was extremely pale, and the Nascent Soul Elders around her had looks of extreme vigilance.

Meng Hao looked at her coolly, then looked away. It seemed she would be able to escape calamity this day. He did not have the same advantages from earlier; therefore, it would be too difficult to slay her right now.

Meng Hao’s body flickered as he shot into the force of nearly three thousand enemy Cultivators. The Lotus Sword Formation rotated next to him, sending out the power of Time. Everywhere he went, time seemed to flow by, and all Spider Branch Cultivators caught within the range of the formation suddenly grew older. Their faces instantly filled with astonishment.

This time, Meng Hao truly did cause a massacre. He donned the blood-colored mask, then waved his hand, sending the Time Sword Formation toward a group of seven or eight Core Formation Cultivators. They instantly grew old, and their eyes faded. It was like a wind had blown over to extinguish the flame of their life.

Meng Hao waved his hand again, and the shocking light of the Blood Finger could be seen. Anyone who touched it felt their blood decaying, and then they exploded into death.

Meng Hao took a few more steps forward, then pointed out with his left finger, stabbing it into the forehead of a rampaging Spider Branch Cultivator.

He killed neatly and efficiently. With the wave of a sleeve, he summoned what remained of his neo-demon horde. Ten thousand neo-demons roared out to join the chaotic battle. They fought side by side with the members of the Five Tribes. As the sound of the funeral dirge continued to echo out, they fought to the death with the Spider Branch!

The Black Bat did not exhibit any of the strangeness it had in the previous battle. Its eyes glowed coldly as it disappeared in a flicker, to reappear behind a Spider Branch Cultivator. It wrapped its wings around the man, who struggled with astonishment. Two sharp fangs plunged into the Cultivator's neck, and the man's flesh instantly withered up.

Every time it did this, a bloody glow would appear in the eyes of the Black Bat, and its strange aura would grow a bit stronger. In the beginning it sought out the weakest Cultivators, but gradually, its gaze began to fall on early Core Formation Cultivators.

When Meng Hao occasionally looked over at it, it would suddenly restrain itself, and not reveal any hints about what it was doing. However, it didn't take long before Meng Hao caught onto the vigilance being shown by the Black Bat in this regard.

"There's definitely some big mystery regarding this creature!" thought Meng Hao. Now was not the time to think about such matters though. After confirming that the brand connecting him to the bat was still intact, he continued on with his extermination of the Spider Branch Cultivators.

Within this chaotic battle, it wasn't just the Black Bat who fought dazzlingly. Big Hairy, his fur shining like silver, descended into the fighting like a silver moon. The cloud of Demonsquitos spread out, their vicious mouthparts guzzling fresh blood.

The red crocodile who was now the shape of a Flying Rain-Dragon, as well as the gigantic lizard, and all of Meng Hao's neo-demons experienced a sort of baptism by means of the fighting. Every one who survived only continued to grow stronger.

Fueled by the madness and ferocity of the Five Tribes members, a stunning massacre was underway. The Spider Branch Cultivators' morale

plummeted. Once Meng Hao joined the battle, the tide clearly turned in the favor of the Five Tribes.

When the neo-demons appeared, the Spider Branch experienced an unprecedented feeling of devastation. It didn't take long before only one thousand were left from the original force of three thousand. Blood soaked the ground, and the reek of gore filled the air.

It was then that a miserable shriek could be heard from up above. Except for the two Nascent Soul Cultivators protecting Zhao Youlan, the rest of the Spider Branch's Elders were now locked in deadly combat with the Five Tribe's seven Nascent Soul Cultivators. Just now, the cry had come from one of the Spider Branch Elders.

He was a middle aged man whose face was currently ashen. His pupils constricted as he retreated backward, a massive wound on his chest, within which his beating heart was actually visible. Directly in front of him was the Crow Gloom Grand Elder, his hair disheveled, his body covered with serious injuries. His shocking expression was one of madness, like that of a wild beast.

A boom filled the air as the Crow Gloom Grand Elder's body suddenly exploded as another of the Spider Branch Elders took advantage of the situation to exterminate him. However, before he died, he lifted up his right hand, within which was the severed head of the middle-aged Nascent Soul Cultivator.

This was the first of the Spider Branch Nascent Soul Cultivators to die in the battle. His death immediately caught the attention of the remaining thousand Cultivators down below. As of this moment, it seemed that any remaining will to fight was now completely gone. All of them began to do everything in their power to flee.

It was like tide waters. Their faces filled with panic as they gave up attacking and focused completely on defense and full-speed flight. Even the remaining Nascent Soul Cultivators up above seemed to have lost their will to do battle, and were about to flee.

Although the Five Tribes now had the upper hand in the battle, the price

they had paid was an incredibly heavy one, far more than what could be made up for by capturing the Spider Branch.

Therefore... how could they possibly allow the Spider Branch to flee?!

“Kill them!”

“Kill them!!”

Their eyes red and filled with both frenzy and the comfort of revenge, the Five Tribes shot in pursuit. Many of the Tribe members still had tears streaming down their faces.

All the Tribe members, both the ordinary Cultivators and the Nascent Soul experts, joined in the chase. Meng Hao had no way to understand the pain they felt from the loss of their friends and family. However, what he could feel, was the desire for revenge. For some reason, this also made him think of the Ji Clan!

Suddenly, another of the Spider Branch's Nascent Soul Cultivators died. Hundreds of other Cultivators were being slaughtered by Meng Hao's neo-demons and the other Five Tribes Cultivators.

They were like an avalanche, completely unstoppable!

It was at this moment that all of a sudden, a raindrop fell onto Meng Hao with a light plopping sound. The color of this raindrop was somewhat strange. It was violet, and as soon as it landed on him, it stained his garment, soaking through to touch his skin.

As soon as the raindrop hit him, he stopped in his tracks. The place where the raindrop had hit him felt cold. The cold aura seemed as if it had the power to exterminate life force. However, it was only one drop, so as far as Meng Hao was concerned, it was harmless.

“Violet rain?” he thought, frowning. He looked up into the sky to see some random raindrops falling down from up above.

“Don't tell me that because so many people have died here that the aura of blood and hatred has merged together and transformed into clouds? Is that where this violet rain is coming from?” After a moment of thought,

he suppressed his doubts. Looking around, he saw that scattered raindrops were falling, not just on him, but on the bodies of others. Even some of the Spider Branch Cultivators were getting hit.

It didn't seem to be anything out of the ordinary, but for some reason, Meng Hao couldn't shake the feeling that the rain had the power to exterminate life force. The thought of it swirled in the back of his mind.

Zhao Youlan also noticed the rain.

Earlier, she had been biting her lip as she watched her fellow Tribe members dying. There was nothing she could do, unfortunately. No order from her could secure victory in this battle.

The fighting had descended into chaos. Then the funeral dirge began, and Zhao Youlan understood. The Spider Branch... was suffering a complete defeat.

She felt as if her heart were tearing apart. What stuck out most in her mind though, the figure which had shocked her more than anything in her life, which had caused her trial by fire to become a complete failure, and had almost killed her... was of course Meng Hao.

However, it was then that a drop of violet rain landed on her face and then slowly flowed down her cheek. It felt cold, and caused a tremor to run through her body. Without thinking, she reached up to wipe away the raindrop. When she looked down at the water on her hand, she frowned and suddenly looked even more anxious.

"Violet rain?" She gaped in shock.

The violet rain was very light, and was quickly forgotten by everyone except for Zhao Youlan and Meng Hao. Zhao Youlan had the same feeling that he did. Something about this rain... seemed strange. All of a sudden, their gazes met across the vast battlefield, and they could see the vigilance in each other's eyes.

"It's not him."

"It's not her." Meng Hao and Zhao Youlan could both sense each other hesitating. Their gazes separated, and it was in that instant that....

Suddenly, sharp sounds could be heard coming from off in the distance. This was not the sound of a funeral dirge, but rather, war bugles. The sound instantly lifted the spirits of the Spider Branch Cultivators. Their will to fight suddenly surged up again, and they lifted their heads to the sky and roared.

Even the Spider Branch Nascent Soul Elders up above could not conceal their excitement. The two Elders next to Zhao Youlan heaved sighs of relief. Only Zhao Youlan seemed taciturn as she looked up at the sky.

Off in the distance could be seen a black streak that looked like seawaters as it whistled through the sky toward them. Up above, seemingly standing within the black seawaters, was an enormous red scorpion, emitting a shocking cry.

“The Scorpion Branch!” cried the High Priest, who was currently locked in battle with the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather. When the Greatfather saw what was happening, his pupils constricted and he gasped. His expression was now filled with profound grief. If it weren’t for the Exotic Heartdevil Flower, the Five Tribes might have been powerful enough to hold out through this war. But, now....

In mid-air, the members of the Five Tribes ceased their pursuit and began to group together. Their faces filled with madness as they look off into the distance at the approaching scorpion!

Chapter 446: Totem Perishing!

As the black streak beneath the scorpion neared, it became clear that it was not a black sea. Instead, it was a group of roughly five thousand Cultivators, all of them wearing long black robes, organized in formation. An army of blackness.

They blotted out the sky as they arrived, accompanied by the sound of war bugles, which drifted out in all directions. In addition, the Cultivators shouted out intense roars, the sound of which caused the gigantic illusory scorpion above them to suddenly let out an incredible shriek.

As it shrieked, it suddenly shot through the air with incredible speed toward where the Holy Spider and totemic Sacred Ancients were battling it out, the area that was distorted and impossible for anyone to see into.

Booms filled Heaven and Earth. The scorpion was of the same level as the Holy Spider, which meant that the battle with the Sacred Ancients was instantly thrown out of balance.

In years past, the totems of the Five Tribes had also been of the same level as the scorpion and the Holy Spider. But after the passage of time, the Crow Divinity began to fade and the Tribes grew smaller. Thus, they were now much weaker, which was why it took five of them just to fight the Holy Spider.

And now, things were even more different than before!

No one could see them battling. The only thing outsiders could see was the scorpion charging into the area of distortion up in the air. After the space of about ten breaths passed, before the Cultivators of the Scorpion Branch could even arrive, a deep sigh could be heard from up above. Then, an enormous Stone Golem suddenly shot out from within the distortion.

Its body began to collapse, and black strands could be seen emanating off of it. There was a gigantic hole in the middle of its chest. This was the Crow Fighter Tribe's totemic Sacred Ancient. And as of this moment... its body was surrounded by an intense Death Qi.

With a sigh, it shot out from within the distortion. Before it could get very far, the shocked members of the Five Tribes watched as a black shadow emerged after it from within the distortion. It transformed into a scorpion tail which then slammed into the Stone Golem. Poison shot into the Stone Golem's body, and an explosion could be heard as cracks spread out over its entire body, from within which an earthy yellow glow could be seen. The glow transformed into an earth-colored totem, which then filled with cracks and then exploded with a bang.

"The Crow Fighter Tribe's totemic Sacred Ancient!"

"It... perished...." The blow this dealt to the members of the Five Tribes was no less than what they had experienced when forced to watch their fellow Tribe Members slaughtered beneath the power of the Exotic Heartdevil Flower. This was because the totems of the Tribe were legacies from the totemic Sacred Ancient. The connection between the two was deep and profound!!

Right now, the members of the Crow Fighter Tribe were all trembling. They felt as if their faith was crumbling. Blood sprayed from their mouths as their Stone Golem totem tattoos from the Sacred Ancient began to fade away.

As the totem tattoos faded, their Cultivation bases immediately dropped an entire stage. Nascent Soul became Core Formation. Core Formation became Foundation Establishment. Foundation Establishment... dropped directly to Qi Condensation.

The entire Crow Fighter Tribe dropped, which of course immediately affected the entire battle!

It was at this moment that disconsolate howl could be heard. At the same time, clouds of vapor suddenly could be seen expanding out from the area of distortion up above, which then dissipated into the surroundings.

At the same time, every member of the Crow Gloom Tribe began to cough up blood. Their bodies sagged as their Water-type totem tattoos faded. All of them experienced an immediate Cultivation base drop of a full level.

The Crow Gloom Priest's face was pale as he coughed up blood and staggered backward. A sad smile could be seen on his face as he felt his Nascent Soul power rapidly vanishing and weakness spread throughout his body.

All of the members of the Five Tribes knew what this meant as soon as they saw it.... The Crow Gloom totemic Sacred Ancient... had perished!

All of this takes quite a bit of time to explain, but actually happened in the space of a few dozen breaths. As the events occurred, the Scorpion Branch Cultivators whistled through the air, growing closer and closer. Meng Hao looked toward the five thousand incoming Cultivators and noticed that one of their number was a young man wearing a red robe.

The young man's clothes and bearing made him seem completely different from the other Cultivators. Meng Hao suddenly sensed something about him that seemed very much like Zhao Youlan.

"He's the Holy Son of the Five Poison Tribe's Scorpion Branch?" Meng Hao's eyes glittered. He knew that Zhao Youlan was a Holy Daughter, so it was easy for him to come to the determination who this handsome, extraordinary, and somewhat sinister-looking young man must be.

As the Scorpion Branch neared, the Holy Son waved his right hand, immediately causing four thousand of the Cultivators to shoot toward the battlefield. Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and in response to his will, the neo-demon horde began to roar.

As the roaring shook Heaven and Earth, the Scorpion Branch Holy Son ignored the bitter fighting and approached Zhao Youlan, a slight smile on his face.

As he neared her, he said, "The Tribe gave the honor of this trial by fire to the most talented Holy Daughter, Zhao Youlan. In the end, all you got was a lost arm. Soon everyone in the Tribe will know about it. Zhao Youlan, I actually feel sorry for you. I'm afraid that even after we take this trifling five Crow Divinity Tribe's spot in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, there still won't be space for you."

Zhao Youlan's expression was cold as she looked over the Holy Son.

“Who was it that cut your arm off?” he continued with a smile. “You even requested the use of the Exotic Heartdevil Flower, and yet still failed. Such a pity, such a pity.”

“Are you done, Zhao Chunmu?” said Zhao Youlan coolly. “My victory or defeat is no concern of yours. If you can subjugate these five Crow Divinity Tribes, then I will offer you my congratulations.” 1

“The two of us look at things very differently,” said Holy Son Zhao Chunmu. “If this battle had been led by me and the Scorpion Branch, then we would have long since secured victory. I wouldn’t even have to use a precious Exotic Heartdevil Flower. Just destroy their totems, and everything will be over! Why go to the trouble of doing anything else? Zhao Youlan, your soft-heartedness is your biggest weakness!” He gave a sinister laugh.

The sound of bitter fighting rose up into the air as the four thousand Scorpion Branch Cultivators dove into battle. They had hideous grins and sinister looks in their eyes. Totemic light shone out from their bodies, and they attacked with even more viciousness and cruelty than the Spider Branch.

Were it not for the resistance provided by Meng Hao’s neo-demons, the members of the Five Tribes would have instantly sustained heavy casualties. Meng Hao looked around to see that despite the fact that only two Sacred Ancients had died, causing two Tribes to be weakened, the members of the other three Tribes had ashen faces filled with despair. If things went on the way they were, their defeat was inevitable.

Suddenly, Meng Hao spoke, his voice as powerful as thunder.

“You don’t need to fight for the Crow Divinity!” As soon as they heard his words, the members of the Five Tribes looked over at Meng Hao.

“Look down at the blood and corpses that litter the land. Those are your friends and your fellow Tribe members. Fight for them!

“Look back at the elderly and the young behind that shield! They are your family and blood. Fight for them!

“Hold your heads high as you look at those Five Poisons Cultivators. Fight for your friends! Fight for your family! You are the last line of defense. If you give up, then your families will be completely exterminated!

“The time has come to go all out! We might not win, but if you don’t take the risk, then your defeat is assured. Fight for them.... All of you, will you really hold back now!?!?” Meng Hao lifted his head up and roared, a roar that entered into the ears of the Five Tribes and shook their hearts and minds.

Madness once again burned in their eyes. Their exhaustion, their hopelessness, and all of their negative emotions did not disappear. Instead it transformed into an explosive, mortiferous despair!

“TO BATTLE!!”

“KILL THEM!!”

The remaining two thousand members of the Five Tribes roared. Their madness blazing to the point that they no longer feared death, they charged toward the Scorpion Branch.

Meng Hao led the charge, surrounded by his neo-demons. Roaring filled the air and the intent to slaughter spread out everywhere. You could definitely say that without Meng Hao, the Five Tribes would have long since been defeated!

Without Meng Hao, they would have been ruthlessly slaughtered on a mass scale. The only ones who would have survived would have been the ones enslaved by the Five Poisons Tribe.

By this point, Zhao Chunmu had taken notice of Meng Hao. He looked at him for a moment and then began to chuckle.

“Ah, so he’s a Dragoneer,” said Zhao Chunmu. “You, of course, would hesitate about whether or not to kill him. That’s why he’s still alive. As for me, there is only one course of action that I would take. Strike like lightning and exterminate him immediately!” Killing intent glittered in Zhao Chunmu’s eyes as he lifted his right hand and pointed toward Meng

Hao out on the battlefield.

“18 Stealth Guards, you have the space of ten breaths to kill that man!”

Zhao Youlan's face was the same as ever, but she backed up a bit nonetheless, seemingly wanting to put some space between herself and Zhao Chunmu. The two Nascent Soul Elders standing next to her hesitated for a moment. However, after looking at her, they didn't say anything.

When Zhao Chunmu pointed his finger out, Meng Hao sensed something, and looked over with cold eyes. He waved his right hand, and a Blood Qi emanated out, enveloping two Scorpion Branch Cultivators. Immediately, they began to scream as their bodies withered up.

“I let Zhao Youlan scurry away, but I can't believe that this newly arrived Holy Son will be able to do the same!” Killing intent flickered in Meng Hao's eyes as he came up with a plan for how to kill Zhao Chunmu. Suddenly, his pupils constricted, and his body disappeared as he used the Bloodburst Flash. When he reappeared, he was about ten meters away.

The moment he appeared, the place he had just been standing was suddenly filled with sixteen glowing bands of light that looked like needles. If he had been standing there just now, the sixteen black needles would definitely have pierced through him.

Meng Hao's eyes glowed coldly as he lifted his right hand to punch out into the air. Surprisingly, the air in front him seemed to sink inward as the figure of one of the assassins was forced to appear. It was at this point that Meng Hao's fist landed. The figure was actually that of a woman, her appearance sweet and charming. Surprise filled her eyes as his fist slammed into her and her body exploded into pieces.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as always. After making the kill, he shot backward to avoid another black needle which whistled through the air. He gave a cold snort and lifted his left hand, which was surrounded by a bloody glow. He shoved his hand out in front of him, whereupon another miserable shriek could be heard. Another woman appeared, whose head Meng Hao now held in his hand. Suddenly, Meng Hao moved forward,

rapidly lifting his leg to slam his knee into her head.

There was a bang, and another person was dead.

“Here to assassinate me, eh?” said Meng Hao, a cold smile twisting his lips.

*

1. Zhao Chunmu's name in Chinese is 赵春木 zhào chūn mù – Zhao is a surname, the same surname as Zhao Youlan's. Chun means “spring.” Mu means “wood.”

Chapter 447: Title at the end!

Two people had been killed quickly and efficiently, causing Zhao Chunmu's eyes to flicker slightly. However, his expression was the same as before.

It was at this moment that Meng Hao released the head he held in his hand. Eyes flickering, he lifted his right hand up and then gestured toward the ground. Immediately, a blinding bloody light shone out from Meng Hao's body, rotating to cover the area for dozens of meters in each direction. Within this Blood Death World, fifteen figures were instantly made visible.

As soon as they appeared, Meng Hao stepped forward. With two fingers of his left hand emanating a will of blood, he tapped onto the forehead of one of the figures. A boom could be heard as, at the same time, he punched another of the figures with his right hand.

Blood showered out everywhere, accompanied by one bloodcurdling scream after another. Meng Hao's entire figure had turned the color of blood. He flicked his right sleeve as he reached out to grab another of the women. His left hand slapped his bag of holding to produce a medicinal pill, which he shoved into the mouth of the terrified woman.

After the space of a few breaths, the woman's body began to swell until it exploded, sending blood out for a dozen or so meters in every direction. Blood landed on four or five nearby assassins, causing the women to emit miserable shrieks as their bodies dissolve into pools of blood.

"Poison Cultivator!!" cried the remaining four women. They were tall, slender and beautiful. As of this moment, though, their faces were completely filled with astonishment at seeing Meng Hao's ruthless slaughter.

Their faces were pale, and they immediately began to retreat. No longer were they attempting any sort of assassination, but instead were trying to flee what they now viewed as the most terrifying figure in existence.

"Want to run?" said Meng Hao, his face expressionless. These women

had bizarre forms; if it wasn't for the Blood Death World and Meng Hao's faint Demonic Qi, he might not have been able to prevent them from getting close to him.

Even as his words rang out, Meng Hao moved forward. As he neared them, the faces of the four women filled with despair. However, the hopelessness quickly changed into viciousness. Just when they were about to attack, Meng Hao smiled. Suddenly, the Blood Death World began to shrink. In the blink of an eye, it was as if a gigantic hand were clenching down viciously on the four women.

A rumbling sound could be heard as the fist crushed them to death. Meng Hao floated in mid-air; the area for dozens of meters surrounding him was completely empty. No other person could be seen. The Scorpion Branch Cultivators off in the distance looked over at him, fear written across their faces.

As for the members of the Five Tribes, they were starting to get excited, and continued on with their slaughter.

Zhao Chunmu chuckled and coolly said, "It's not over y..."

Before he could finish speaking, his face suddenly filled with astonishment.

Just now, a dark figure had appeared directly behind Meng Hao. It made no noise and let off no ripples, and was completely bizarre in appearance, like a ghost. It shot toward Meng Hao at incredible speed that almost looked like minor teleportation. However, just as the figure was almost upon Meng Hao, it let out a bloodcurdling scream. Its right hand, with which it had just been preparing to stab into Meng Hao's back, was suddenly shredded to pieces as if by some massive rotating blade.

Meng Hao's right hand shot back and grabbed hold of the throat of this final, wounded assassin. Dragging her in front of him, he clenched his fist, and then looked over at Zhao Chunmu, his eyes filled with killing intent.

When Zhao Chunmu saw the killing intent his heart was filled with coldness. Meng Hao had just killed eighteen Stealth Guards, which left Zhao Chunmu completely shaken. What he didn't notice was that off to

the side, on Zhao Youlan's face, a sneer could be seen.

He also didn't notice that Zhao Youlan had quickly backed up even more, putting more distance between the two of them.

"9 Grand Elders! Supreme Priest! Spare nothing. Kill that man!"

In response to Zhao Chunmu's words, ten figures immediately teleported toward Meng Hao. Nine of them were of the early Nascent Soul stage, one was of the mid Nascent Soul stage. The combined attack of this ten people was enough to shake Heaven and Earth.

However, it was at this moment that suddenly, a bitter sigh could be heard echoing out from up above.

"Tribe, I have protected you for many years, but unfortunately, I can accompany you no more.... Before I return to the dust, I will give you a final chance to live...." A rumbling sound echoed out that caused Meng Hao's entire body to shake. He looked up to see that now, just like the Earth and Water totems of the Five Tribes, the Crow Scout Tribe's Treant was breaking apart into death.

As it died, vast quantities of life force turned into a Qi which shot down toward the Five Tribes, fusing into their bodies and transforming into healing power.

What was unavoidable, however, was that because of the death of the Treant, the totem tattoos on the members of the Crow Scout Tribe began to fade away. As they did, the Cultivation bases of the Crow Scout Tribe members began to show signs of dropping.

Before that could happen, though, the Wood character totem tattoo on Meng Hao's forehead began to emanate a mighty, glowing light. Suddenly, the illusory image of a massive tree magically appeared above his head.

Close up, it looked like a great tree. But from a distance, it actually looked like the character 'Wood.'

Now, the Crow Scout Tribe members' totem tattoos were no longer disappearing, but rather, transforming. In the space of a few breaths, the entire force of Crow Scout Tribe members felt their totems becoming

stable. However, what they had were no longer Greenwood totems, but... the Wood totem that belonged to Meng Hao!

This strange scene was something that even Meng Hao would never have imagined could happen. As soon as the Wood character totems appeared, a tremor ran through him as he suddenly realized he could sense all of the Crow Scout Tribe members. He could feel their zeal and passion. Furthermore, it seemed as if there was a continuous flow of life force being transmitted into his own body. At this moment, his aura suddenly expanded rapidly.

His Wood-type totem tattoo emitted boundless, shocking light. Not only were the Five Tribes stunned, the Cultivators of the Scorpion Branch were shocked and in disbelief.

Zhao Youlan's eyes went wide, and she began to pant. Zhao Chunmu stared blankly, his eyes filled with incredulity.

As Western Desert Cultivators, they all knew that totems... could only arise from neo-demons. Cultivators... practice Cultivation, and could never produce totemic power!

What was happening exceeded anything they could ever imagine. What they were seeing could only indicate one thing: Meng Hao had become the Crow Scout Tribe's totemic Sacred Ancient!

His totem was now the Crow Scout Tribe's totem! The explosive growth of his aura meant that... just like the magical totemic neo-demons, he could absorb the power of worship directed toward him by the Tribe members!

It was mainly because of this incredible power that such neo-demons could bestow totems.

Up above in the sky, where the battle of totems was taking place, a sigh could be heard. Down below, people began to express their shock.

"Since he has become a totem, his totem is now the Sacred Ancient of the Tribe. He... can absorb our power!!"

"Could it be that he's not a Cultivator but actually a neo-demon?!?!"

This shocking scene sent the entire battlefield into a completely commotion. One moment ago, the Crow Scout Tribe members were losing their Cultivation bases because of the death of their Sacred Ancient, the Treant. Now, their Cultivation bases were no longer disappearing. They were a bit weaker than before, but had not slipped down an entire stage.

As of now, there was an indescribable connection between them and Meng Hao. They looked at him, their hearts filling with incredible zeal and reverence.

“Sacred Ancient!”

“We members of the Crow Scout Tribe offer our respect, Sacred Ancient!!”

One by one, the members of the Crow Scout Tribe began to shout out, roaring. Instantly, they began to fight with increased ferocity.

Meng Hao was panting, and his mind reeled. But then, everything became clear. His eyes flickered as he took advantage in the sudden increase in his aura to point his hand up into the air.

“Without a face!”

An enormous face suddenly appeared, its eyes closed. A bloody glow rose up and spread out in all directions, transforming into attacking power that slammed into the nine Nascent Soul Cultivators who were charging toward him.

Their faces flickered, and they immediately backed up in retreat.

“A single word!” Meng Hao suddenly felt an unimaginable power welling up within him. He could sense that this power did not come from him, nor was it something he could store up or fuse with his Cultivation base.

It was as if doing that would break some sort of rule, making it impossible to accomplish. This power was something he could only use, or perhaps borrow. It came from the members of the Crow Scout Tribe. There weren't very many of them, only a few hundred, but their zeal made the power potent to a shocking degree.

This borrowed power could sustain him and enable him to unleash the second form of the Blood Immortal divine ability that previously had sucked away at his life force!

Meng Hao's Spiritual Sense was also increased dramatically. He caused it to spread out, pointing out in front of him. Suddenly, the giant face that was currently beginning to break up, became clear. The eyes that had been closed before, opened, along with the mouth.

It was like a sound came out, a strange sound that entered the ears of the people in the area. Each person heard exactly the same thing as Meng Hao pointed down toward the ground. The air there began to ripple. The face of the Scorpion Branch mid Nascent Soul stage Supreme Priest filled with disbelief.

He suddenly began to tremble, as if he were being injured by some invisible force. He immediately began to back up, but before he could get farther than a few paces, blood sprayed from his mouth. Panting, his eyes filled with fear, and he hoarsely said, "Joss Flame! He can actually wield the power of Joss Flame! Only totem neo-demons can do that!!"

The Supreme Priest wasn't the only one to cough up blood. The faces of the other nine Nascent Soul Elders from the Scorpion Branch filled with shock and terror as they coughed up three successive mouthfuls.

Meng Hao floated there, his hair whipping about, his clothes flapping. A strange glow shone in his eyes. With every breath he took, he could sense the power from the zealous Crow Scout Tribe members pouring into him.

"Joss Flame, huh...." murmured Meng Hao. He closed his eyes for a moment, then opened them. They were filled with a fierce glow.

"Flames of war unify...."

Without a face, a single word, flames of war unify! These were three Blood Immortal divine ability forms. Thanks to the power of the Joss Flame, Meng Hao... was now able to truly unleash the third form. Flames of war unify!

Chapter 447: New Totem!!

Chapter 448: Title at the end!

These three Blood Immortal divine ability forms immediately caused black smoke to appear on the bodies of the nine Nascent Soul Elders. It rolled off of them up into the sky, seemingly completely beyond their control. Seeing this caused their faces to fall immediately.

It took only a moment for them to realize that this smoke was caused by an invisible burning of their own life force. Their life force was the fuel and this black smoke was the result!

The sight of it caused the nine men to be filled with shock. They immediately began to utilize various techniques and divine abilities, but to their horror... they were completely incapable of preventing their life forces from being burned up. The black smoke continued to billow off them.

Within the black smoke was vast quantities of thick Death Qi, making the smoke a mass of inky blackness. From a distance, it really did look like the flames of war were burning in the area. The sight was shocking to the extreme.

As for the Supreme Priest, even he had black smoke coming off of him. The ten Nascent Soul Cultivators' faces were filled with shock at this strange divine ability which apparently couldn't be evaded. Then their faces filled with hatred, and they once again used minor teleportation to charge toward Meng Hao.

Ten people closed in on Meng Hao from ten different directions.

Meng Hao closed his eyes. He had noticed something familiar within the black smoke from the burning life forces. He had seen something just like that after his glimpse at the world above the Tower of Tang in the State of Zhao, when he had been infected by the Death Qi from the fallen Immortal whom he later encountered outside the Rebirth Cave.

"There must be some similarity between the two...." A cold glint appeared in his eyes as he performed an incantation gesture with both hands and then waved his hands out. Flames of war shot up into the sky.

The power he had absorbed from the hundreds of Crow Scout Tribe members poured through the mask, causing rumbling sounds to fill the air as the flames exploded up to shocking effect.

The ten Nascent Soul Cultivators immediately coughed up blood. The closer they approached in their charge toward Meng Hao, the more life force they wasted.

It was as if Meng Hao had turned into some destructive force that could consume all life forces.

Unfortunately, they had no choice but to continue to charge toward him. Retreat was not an option. The only chance they had was to kill Meng Hao.

Even as they roared and charged forward, Meng Hao closed his eyes and sensed the boundless, so-called Joss Flame power within him. Suddenly, the enormous face once again magically appeared. This time... the face was different. This time, it bore the semblance of Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes suddenly opened, and so did the face's eyes. Its lips quivered, and just as it seems more flames of war would rise up, a single word was uttered.

“Collapse!”

The instant Meng Hao's voice could be heard, rumbling sounds filled the air. In that instant, the black smoke coming off of the ten Nascent Soul Cultivators roared with an earth shaking sound as it exploded with intensity. This was an explosion of their life forces, as if they were being harmed by their own power!

Surrounded by roaring sounds, nine of the Nascent Soul Cultivators coughed up blood as their bodies tumbled backward violently like kites whose strings had been cut. They were thrown three hundred meters away, and their bodies were listless, older. Their life forces were now dim; they had lost nearly half of their longevity.

When they finally came to a stop, their faces were unsightly. Their hearts trembled; fear for Meng Hao had already taken root inside of them.

It seemed to them that they weren't fighting a Cultivator, but rather... a totemic Sacred Ancient!

Furthermore, the power of Joss Flame was incongruous with their own Cultivation base power, which came from the totems of their Tribe. This, combined with Meng Hao's Blood Immortal divine abilities, allowed him to thoroughly shake these ten Nascent Soul Cultivators.

As for the Supreme Priest, blood sprayed from his mouth. He was obviously stronger than the other nine, but he too had been severely injured.

All of them were thoroughly shaken inwardly.

Meng Hao gave an inward sigh of disappointment. Just now, he had attacked with the full force of the Joss Flame power. Even that was only enough to injure his opponents. After all, these were ten Nascent Soul Cultivators. If he were only fighting one or two, Meng Hao was confident that with his borrowed power, he would be able to slay them.

However, as soon as all of them came to a stop, the killing intent in their eyes grew even stronger. Their bodies flickered as they approached him once more!

It was at this point that suddenly, a massive sea of flame exploded out from within the distorted ripples that blocked the view of the battle of totemic Sacred Ancients up above. It spread out to cover half of the sky. The massive flames lit up the faces of everyone down below on the battlefield, astonishing everyone.

Astonishingly, within the massive spread of flames a figure could be seen, reclining there in mid-air. A golden light rose up, and it was impossible to see what was inside, but it was clear that the golden light was melting and dissipating.

That golden light was the Metal-type totemic Sacred Ancient of the Crow Soldier Tribe. The Flame Sea was the Crow Flame Tribe's Fire-type Sacred Ancient. It was impossible for everyone down below on the battlefield to not look at the scene up above.

An archaic voice suddenly echoed out from up above. "I cannot continue to protect you of the five Crow Divinity Tribes. However the Flame Totem and I... will fight to put you in a good position. As such, our ten thousand years of Karma must be dispersed.... We wish you... peace and safety."

The sea of flames rapidly began to contract. It shot toward the golden light at incredible speed. In the blink of an eye, it completely surrounded the golden light, wrapping it up, transforming into... a gigantic sun!

Death Qi swirled within the sun. Down below on the ground, the members of the Crow Soldier Tribe were trembling, as were the members of the Crow Flame Tribe. Their totems were rapidly beginning to dissipate. Intense feelings of grief and sorrow welled up in their hearts.

"Sacred Ancient!"

"Sacred Ancient!!"

Wails of grief rose up into the sky. Unfortunately, neither the Metal-type nor the Fire-type totems could hear them.

Even as the members of the Five Tribes cried out in grief, golden light and the glow of flames combined within the burning sun up above. Soon, everything was illuminated by its billowing light. Shockingly, just barely visible within the enormous sun was... a Golden Crow!

The instant the Golden Crow appeared, Meng Hao's eyes went wide. He was able to sense a somewhat familiar aura on it, and yet, most of it was unfamiliar.

"It's not her," he murmured with a soft sigh. "It's only a tiny sliver of consciousness left behind in the world. Gold and Fire ended their own lives to transform."

The Golden Crow lifted its head to the sky and roared as it shot out from within the sun. It closed in on the spider and the scorpion, which in turn shot toward it, intent on destroying it.

Such a totemic battle was something that Cultivators couldn't interfere with. The instant the three of them slammed into each other, the Golden Crow's body burst into flames. Golden light and the glow of flames spread

out. The Golden Crow began to expand. In the blink of an eye, it was three hundred meters, three thousand, thirty thousand meters!!

It filled the sky and covered over the land, completely enveloping the spider and the scorpion!

“Totems, I call upon the vestiges of the power of the Crow Divinity to seal you and the root of your totemic power! Totemic Demons of the Five Poisons Tribe, be sealed!!” The archaic voice was filled with weakness as it used the last of its power to speak. The gigantic Golden Crow was now completely enveloping the spider and the scorpion. It transformed into an enormous golden shield almost like a bubble. The frantic spider and the scorpion were trapped inside, and were madly attacking in all directions as they tried to escape.

“SEAL!” The enormous golden bubble glittered as if with flames as it shot away with the spider and the scorpion. All the onlookers were breathing heavily as it flew out of the mountains, carrying the Sacred Ancients of two branches with it!

Its destination? The plains which housed the Five Poisons Tribe, where it would use the last bits of its power to interfere with the other three totemic Sacred Ancients.

This was the final price paid by the great totems of the Crow Divinity, a final protection for the members of the Five Tribes!

This seal would last for half of a sixty-year cycle. They had burned their own life forces to create this seal. However, their deaths, and the burning of their life force which had unleashed such incredible power, had caught the attention of the Golden Crow’s sliver of will, which would exist for half of a sixty-year cycle.

As for the Sacred Ancients from the other three branches of the Five Poisons Tribe, they would meet similar fates as the other two. Even if the Five Poisons Tribe made another move, they would not be able to employ the strength of their Sacred Ancients.

Zhao Youlan coughed up a mouthful of blood. It wasn’t just her; all of the surviving Cultivators from the Spider Branch did the same as their

Cultivation bases instantly dropped an entire stage.

When the Sacred Ancients were sealed, their auras were also sealed as if in death, and were incapable of bestowing any of their power. This was the cause of this instant Cultivation base drop.

Zhao Chunmu also coughed up a mouthful of blood, along with the rest of the Scorpion Branch Cultivators. Their expressions were that of shock as their Cultivation bases also fell.

The faces of the ten Nascent Soul Cultivators who Meng Hao was facing up against instantly fell. They began to pant as their Cultivation bases began to weaken and fall. It wouldn't be long before they were no longer of the Nascent Soul stage!

That was a unique feature of Western Desert Cultivators. They could borrow the power of totems, but if a Sacred Ancient died, then they would lose a totem tattoo, which would result in Cultivation base loss. In contrast, the Cultivation base of Southern Domain Cultivators belonged only to them. That was why practicing Cultivation was much more difficult there than in the Western Desert.

Of course, the Crow Divinity Tribe was in the exact same situation because of the deaths of the Metal-type and Fire-type totems. The Crow Soldier Tribe members' totem tattoos began to vanish; however, at this exact moment, when their Cultivation bases were beginning to fall, a golden light suddenly sprang out from Meng Hao.

It was as if a previous generation had died, so a new one arrived to replace it. Golden light radiated out of Meng Hao from his Metal-type totem tattoo, the ancient character 'metal' which existed on his chest!

The instant the light appeared, the Crow Soldier Tribe members' bodies began to tremble. Although their previous Metal-type totem tattoos were disappearing, a new one appeared. It looked different than the previous totems; it resembled Meng Hao's in every aspect. This was the ancient character for metal!

Immediately, boundless and intense Joss Flame power erupted from the members of the Crow Soldier Tribe to shoot toward Meng Hao. It covered

his golden body, causing his aura to rise up even higher.

His hair whipped about wildly, and brilliant beams of green and gold light swirled around him. In front of him, two massive characters appeared, wood and metal. They emanated shocking power.

Filled with excitement, the Crow Soldier Tribe members clasped hands and bowed deeply to Meng Hao. The roar of their voices filled the air.

“Sacred Ancient!”

“Greetings, Sacred Ancient!!”

It was at this moment when Meng Hao’s Wood-and Metal-type power was displayed in spectacular fashion that... the power of the Joss Flame around him grew thicker and suddenly... a flame appeared within him!

This was not Joss Flame, but rather something that had been inside of him this entire time... the East Pill Everburning Flame!

Chapter 448: East Pill Everburning Flame!

Chapter 449: Title at the end!

The East Pill Everburning Flame had been inside of Meng Hao all along. It was a flame gifted to him by his Master Pill Demon, for use in pill concocting. He had observed the flame for quite some time that year, and had eventually fused the seed of the flame with his Core. After igniting it fully, it became an everburning fire inside of him.

When he finally became convinced to tread the path of the Five-Colored Nascent Soul, it didn't seem to have anything to do with the Everburning Flame. Meng Hao hadn't thought much about it. Meng Hao had assumed that in his pursuit of the five elements, he would need to find different types of totems. However... in the blink of an eye, this flame suddenly exploded out, causing Meng Hao to be completely shaken mentally.

He suddenly realized that he had made a mistake. The Five-Colored path, and the attributes of the five elements, weren't necessarily limited to totems. Any blessing in Heaven and Earth had the possibility of becoming part of his Five-Colored path.

The Everburning Flame, drawn out by the power of the Joss Flame, and because of his two great totems of Metal and Wood, burned out in all directions. It melted the air itself as it raged around Meng Hao.

Suddenly, the character for fire appeared near his dantian region. The instant it appeared, the flames around him rose up into the sky. Suddenly, the Fire-type totem seed given to him by the five Crow Divinity Tribes flew out from within his bag of holding. The tiny tongue of flame had already dissipated by more than half by now. Meng Hao instantly began to rotate the Everburning Flame, causing it to envelop the tiny seed and then assimilate it.

The moment Meng Hao absorbed the Fire-type totem seed, the Crow Flame Tribe members all looked at him, trembling.

The Fire-type totem tattoos that had been disappearing from their bodies moments ago, were suddenly changed! Now, they looked exactly like Meng Hao's Fire character!

Immediately, Joss Flame power shot out from their bodies toward Meng Hao.

The Crow Flame Tribe members were shaking with excitement. Their voices came out in loud shouts as they dropped to their knees to kowtow to Meng Hao.

“Sacred Ancient!”

“Greetings, Sacred Ancient!!”

Meng Hao’s entire body was filled with roaring sound. His aura was shocking as his body floated there in mid-air. The Joss Flame power from the more than 1,000 members of the Crow Scout, Crow Soldier and Crow Flame Tribes coalesced together and shot toward Meng Hao’s Flame-type totem tattoo.

The ancient fire character suddenly grew even clearer. Within the space of a few breaths, it was sharp and bright and sent out a sea of flames that surrounded Meng Hao.

Meng Hao’s aura once again climbed upward. Three characters floated around him. Metal. Wood. Fire. Three totems that emanated blinding light. The moment the Fire-type totem began to emit light, Meng Hao’s Cultivation base rose up explosively.

As this happened, the view in front of Meng Hao began to grow blurry. It only took a moment for the blurriness to pass, though. Meng Hao suddenly noticed that the world around him was filled with what looked like countless streaks, as well as nodes like sparks of electricity. It seemed that, if he wished, he could... make himself appear at any of these glowing nodes!

“Minor teleportation....” Meng Hao’s mind spun as he looked around with intensely glowing eyes. Excitement filled his heart, and he took a deep breath. He didn’t test it out right away, but he was sure that if he wished, he could merge himself into the air. He knew that he... now possessed a divine ability that only the Nascent Soul stage could employ. Minor teleportation!

With this divine ability, he effectively increased his life force. If he faced up against a powerful enemy, he could rely on this ability to evade.

“My decision to pick the path of the Five-Colored Nascent Soul was the correct one. This path will let me forge my own Dao!” He took a deep breath, and his eyes filled with a bright glow of confidence!

What Cultivators cultivate is... confidence!

Meng Hao breathed deeply as he sensed the power of the three great totems circling around him. He lifted his right hand and waved it forward, causing the sea of flames to spread out. He merged Wood-type power into it, causing it... to rage even higher. Any Scorpion Branch Cultivator that it touched let out a bloodcurdling scream and then shot backward in astonishment.

As for the ten Nascent Soul Cultivators, they had long since fled. Their Cultivation bases were unstable, and they didn't dare to fight Meng Hao at the peak of his power.

Meng Hao's left hand flickered an incantation and he pointed out, fueling the flames with Metal-type power. They congealed together, filled with golden liquid that suddenly shot out like a golden rain. Everywhere it went, the will of Metal followed.

The appearance of these divine abilities instantly changed the circumstances of the battle. Although there were more than three thousand Scorpion Branch Cultivators, their hearts were filled with fear. Much the same as the Spider Branch Cultivators before them, they suddenly lost their will to fight.

By this point, it wasn't just the Crow Scout, Crow Soldier, and Crow Flame Tribe members who were bowing deeply to Meng Hao. The other two of the five Crow Divinity Tribes saw what was happening and felt deep approval for Meng Hao. They also turned toward him and bowed.

The Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather and the remaining five Nascent Soul Cultivators all looked at Meng Hao with deep respect. They didn't want to put too much thought into the matter; at the moment, they were able to force their Cultivation bases to remain at the Nascent Soul stage, but in

reality, once the battle was over, only three of them would be able to continue to do so. The Cultivation bases of the Crow Gloom and Crow Fighter Nascent Soul Cultivators would soon fall down, and they would no longer be of the Nascent Soul stage.

“Sacred Ancient....” Zhao Youlan watched on silently with her phoenix-like eyes. Next to her, Zhao Chunmu’s face was pale, and the other Five Poisons Tribe members around him were starting to back up in retreat.

Meanwhile, some distance away, an old man was watching the scene that was playing out on something that looked like a giant mirror. This old man stood at the lead of an army of nearly twenty thousand Cultivators.

“A change in Sacred Ancients. A Dragoneer turning into an Ancestor. If... if we could research this matter and figure out how this person accomplished such a feat, it would be an unprecedented windfall for the Five Poisons Tribe!

“Pass the order down,” the old man continued coolly, a strange light gleaming in his eyes. “Spare no cost! Employ teleportation! I WILL lay eyes on this man in the time it takes an incense stick to burn!” As his voice echoed out, the Tribe members at his side immediately began to spread the word throughout the Tribe. Roaring sounds filled the air along with the glow of teleportation. Even as all of them began to disappear, a violet raindrop landed on the old man’s body.

“Violet rain?” said the old man. He looked at it in shock for a moment, then frowned as his body vanished.

Violet rain once again began to fall. It wasn’t just in a small area this time. All of the mountains and even the plains that were home to the Five Poisons Tribe, experienced the rainfall.

It contained an exterminating coldness, the will of extinction, although it wasn’t very intense, but rather, scattered in fragments.

The rain splashed down onto the ground in front of Meng Hao, mixing with the blood there. Currently, few people noticed it. It was only Meng Hao and a few others who, after seeing it, suddenly hesitated. However, considering that a battle was going on, Meng Hao didn’t have much time

to think. Floating there in mid-air, his gaze slowly turned cold as he looked across the battlefield toward Zhao Chunmu.

When this happened, Zhao Youlan's pupils constricted. She had been slowly and unobtrusively edging away from Zhao Chunmu this entire time. However, when she saw Meng Hao look at him, her face flickered. Not caring if her actions were obvious, she immediately shot backward, putting a greater distance between her and Zhao Chunmu.

Zhao Chunmu also noticed Meng Hao's gaze, and his heart trembled. When he saw Zhao Youlan falling back, his heart and mind filled with a roaring sound, as he suddenly realized that the person who cut off Zhao Youlan's arm... was probably this new Sacred Ancient of the five Crow Divinity Tribes.

"He wants to kill me!!" he thought, his scalp growing numb. Everything that had just happened with Meng Hao caused his heart to tremble. Meng Hao had slaughtered his eighteen Stealth Guards. Even nine Nascent Soul Elders along with the Supreme Priest hadn't been able to shake him. All of this caused Zhao Chunmu to begin to pant, and he immediately backed up.

"Nine Grand Elders, Supreme Priest, save me!"

However, almost in the exact same instant that Meng Hao looked at Zhao Chunmu, he began to move forward. He shot through the air like an arrow. The nine Elders and the Supreme Priest from the Scorpion Branch hesitated. It only lasted for a moment, however. Gritting their teeth, they shot once again toward Meng Hao.

A cold smile twisted the corners of Meng Hao's lips. The main reason he had not employed minor teleportation right away was to attract these people over. Zhao Chunmu was nothing more than bait. Unlike Zhao Youlan, he wasn't important enough at the moment that Meng Hao needed to kill him. The people Meng Hao wanted to kill were none other than... the nine early Nascent Soul stage Cultivators and the one that was of the mid stage.

As they neared him, killing intent flickered in his eyes. All of a sudden,

he teleported. When he vanished, the faces of everyone who was watching instantly filled with shock. This was especially true of the ten Nascent Soul Cultivators, as they realized that what Meng Hao had just done was not the Bloodburst Flash but rather... true minor teleportation.

“Not good!” said the Supreme Priest, his face flickering. He looked over at the nine Elders to see Meng Hao suddenly appearing directly behind one of them. His right hand lifted up and then smashed out with the power to destroy a Nascent Soul Cultivator.

That Nascent Soul Cultivator’s face fell. His body immediately began to grow blurry as he attempted to flee via minor teleportation. At the same time, he spit out a colorful beam of light which transformed into talisman paper that shot toward Meng Hao. However, at the same time, Meng Hao’s fist, filled with exterminating power, landed.

A boom filled the air along with a miserable cry. The talisman paper collapsed, giving the Nascent Soul Cultivator just enough time to finish his teleportation. As he disappeared, Meng Hao let out a cold snort. He moved forward and then performed his own teleportation. The two figures grew blurry, and in the blink of an eye Meng Hao had caught up. Once again, his fist descended.

Another boom could be heard. The Nascent Soul Cultivator spit out a mouthful of Nascent Soul Qi. Within were eight magical items, all of which began to explode. Even his body exploded, as he used self-detonation to attempt to kill Meng Hao. A flying sword swept up his Nascent Soul, which borrowed the momentum of the self-detonation to flee away at top speed, clearly weakened.

Chapter 449: Nascent Soul Slaying!

Chapter 450: Downpour of Violet Rain!

The power of self-detonation was useless against Meng Hao because of the Eyeless Larva. After the explosion dissipated, Meng Hao looked at the panic-stricken, fleeing Nascent Soul, and then waved his right hand. Eyeless Larva silk whistled out through the air to surround it. The Nascent Soul's face filled with despair, and its hands flashed an incantation. Immediately, brilliant light surrounded it as it tried to fight back. However, the instant it touched the Eyeless Larva silk, the light shattered. The Eyeless Larva silk wrapped crushingly around the Nascent Soul, strangling it into death.

A miserable shriek could be heard as this Scorpion Branch Elder first lost his physical body, and then experienced complete death as his Nascent Soul was crushed into tiny pieces.

His death caused the minds of all onlookers to reel. The viciousness of Meng Hao's tactics, and his cold-blooded attacks, made it clear that he desired to exterminate them all. When you added in the fact that he could teleport, that meant that he was firmly in the position to be able to battle with Nascent Soul Cultivators.

The surrounding Nascent Soul Cultivators had already sustained injuries. Furthermore, the sealing of their scorpion, cutting it off from the outside world, made their Nascent Souls unstable. The Supreme Priest's face flickered with hatred, but he retreated unhesitatingly, no longer willing to be entangled with Meng Hao.

The other eight Nascent Soul Cultivators were scared witless. Were their Cultivation bases at the peak of their power, they could join hands to fight Meng Hao. But now, they had sustained severe internal injuries, and were no longer willing to fight. They began to back up, vigilantly putting as much distance as possible between themselves and Meng Hao.

Seeing this, Meng Hao inwardly gave a sigh of relief. Just now, he had known that he must either kill with extreme speed or kill more than one person. These were Nascent Soul Cultivators, each of whom had risen up

to supersede countless contemporaries. They were crafty and scheming, and difficult to kill.

He had pulled a fast one just now to quickly exterminate one of their number. As a result, they didn't wish to continue to fight. If they did, it would be difficult to continue killing them.

"So they don't want to keep fighting? Fine," thought Meng Hao. "The seed has been planted in their minds. If I ever face them again, it will be even easier to kill them!" He took a deep breath, confidence shining in his eyes. This was the first time that he alone had killed a Nascent Soul Cultivator. As of this moment, his feet were truly planted firmly in the Cultivation world.

Before acquiring the Metal-type totem, Meng Hao could have killed a single early Nascent Soul stage Cultivator. However, he would not have been able to do so very easily. With the addition of the Fire-type totem, he now had three totems. Even though he was still of the great circle of Core Formation, in terms of battle prowess, he had already bridged the gap between Core Formation and Nascent Soul, that supposedly uncrossable divide!

Meng Hao once again disappeared. When he reappeared, he was standing next to Zhao Chunmu. Zhao Chunmu screamed, and his pale face was filled with terror.

"Well, since I can't catch any of the big fish, then I guess there's no need for the bait anymore," said Meng Hao coolly. He slowly raised his right hand. Zhao Chunmu could do nothing to resist him as he tapped his forehead.

The slight tap turned into a roar as Zhao Chunmu's head exploded. His body fell to the ground, twitching.

Meanwhile, back on the battlefield, the fighting was growing more intense between the five Crow Divinity Tribes and the Scorpion Branch. After successfully killing a Nascent Soul Cultivator, none of the other Nascent Soul Elders were willing to get near him. Then, he slew the Scorpion Branch Holy Son. The Scorpion Branch's will to fight was now

completely shattered. As they slowly began to retreat, the five Crow Divinity Tribes began to gain the upper hand. The sound of slaughter rose up as they seemed to forget their exhaustion. As of this moment, there were less than a thousand of them left, but they continued to attack with wild abandon.

Meng Hao's neo-demon horde was a critical factor in the battle. Without his remaining seven thousand or so neo-demons, the five Crow Divinity Tribes would not be able to continue on with the fight.

Meng Hao stood on the battlefield, looking around until his gaze came to fall on Zhao Youlan. Instantly, her face paled. The two Nascent Soul Elders who stood next to her, as well as the High Priest, who had long since approached to protect her, started looking nervous.

Meng Hao's valiance had shaken them to the core.

Suddenly, thunder could be heard from up above. The sound of it was very unique; it almost seemed to be like the sound of countless people wailing. It was so shocking that it even caused the soul to begin to tremble.

After the thunder rumbled out, rain began to fall. The rain was violet in color, and this time it didn't fall in just scattered bits like before. This time the rain began to pour down heavily, splashing all over the ground.

The rain contained a cold, destructive will, as if it wished for all life to become extinct. The rainwater fell down and spread out on the ground, and suddenly, it turned into an omen.

Meng Hao suddenly felt a sense of crisis. He looked up at the falling violet rain, and frowned.

"This rain... there's something not right about it."

Almost at the same time that the rain began to fall, a blinding light appeared up in the sky not far away. Countless figures began to emerge at top speed. These people were none other than members of the Five Poisons Tribe.

Their appearance instantly caused the looks of despair on the faces of

the Scorpion Branch Cultivators to vanish.

Meng Hao's pupil's constricted, and he shot backward with the flick of a sleeve.

"Members of the five Crow Divinity Tribes, fall back to the area behind the shield!" His voice caught the attention of the all the five Crow Divinity Tribes on the battlefield. One by one, they silently looked up into the sky, and then began to retreat. Suddenly, a huge gap appeared on the battlefield between the two forces.

The twenty thousand Five Poisons Tribe Cultivators whistled through the air toward the battlefied, smiling coldly, eyes filled with the desire to kill. Their numbers seemed to blot out the sky.

The group included quite a few Dragoneers, each one of whom possessed thousands of neo-demons, and in the case of a few, even tens of thousands. The neo-demons flew behind the Cultivators like a gigantic sea.

Among the group were more than thirty Nascent Soul Cultivators, including six Priests. Even more impressive, one of their number was an old man in a white robe. His skin was dark brown, and his eyes shone with a threatening light. Shockingly, this man was of the late Nascent Soul stage!

This man was the leader of all the Priests in the Five Poisons Tribe. He was the High Priest of the entire Five Poisons Tribe, a position similar to Greatfather.

"Greetings, High Priest!"

"We offer you our respects, High Priest!"

It didn't matter if they were from the Spider Branch or the Scorpion Branch, all of the remaining Cultivators on the battlefield dropped to their knees and kowtowed to the old man.

So did Zhao Youlan.

The Crow Divinity Tribes were clearly not capable of fighting back

against someone so powerful. Furthermore, the source of their shield was already gone, and the shield itself was growing thin. From the look of it, it would only last another four hours.

Meng Hao stood there outside of the shield. Next to him were the remaining Nascent Soul Cultivators of the Five Tribes, including the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather. All of them had extremely unsightly faces.

Under Meng Hao's command, the remaining seven thousand or so neo-demons in his horde were positioned protectively around the shield. Everything was very quiet, making the battlefield seem almost like a graveyard. The violet rain began to fall even harder.

Amidst this deathly silence, the Five Poisons Tribe's High Priest, the brown-skinned old man, coolly said, "Leave none alive!"

All of the Five Poisons Tribe's twenty thousand Cultivators and their neo-demons roared. As they did, they surged forward like seawaters toward Meng Hao and the others.

As the enemy neared, Meng Hao took a deep breath, and his eyes filled with coldness. He did not summon the Agarwood. That was something he could only use to protect himself, and was not a tool for a battle like this.

From beginning to end, Meng Hao had been filled with confidence regarding this battle. That was because, the entire time, he had kept one card up his sleeve. One trump card, yet to be played.

Suddenly, Meng Hao's voice echoed out:

"Vines! Thorn Rampart!" As soon as the words filled the air, a howling noise could be heard coming from the body of the Wild Giant. There was a blood-colored vine wrapped around it that suddenly shot out. Instantly, thorns sprang out from its body as it burrowed into the ground.

The moment the vine burrowed into the ground, the earth in front of the attacking Five Poisons Tribe army exploded up as countless thorns exploded out. The shortest of the thorns were roughly twenty five meters long. The largest were over three hundred. They shot out in waves to protectively surround the Crow Divinity Tribes!

Even more bizarre, each of these thorns quickly began to bristle with even smaller thorns. Even as the Five Poisons Tribe charged, these vines formed a protective barrier, completely covering over the Crow Divinity Tribes!

These thorns were a sacred relic of the Frigid Snow Clan. Upon leaving Holy Snow City, the Patriarch of the Frigid Snow Clan granted them to Meng Hao as a reward. Later, Meng Hao fed them to his vine. After the passage of much time, the vines absorbed the thorns, and then mutated. 1

The appearance of the Thorn Rampart caused the face of the Five Poisons Tribe High Priest to fill with shock. “That’s the Annihilation Thorn Rampart of the Frigid Snow Clan! Supposedly, nothing under the Spirit Severing stage can break through it.... Well, let’s see if that legend is true or false!” With a cold snort, he waved his right hand. Immediately, the surrounding Cultivators and neo-demon hordes proceeded to attack the Thorn Rampart.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and then sat down cross-legged. He coagulated a drop of life blood which he then fused into the Thorn Rampart. Once his Spiritual Sense merged with it, he used this method to fight against the Five Poisons Tribe.

Roaring filled the air outside as the neo-demon horde slammed into the Thorn Rampart Shield. Rumbling rose up, along with the miserable cries of the neo-demons.

With the Thorn Rampart in place, nothing under the Spirit Severing stage could step even half a pace beyond it.

Outside, booms filled the air, along with the light of magical treasures and the glows of totems. Everything shook violently, and even the mountains seemed on the verge of collapse. The Thorn Rampart vibrated, and some cracks even appeared, but it did not fall!

At the same time, thorn shot out from the vines. In a relatively short period of time, a vast number of neo-demons had been killed. Of the twenty thousand Cultivators, more than three thousand had been stabbed through with thorns. They could only let out bloodcurdling shrieks as their

life force was sucked away and they were transformed into desiccated corpses.

It seemed the battle would not stop until one side had been exterminated. However, it was at this time that suddenly more thunder filled the sky. It sounded like countless people weeping. The violet rain grew even harder. A bit of the rain was absorbed into the earth, but most began to pool up on the ground. Now, puddles were forming in some of the lower areas.

This caught the attention of Meng Hao as well as Zhao Youlan. The Nascent Soul Cultivators of the Five Poisons Tribe also noticed, as did the High Priest. He stared in shock for a long moment at the rainwater, and then suddenly... his face fell!

Thoroughly and completely fell!

“This... this is....” The High Priest’s body began to tremble. Considering his intelligence and the level of his Cultivation base, even something that could lead to the destruction of his Tribe would not cause him to lose control of his facial expression in such a way. The only thing that could... would be something shocking that far exceeded the destruction of a Tribe!

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1. Meng Hao first used the Thorn Rampart in chapter 369. He was given the Thorn Rampart seed in chapter 382.

Chapter 451: Title at the end!

There was a legend in the great lands of the Western Desert, the source of which was impossible to determine. In any case, over the years, this legend came to exist in the minds of all Tribes in the Western Desert. It was even recorded in the ancient records of the Tribes and passed down from generation to generation.

But then, even more time passed. Eventually, people began to forget about the legend. It wasn't that there was no knowledge about it at all, just, most people didn't remember....

According to the legend, at a time many, many years in the past, the Western Desert was not a continent, but rather, a sea. The sea existed for thirty thousand years before vanishing to reveal the continent beneath. During that time, the Western Desert... was not called the Western Desert, but rather a different name. The Western Sea.

This sea was not the same color as the Milky Way Sea. Rather, it was violet, and its waters had the power to cause all life to become extinct. It even cut off spiritual energy, making the area a prohibited zone for living things.

There was an area of division between the Milky Way Sea and this Sea, as if they intentionally did not want to mix.

According to the legend, the Western Sea was not completely without any land mass. There was one area with land, a part that was connected to the Southern Domain. That was none other than... the Black Lands.

In terms of elevation, the Black Lands were relatively high. Such high elevation was something that Cultivators wouldn't pay too much attention to. However, the Black Lands were actually the highest place in the entire continent, including the Western Desert and the Southern Domain. It was so high that even after the Western Desert became a sea... it still existed.

The legend said that long before the Western Desert, and even before the Western Sea, the entire land was filled with abundant resources and dense spiritual energy. However, it eventually experienced a fall of violet

rain that lasted many years. The rainwater did not soak into the earth, but rather began to collect on its surface.

Gradually the waters turned into streams, which then formed lakes, and eventually turned into a sea.

The violet rain had the power to destroy the life force of any living thing it touched, and could even cut off spiritual energy. All spell formations ceased to function, and it became difficult for Cultivators to survive there. Everything was plunged into destruction.

Countless varieties of vegetation died, and an innumerable amount of animals became nothing more than skeletons. Multitudinous life forms... reached the end of their path. This was a catastrophe that affected the lives of all Tribes in the Western Desert, an Apocalypse of Heaven and Earth!

This was the legend that existed within each and every Tribe.

Right now, the body of the Five Poisons Tribe High Priest was trembling, and his face was pale. He slowly reached his hand out to catch some violet raindrops. He stared blankly; it felt as if this rain was causing his Cultivation base to slowly fade away.

He was now shaking, and his eyes filled with dread. He looked down as the rainwater collected on the ground, mixing together with the blood. There were some places in which cracks existed in the ground where the water drained into. However... most of the water appeared to be just floating there, mixing with the blood.

The High Priest's face was completely ashen, and he was panting.

"This is... this is impossible...." he murmured. There were some of the Five Poison Tribe's Nascent Soul Cultivators who also seemed to be reaching the same conclusion as the High Priest. Their faces began to flicker as they looked at the violet rain.

Zhao Youlan suddenly staggered backward a few steps, staring blankly at the rain. Clearly, she too had just come to a certain realization.

At the same time, inside the Thorn Rampart, the Crow Soldier Tribe

Greatfather was staring at the rain in stupefaction. His face completely fell as a despair filled him even that was even more terrible than that which could be caused by the destruction of his Tribe.

“Apocalypse....”

“The Western Desert Apocalypse....”

“According to the legends, an Apocalypse will come that will exterminate all life and change the Western Desert into the Western Sea!!”

The Five Poisons Tribe High Priest backed up a few steps. At that moment, the war, the spot in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, the spoils... none of them were important.

Without hesitation, he began to activate the teleportation spell again as a means to test whether or not the stories about the violet rain were true. Before, the teleportation spell had worked, but now... no matter what he tried, he couldn't get it to work. It was as if something were blocking its power, making it completely useless.

The sight of this turned into a roaring sound that filled the minds of the Five Poisons Tribe High Priest.

“Migrate. The Tribe must migrate!” he murmured to himself. “The Western Desert North is the lowest place in the whole Western Desert. This is the first place where the sea will rise up! The Tribe must migrate, migrate to south. We... must go to the Black Lands near the Southern Domain!!” The rain continued to grow heavier. Already, the Cultivators were beginning to sense that the spiritual energy of Heaven and Earth was become thinner. This immediately caused the faces of the Five Poisons Tribe members to fall.

“The Black Lands... the Black Lands!! Now I understand!” A tremor ran through the High Priest; his eyes went wide and filled with even more urgency. “It makes sense. All those years ago, the three great Tribes with Spirit Severing Patriarchs made an alliance and invaded the Black Lands. They even joined forces with some of the powers in the Black Lands.

“They were careful not to offend the Southern Domain in their war!

After the war, many of the other Tribes connected to them also migrated to the Black Lands!

“They knew! They carved out an area for themselves in the Black Lands, making it even easier to have dealings with the Southern Domain. Or, maybe they had some other purposes.

“In any case, it all makes sense now!”

The High Priest’s panting grew even more intense as he murmured to himself.

“Those three enormous great Tribes knew all along that the Apocalypse was coming. They occupied the Black Lands. Now, anyone who wants to go to the Black Lands will only be able to do so with their approval!!

“Without spilling a drop of blood, they wrested control over all the powers in the Western Desert! They will be able to control the fate of thousands of Tribes during the Apocalypse!”

The High Priest’s eyes filled with anxiety.

“The Black Lands is small. There’s no way it can hold all of the Tribes of the Western Desert. But any who don’t go there... will be exterminated without a doubt. The Five Poisons Tribe is in the north. So far away....”

He suddenly raised his voice loudly. “All Five Poisons Tribe members, hear my orders. We must leave this place immediately. Whatever the cost, employ the greatest speed possible to return to the Tribe!” This was a critical moment in which every bit of time was important. The war with the broken remnants of the Crow Divinity Tribes was now inconsequential. In fact, now he felt regret over having gone to war in the first place!

The members of the Five Poisons Tribe heard his words and gaped in astonishment. However, based on the ashen expressions of the various Elders, they had guessed that something was going on. Without hesitation, they followed orders and flew up into the air.

Soon, not a single member of the Five Poisons Tribe was fighting. Nearly twenty thousand Cultivators and tens of thousands of neo-demons all

roared through the air to disappear off in the distance. Zhao Youlan was amongst them. However, as she flew off, she looked back at the Crow Divinity Tribes and the protective Thorn Rampart, and her eyes filled with a sharp glow.

“You will pay tenfold for severing my arm!” she thought. Then she turned and followed the rest of the Five Poisons Tribe members off into the distance.

After the Five Poisons Tribe left, the Thorn Rampart slowly began to retract and disappear. Meng Hao rose up from his cross-legged position and looked off at the horizon. Behind him, the more than two thousand surviving Tribe members let out cries of relief at their sudden new lease on life.

However, their happiness could not dispel the shadow that lingered over Meng Hao’s heart. Next to him, the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather had a bitter look on his face.

“Is it true?” said Meng Hao slowly.

“For the Five Poisons Tribe to make such a hasty exit indicates that the legendary Apocalypse is mostly likely coming. Spell formations will become inoperable and the spiritual energy of Heaven and Earth will be extinguished. All life will be destroyed.... The only hope....

“The only hope is to migrate to the south,” said the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather, his voice low. “Head south and keep going all the way to the Black Lands.”

“The Black Lands....” Meng Hao’s body suddenly shook. Like the Five Poisons Tribe High Priest, Meng Hao also thought of the war that the Western Desert had participated in back in the Black Lands. He thought about the Western Desert Tribes he’d seen entering the Black Lands during his departure.

“So, this is the reason for all of it!” he thought. Finally, he understood something that for so long had been a point of confusion.

This was why war had broken out in the Black Lands. This was why the

Western Desert had participated with such gusto. And this was why the Southern Domain did nothing to stop it. They allowed the Western Desert to occupy the Black Lands. A great Apocalypse of Heaven and Earth was coming. If the Southern Domain attempted to obstruct the Western Desert, a full scale war would have broken out. That was something the Southern Domain wouldn't want.

Meng Hao looked up at the increasingly heavy rain. A gleam suddenly appeared in his eyes.

"The spiritual energy of Heaven and Earth is being extinguished. All living things will be destroyed. The continent will turn into a sea.... For me, it's not that bad. After the experience of using the East Pill Everburning Flame to form my Fire-type totem tattoo, I know... that all things in Heaven and Earth exist on the path of the five elements, and have the potential to give enlightenment.

"What better type of water could you use than a sea!? And what better sea could there be than one referred to as the Western Desert Apocalypse!?"

"As for the spiritual energy of Heaven and Earth being extinguished... with the exception of the ultra high-grade Spirit Stones, I've already gone for many years without absorbing it. That's why I've supported myself by consuming medicinal pills. Every time I attack, I must very carefully control the spiritual energy I use. Furthermore, I've constantly been improving my pill concocting skills.

"For the same reason, I was always inclined toward being a Dragoneer. Only Dragoneers can grow strong without wasting very much spiritual power!"

"The main thing I need to be careful of is that the rain can exterminate life force.... In any case, I am definitely the most suitable person to exist within the Western Desert Apocalypse!" Meng Hao's eyes glittered for a moment. However, he then looked at the rejoicing members of the Five Tribes. They didn't know about this Apocalypse. Seeing the happiness of the children caused him to think for a long moment.

“Golden Crow,” he said, closing his eyes. “I have accepted your legacy. Your Tribe calls me their Sacred Ancient, and I am connected to them through totems. Is this... is this the protection you wish me to give them...?”

As of this moment, all sky and land of the Western Desert North regions was filled with violet-colored rain. No sun could be seen in the sky, and everything was dark. This was a dusk that would last a very, very long time....

Down on the ground, the water slowly began to pool up. More and more puddles could be seen.

It wasn't just in the North region of the Western Desert. In the East, West and South, it was just the same. Violet rain began to fall, and as it did, more and more cries of alarm could be heard. Hearts shook.

The Western Desert Apocalypse was nigh!

Chapter 451: Western Desert Apocalypse!!

Chapter 452: Hope

Migration.

Throughout the lands of the Western Desert, it took only a short period of time for a multitude of Tribes to all reach the same bitter decision!

To make such a decision was easier said than done. However, as far as the Crow Divinity Tribes were concerned, migrating... was the same as death!

Throughout the Western Desert, teleportation spells rapidly ceased to function. This was especially true of the lowlying Western Desert North, where vast amounts of violet rainwater was collecting. One could easily imagine how the rain which fell in the West, South and East would flow down and accumulate within the North.

The Western Desert North was definitely the first place that the sea would begin to rise!

Had the five Crow Divinity Tribes not experienced the war with the Five Poisons Tribe, then they would surely have been powerful enough to migrate. Unfortunately... even including all the young children and elderly Tribe members, their total population was now around two thousand.

Considering that they used to have more than ten thousand Tribe members, their overall power had been critically reduced. As of this moment, they only counted as a small Tribe when compared to the rest of the Western Desert.

Furthermore... because teleportation portals were no longer functional, and more than half of the Tribe members were ordinary people with no Cultivation bases, there was no way for the Tribe to fly. They would be forced to travel on foot.

The Greatfather stood next to Meng Hao, his hair gray and his expression one of exhaustion. He smiled bitterly and said, "We can't travel on foot to the Black Lands.... We're simply too far away. Even a Nascent Soul Cultivator who flew continuously without sleep or rest would need at

least ten years to get there. If we went on foot... it would take more than a thousand. More than a thousand years to migrate. Would the Crow Divinity Tribes even still be around by that time?"

He looked even older than he had before. He turned his head back to look at the Tribe members behind him who were erecting wooden shelters, and continued, "The violet rain will continuously extinguish the spiritual energy. Eventually we would all become mortals. The will of extermination in the rain would corrode our bodies, weakening us to the point of death.

"That's not even to mention what the rain would do to the children and the other ordinary Tribe members. They... would be the first to die. After that... the deaths would only continue to increase. The entire Tribe would eventually be wiped out during the course of the migration.

"In addition, virtually all of the other Tribes in the Western Desert will be migrating at the same time. Because of food, resources and other reasons, the road will be filled with chaotic battles! Tribes will be constantly contending with each other in order to ensure their own existence. Right now, the Crow Divinity Tribes... simply could not survive such an ordeal.

"Also, even if we managed to travel for more than a thousand years, even if by some fluke we weren't swallowed up by some other Tribe, then... once we got to the Black Lands... what would qualify us to enter? There is limited space in there. How could we get in?

"How could we possibly distinguish ourselves... amongst so many great Tribes and mid-sized Tribes. With so many big shot Tribes controlling the Black Lands, how could we get them to accept us?"

Meng Hao stood there silently. He had already seen some of the children who were physically weak to begin with growing even weaker after being touched by the rainwater. This violet rain was going to exterminate everything.

"It is because of all of this, exalted Sacred Ancient, that I urge you... to leave!" The Greatfather's voice was so decisive that it could sever nails and

chop iron. "Leave this place and leave the Crow Divinity Tribes. Sacred Ancient, given your Cultivation base and your status as a Grand Dragoneer, any Tribe would be happy to accept you during this critical time and bring you with them to the Black Lands.

"Exalted Sacred Ancient, this is your only hope. As for us...." The Greatfather once again looked back at the Five Tribes members building huts to shelter themselves from the rainwater. Their eyes were filled with sorrow and grief.

"We will not leave our homeland. If we are doomed to be exterminated, then we will die together and be buried here with our forefathers and fellow Tribe members. At least this way, maybe some of those children will have a chance to grow up." The Greatfather looked even older now, as if his life force were slowly flowing away.

Meng Hao continued to stand there quietly, unsure of what to say. He looked over his shoulder at the silent Five Tribes members. Wu Chen was there, as was Wu Ling. There were sleeping children, who occasionally called out for their mothers. Tears were being shed. There were elderly ones longing for loved ones. As Meng Hao looked at them all, he realized that there were many, many familiar faces.

Right now, he had only two choices. Go... or stay!

If he did leave, then he was essentially the most likely person to be able to survive within the violet rain, considering all of his special abilities.

But if he stayed....

Meng Hao let out a soft sigh. He said nothing, but rather, turned and walked over to where the Tribe members were gathered. As he neared, they all looked toward him, eyes hot with zeal. With a slight smile, Meng Hao continued around to the back of the mountain, and his courtyard.

Here, the rain was falling heavily. He sat down beneath the eaves, surrounded by his neo-demon horde. Big Hairy lay on the ground next to him, letting out light yips. He was wounded, but not fatally.

Meng Hao now had only six thousand neo-demons left in his horde. All

were wounded, and were currently healing naturally.

Gu La braved the rainwater to bustle about, giving them food and treating some of their minor injuries. The sky above was dim, and the rain... only continued to fall harder and harder.

The vast sky and land gradually transformed into a depression that weighed down on the hearts of both Meng Hao and the Crow Divinity Tribe members.

“Perhaps I should wait for the parrot to return... and then leave. Leaving really is the best decision. However....” He lapsed into silence again. During his entire time in the Western Desert, he had lived amongst the five Crow Divinity Tribes. He had achieved his goals, and yet, the ones to pay the price had been them.

Objectively speaking, everything that was happening was not Meng Hao’s fault. However, when it came to his heart, Meng Hao found it hard shake off the deep emotions that he felt.

The Crow Soldier Greatfather’s words made sense. The five Crow Divinity Tribes had no ability to migrate, and even if they did... they would never be able to enter the Black Lands.

When he thought of the Black Lands, Meng Hao recalled the war he had seen there, and the Western Desert Cultivators who had fought in them.

“What an incredible plan,” Meng Hao thought, his eyes flashing. “Because of this Apocalypse, the eyes of the entire Western Desert will be focused on the Black Lands. It seems that the time will soon come for those great Tribes who control the Black Lands... to bare their fangs.”

Time passed by slowly. Two months were gone, and the violet rain never ceased to fall. It only grew harder. Meng Hao could no longer stay behind the mountain, because... it had already turned into a small stream as deep as one’s knees.

The five Crow Divinity Tribes had moved to the top of the mountain peak. There, they built huts to shelter themselves from the rain. More than two thousand people lived their lives silently inside these huts.

Already, there were Tribe members who were visibly weakening....

Meng Hao sat cross-legged on the mountain peak, looking at the mountains off in the distance. They had once been green and verdant, but now they were a deathly dark gray. All of the vegetation had withered up and died.

Every day, it was possible to see neo-demons running or flying away from within the deep mountains. It wasn't just Cultivators who were migrating during this Apocalypse, but neo-demons as well.

The land in many areas around had already turned violet. Streams flowed together to form rivers. It was easy to imagine how, after some bit of time passed, the rivers would merge together to form lakes. Eventually, the lakes would turn into... a sea.

"If I can't take you with me," said Meng Hao, "then I will stay with you here. We will await death together. I will not allow the violet rain to bury you. The tombstone of the five Crow Divinity Tribes should have all of your names carved on its surface." Meng Hao felt deeply melancholy, but he really could not think of any other options. The five Crow Divinity Tribes really had no hope to hold in front of them anymore.

The Black Lands might count as hope. However, it was an intangible hope, a stagnant hope. Besides, the path to the Black Lands would be rife with countless other Tribes all charging toward the same destination. The five Crow Divinity Tribes would have much difficulty fighting for a place amongst all those other Tribes.

"Maybe there is some other hope to be had!" murmured Meng Hao, lifting his head up to look at the violet rain.

More time passed. A month later, hope suddenly appeared one day.... It appeared, not just for Meng Hao, but for all the members of the five Crow Divinity Tribes.

That hope came in the form of a voice!

The voice echoed out throughout the entire Western Desert, from North to South, East to West. It was impossible to say if it was a magical

technique or divine ability, nor was it possible to determine the profundity of the speaker's Cultivation base. The voice was archaic and ancient as it echoed out.

“To all fellow countrymen in the Western Desert, greetings....

“We are the Heavenly Court Alliance of the Black Lands, formed by the great Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, great Wild Flame Tribe, and great Demon Butterfly Tribe. This is our first public announcement to all Cultivators in the Western Desert....”

Meng Hao looked up. The Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather suddenly opened his eyes from meditation. All of the Tribe members gazed out at the sky.

At this moment, all Tribes in the Western Desert stopped what they were doing. Some were like the great Scorching Ice Tribe, currently on the road in the midst of migration. Others were camped out, resting. Others, like the five Crow Divinity Tribes, had decided to return to the dust in their homeland. All Cultivators in the Western Desert began to tremble as they looked up to the sky.

Everyone, even the Five Poisons Tribe. Everywhere, West, East, North and South. All members of all Tribes... looked up.

“The violet rain has come, and the Western Sea Apocalypse is here. This violet rain will exterminate all life, and extinguish all spiritual energy. At the moment, roughly ninety percent of teleportation portals in the great lands of the Western Desert are not functional.

“There is only one hope for life amidst this great Apocalypse, and that is the Black Lands. Thankfully, many years ago, the Heavenly Court Alliance enacted plans to carve out a suitable place for Western Desert Tribes to survive within the Black Lands!

“Naturally, the space is limited, and not all Tribes will be permitted to enter. Furthermore, we do not have the right to decide who is most qualified to do so. Therefore... we will give all of you a chance... to find a Demon Spirit!

“According to information gleaned from the augury of the Heavenly Court Alliance, as well as details recorded in countless ancient records, we know that whenever the Western Desert turns into a sea, Heaven and Earth experience changes. Demon Spirits emerge in the great lands of the Western Desert, no more than ten of them.

“Any Tribe who appears outside of the Black Lands with a Demon Spirit, will be qualified to enter the Black Lands. We will only accept... Demon Spirits!”

The voice stopped speaking, but the sound of it continued to echo out throughout the Western Desert. The countless people who heard the voice all began to breathe heavily, and their eyes instantly grew bloodshot.

Meng Hao’s eyes began to shine brightly.

Chapter 453: Bridge of Immortality!

“Now that’s hope!” thought Meng Hao, his eyes glittering brightly. He didn’t care why this Heavenly Court Alliance in the Black Lands needed these so-called Demon Spirit. He only knew that they were required to enter the Black Lands!

Whoever could get one, would have a chance to live through this Apocalypse and evade destruction.

One could only imagine how short a period of time would pass before the Demon Spirit were surrounded, and great wars would engulf the Western Desert.

Meng Hao stood up, and then turned his head back to look at the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather. An unprecedented glow appeared in his eyes as he gazed at Meng Hao.

After they looked at each other for a moment, the Greatfather stood up and approached Meng Hao to stand at the mountain’s peak.

“I’m not sure where the Demon Spirits will appear in the great lands of the Western Desert,” said the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather, breathing heavily, “nor have I even heard the term ‘Demon Spirit’ before. However, I do know that if the words of this so-called Heavenly Court Alliance are true, then there is a place that is eighty percent or more likely to have them!

“The Realm of the Bridge Ruins!”

Meng Hao nodded, and his eyes glittered as he stood there thoughtfully for a moment.

“Except....” started the Greatfather, and then stopped. He could tell what Meng Hao was thinking. However, he knew that if he himself had reached this conclusion, then many of the other Tribes in the Western Desert would also be able to.

As such, this particular foray into the Realm of the Bridge Ruins would be fraught with even more danger than usual, danger not from that world

itself, but rather, the other Cultivators who entered it.

“I’ve made my mind up already,” said Meng Hao slowly, looking at the old man. “If I can’t acquire a Demon Spirit, then I will accompany you to the end of the road, and I will carve your names onto your tombstones.

“But, if I can get a Demon Spirit, then I, Meng Hao... will lead you in migration. Regardless if the migration is successful or not, I will not disappoint you by leaving you!”

The Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather listened. He looked quietly over at Meng Hao, his eyes shining with an indescribable brightness. Next, he flicked his sleeve and, disregarding his own mid Nascent Soul Cultivation base, and the difference in age between himself and Meng Hao, dropped to his knee, clasped hands and bowed deeply!

“For generation after generation to come, the five Crow Divinity Tribes will never forget your kindness, Sacred Ancient. For generation after generation to come, we will offer worship to your statue. If my words are not true, let the five Crow Divinity Tribes be destroyed by fire!”

There were two other Nascent Soul Cultivators in the Tribe, as well as two whose Cultivation bases had dropped to the great circle of Core Formation. They, too, heard the words spoken by the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather.

It wasn’t just them, but all of the Tribe members. They all were watching on, listening to the conversation between the two.

No one said a word. It was hard to say who did it first, but one by one, they all began to drop to their knees to kowtow. Soon, the entire Tribe was on their knees.

All the Cultivators of the Tribe, including the Core Formation and Nascent Soul Cultivators, had dropped to their knees in worship.

No one spoke a word, they simply kneeled to him. There were, in fact, no words that could express the appreciation that existed in their hearts. They could only use a kowtow, along with the glistening teardrops in their eyes, to show Meng Hao... how deeply thankful they were.

As Meng Hao looked out at them, thunder rumbled in the sky, and the violet rain continued to pitter platter down from up above.

“What Cultivators truly cultivate, is self-confidence, and even more importantly, self-awareness. I have to say that ... I, Meng Hao, do not dare to call myself a straightforward and upright person. Nor am I a gentleman, or a man of honor. But I always repay the kindnesses shown to me!” With that, Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed deeply to the members of the five Crow Divinity Tribes.

Time trickled by. Three months passed. The streams down below were already beginning to merge together to form rivers. Looking down at it all from the top of the mountain, there were already seven or eight such large rivers that could be seen.

The river water churned, lifeless. In some places a thick Death Qi rose up.

The spiritual energy in the area was already very scant. The will of extermination was even more obvious. The world was becoming desolate....

Three more months went by. Of the two thousand Tribe members, there were already a hundred who were gravely weakened, and could do nothing but lay there in bed. Even their power to simply breathe seemed on the verge of disappearing.

Because of their relationship with Meng Hao, Wu Chen and Wu Ling now had a distinguished position in the Tribe. They were the new blazing suns who presided over all matters relating to the Crow Scout Tribe. They were also taken in as disciples by the two other Nascent Soul Cultivators.

After Meng Hao asked the Crow Soldier Tribe about Wu Ling's necklace, he finally understood its origin. It did not come from the Crow Divinity Holy Land. Rather it was a treasure acquired thousands of years ago from the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, back when the Crow Divinity Tribe had been at the peak of its power.

Having learned this, the Realm of the Bridge Ruins became even more mysterious in Meng Hao's mind. Meng Hao also learned something very

strange from the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather. When people returned from the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, they could remember everything that happened inside. However, regarding what happened on the way there, and on the way back, no one ever remembered anything clearly. It was as if something interfered with, or even erased, those memories.

“A Resurrection Lily seed, so-called Demon Spirits, and even a legendary Bridge of Immortal Treading from ancient times.... The whole place is ruins. Regardless of what special functions might be contained within the stones that formed the Immortality Bridge, if they contain the Earth of the five elements, then I might have the fortune to obtain the Earth-type elements I need.” Meng Hao’s eyes shone brightly. His anticipation regarding Realm of the Bridge Ruins continued to grow even stronger.

The parrot finally returned during this time. However, it only took a few days before it went back out, full of enthusiasm. Meng Hao wasn’t sure how it was amusing itself, but the violet rain didn’t seem to stop it.

One afternoon, half a month later, a shocking rumbling sound filled the sky. Silver-colored lightning appeared up above, crackling with such intensity that it seemed it would rip the sky apart. All the Tribe members looked up with shock as the violet rain which had fallen for months on end... suddenly stopped!

When the rain stopped, everyone was filled with shock. Meng Hao’s eyes glittered as he looked up. What he saw caused his entire body to tremble, and he began to breathe heavily.

There in the sky was a bridge!

The bridge seemed to fill the entire sky, with neither the beginning nor the end visible. Inexhaustible light shone out from the bridge; it was this light that broke up the rain. On this day, no rain fell within the Western Desert.

If you looked closely at the booming lightning, you would be able to see that it existed only within the bridge. None of it was on the outside. In fact, the lightning actually seemed like countless cracks that existed on this enormous bridge.

“The Bridge of Immortal Treading!” thought Meng Hao as he looked up at the boundless structure. Although it was actually illusory, it seemed incredibly realistic.

Countless magical symbols glittered on the surface of the bridge. Each one seemed to contain rippling power capable of exterminating even a Nascent Soul Cultivator. An incredibly archaic Qi emanated out from the bridge, a Qi that contained the feeling of Time itself. This Qi was different from spiritual energy; it seemed more rich and full, as though even a tiny bit of it was the same as a large amount of the spiritual energy that existed in the outside world.

Meng Hao could tell that this Qi far outmatched the Qi of the spiritual energy of Heaven and Earth, and would shock any Cultivator who absorbed it. Even more shocking... he himself could absorb it as well!

This caused Meng Hao’s mind and heart to reel with incredible intensity. The shocking light cast by the bridge expanded out for tens of thousands of meters in all direction. It spread out over the entire sky, making it seem almost as if a curtain was opening up to reveal... a starry sky!

Meng Hao panted as he looked up at the stars. He was certain that this starry sky was the true world that existed outside of South Heaven.

It was at this moment that an indistinct figure suddenly appeared on top of the bridge. It was a woman wearing a long robe. Her features weren’t clearly distinguishable, and her body shone with a brilliant glow.

She looked down at the lands below her, then lifted up her slender hand. A strangely shaped stone appeared in her hand which seemed ordinary, lacking any special features. The woman tossed the stone out in front of her, where it floated in the air.

The Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather stood next to Meng Hao. “To step onto the bridge, seize the Immortality Bridgestone,” he said urgently. “Then, you may enter the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. To return, you must also use the same stone.”

As for how to enter and leave the bridge, Meng Hao had learned the details earlier from the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather. Meng Hao looked

up into the sky with glittering eyes. He waved his right hand, and suddenly the Thorn Rampart vine appeared. It circled around the Crow Divinity Tribes, piercing into the rocky mountainside. With it in place, the Crow Divinity Tribes would be protected in the days after Meng Hao left. No migrating Tribes would be able to raid or attack them.

Meng Hao was aware that ordinary Dragoneers were not able to enter the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. The reason for that was because neo-demons were incapable of existing there.

This point had only been revealed to him apologetically later on by the Crow Soldier Greatfather.

The instant that Meng Hao saw the Bridge of Immortal Treading, he could sense an aura that repelled neo-demons. It was as if the bridge was designed for the Immortal Ascension of Cultivators only, and not Celestial Demons. Although it had been destroyed, its primary laws still remained.

As such, Meng Hao left his neo-demon horde behind within the five Crow Divinity Tribes. He took a deep breath and then flew up into the sky. He transformed into a beam of light that shot up toward the Bridge of Immortal Treading. Below, the more than two thousand Tribe members watched him go.

Meanwhile, across the rest of the Western Desert, people flew up into the air from the other twenty or more Tribes qualified to enter the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. The representative from the Five Poisons Tribe was there too. It was none other than... Zhao Youlan.

Her right arm had been restored, and she wore a white robe. She looked incredibly beautiful as she flew up toward the Bridge of Immortal Treading.

Although it appeared as if there were only one bridge, in fact, identical bridges appeared above each and every qualified Tribe. None of the participants could see any of the others. The only thing they could see was the woman on top of the bridge, and the Immortality Bridgestone in front of her.

In different areas, different people all shot up into the sky. Meng Hao

suddenly appeared directly in front of the woman. He reached out and took hold of the Immortality Bridgestone.

The instant he did, a buzzing sound filled him. It felt as if something had grabbed his body, and he was suddenly shooting forward at incredibly high speed.

Chapter 454: Demoness Zhixiang

Meng Hao wasn't the only one experiencing such a thing. The exact same thing happened to everyone from all the other Tribes. The woman in front of them did not seem to be a Cultivator, but rather, something more like a puppet. As for the bridge, it had turned into something like a flying shuttle, carrying them off to some other location.

No life force whatsoever could be detected coming from the woman. In fact, if you observed how she moved, it seemed stiff. In Meng Hao's estimation, she must not be a real person, but a puppet, another mysterious aspect of the Bridge of Immortal Treading.

As he whistled through the air, Meng Hao saw twenty or more figures appearing around him.

These figures were the representatives from the other qualified Tribes. However, because of the incredible speed with which they were moving, their features could not be seen clearly.

The world flashed by as they shot through the air and clouds. The speed with which they moved was incredible. Soon, Meng Hao couldn't even breathe. His mind was spinning as he looked down at the lands beneath them. They rapidly shrank, until the Crow Divinity Tribes were only a small dot.

Soon, he could see about half of the entire Western Desert!

Such indescribable speed filled Meng Hao with a sense of grave danger. He had the feeling that if he wasn't able to keep a firm grip on the Immortality Bridgestone, his body would be crushed into smithereens.

Even as this thought entered his mind, he saw a nearby figure suddenly lose contact with the Immortality Bridgestone. Instantly, a fountain of blood appeared. There wasn't even time for a bloodcurdling scream. Death came in an instant.

This caused Meng Hao's mind to tremble. He kept a tight grip on his Immortality Bridgestone, his eyes glowing brightly.

The temperature was dropping rapidly. The coldness stabbed into his bones; were these people not Cultivators, they would barely even be able to move their bodies at this point.

By now, it wasn't just Meng Hao that was looking at the scene down below. Everyone was gazing at the lands beneath them. By now, Meng Hao could see all of the Western Desert, plus the Black Lands and even the Southern Domain. He was also able to see the Milky Way Sea!

There were a multitude of islands on the Milky Way Sea, but Meng Hao's gaze happened to come to rest on one particular island. By now, it was only a small dot, but Meng Hao was shocked to realize with a certainty that this island was none other than the very unreliable Patriarch Reliance!

His gaze flickered back to the Southern Domain, and the region of the Violet Fate Sect. Although he couldn't see the Violet Fate Sect clearly, his eyes were fixed on that particular area.

The Southern Domain continued to grow smaller and smaller. Meng Hao was now able to see that in addition to the Southern Domain and the Western Desert, there was another continent!

As soon as he laid eyes on it, his heart trembled. A host of indescribable thoughts filled his mind, to the point where he almost forgot to keep a firm grip on the Immortality Bridgestone. He could only stare blankly.

He was looking at... the Eastern Lands!

"So, at long last... I get to look at the Eastern Lands," he murmured inwardly. That had always been his dream as a child, and his dream when taking the imperial examinations. In fact, it was still his dream.

The Eastern Lands, the Great Tang!

He thought about his father and mother who had gone missing that day, and he thought about the violet wind. He also recalled the stories his mother had told him about the Eastern Lands, and the legends of the Great Tang.

"Dad, mom... is that where you are...?" He watched the Eastern Lands

grow smaller and smaller until the entire continent looked like a small arc-like shape. It was at this point that suddenly a booming sound filled his body, and he felt as if he had just slammed into an invisible wall. The intensity of the blow caused his mouth to fill with blood. Instead of coughing it out, however, he swallowed it back down.

His vision grew blurry as everything around him became unclear. It was impossible to even send out Spiritual Sense. Everything was violently suppressed. The only thing he could do was hold on tightly to the Immortality Bridgestone and not allow his grip to loosen in the slightest.

This process in which everything grew blurry lasted for an indeterminable period of time. Eventually, a roaring sound began to echo out, and Meng Hao coughed up some blood. Gradually, the blurriness faded away. When Meng Hao's vision returned to normal, all he could do was gape.

The blood he had just coughed up floating in front of him, and was speeding along with him.

Everything around him was black, blackness dotted with countless stars. The starlight was resplendent, shining out within the pitch black, allowing Meng Hao to see something far off in the distance.

He saw... a bridge!

A ruined bridge!

It was immeasurably large, and throbbed with an ancient will. It was as if it contained countless years of time. The bridge was made of stone, and spread out into vast depths of the blackness and the stars, making it impossible to see where it ended.

The bridge was not complete, but rather, had long since been reduced to countless chunks of rubble. The chunks of rubble had not been scattered about, though. Instead, they retained the original shape of the structure, making the bridge seem almost like a complete one if you looked at it from a distance.

The closer one came, however, the more easy it was to see the gaps

between the various chunks. The gaps looked small, but upon nearing, it became clear that they were actually incredibly wide.

Countless fragments of dust drifted about in the gaps between the various chunks. They glowed brightly, causing the entire bridge itself to also glow.

“The Bridge of Immortal Treading....” murmured Meng Hao inwardly. Even as he neared the bridge, something shocking suddenly neared his field of vision.

Eight dark, blurry figures suddenly appeared up ahead, surrounding the puppet-like woman. As soon as they did, their Cultivation bases began to emanate ripples. The ripples far exceeded anything that Meng Hao could ever have imagined, and gave him the same feeling he’d gotten from the Immortal who had fallen out of the Heavens that year.

These eight figures were Immortals!

As these eight Immortals appeared up ahead, surrounding the woman, they all began to attack. Everything around them trembled as a blinding light appeared, filled with an indescribable feeling of extermination.

Meng Hao had originally assumed that the stiff woman who did not seem to be a Cultivator wouldn’t even move. However, it was at this point that countless ripples suddenly emanated off of her body, spreading out to slam into the divine abilities of the other eight. As a booming sound echoed out, Meng Hao and all the other Cultivators who were holding stones in their hands, coughed up blood. Although they couldn’t see each other clearly, it was possible to sense the shock and injury being experienced by the others.

“She’s not a puppet?” thought Meng Hao, shock filling his heart. At the same time that the boom echoed out, something like a fierce gale swept across everything. Meng Hao’s body did not feel stable, almost as if he were not capable of holding onto the Immortality Bridgestone anymore. The glow in the area began to flicker, and darkened by about half.

“Dammit, dammit....” thought Meng Hao, his fury burning. This was all he could do, however; rage inwardly and hold on tightly to the Immortality

Bridgestone.

The booming caused the eight to be sent tumbling backward. In the blink of an eye, the woman proceeded forward with Meng Hao and the others, shooting off into the distance. However, it only took a moment for the eight to return. This time, their bodies were surrounded by bright glows. They looked like eight suns as they charged toward the woman.

The woman's expression suddenly flickered. Her body disappeared, then reappeared off in the distance, whereupon she transformed into a beam of prismatic light that shot off at high speed.

One of the eight suddenly spoke, his voice cold: "Demoness Zhixiang of the Celestial Demon Sect, you were able to con Young Master out of his precious treasure. We've been chasing you for a whole sixty year cycle, and it turns out you were hiding here, pretending to be a puppet of the Bridge of Immortal Treading. Your little ruse fooled us before, but let's see how exactly you plan to elude us this time!" 1

With that, the eight of them completely ignored Meng Hao and the others as they sped off in pursuit of the woman.

"She's a Cultivator who was masquerading as a puppet to avoid pursuit? Celestial Demon Sect? What Sect is that...?" Meng Hao watched them disappear off into the distance, his mind and heart reeling. The Immortality Bridgestone in his hand had not ceased moving. It continued to carry the group of Cultivators toward the Bridge of Immortal Treading. They flew closer and closer, at a speed that Meng Hao had a hard time wrapping his mind around.

It was at this moment that suddenly, a furious roar could be heard from off in the distance. Behind them, eight colorful beams of light could be seen racing toward them. Their speed was such that they would obviously be able to catch up in a short time.

Meng Hao looked back and his pupils constricted. "Just what divine ability is that? The speed they can achieve while flying amongst the stars is...." He watched as the eight figures would move an incredible distance seemingly in a single movement.

It was almost as if the space beneath their feet was being shrunken.

“Shrunken... shrunken....” murmured Meng Hao. He suddenly thought back to when he had left Planet South Heaven and how the land had seemed to shrink. Ignoring the true size of his body, it made it seem as if with a single step he could cross a huge divide.

Even as the eight people sped in pursuit, Meng Hao suddenly felt a tremor run through his body. Roaring sounds could be heard as some massive, invisible force seemed to emanate out from the Immortality Bridgestone in his hand and then suck Meng Hao inside.

The same thing happened to the others. All of the Western Desert Cultivators from Planet South Heaven suddenly vanished as they entered the true Bridge of Immortal Treading.

As for the eight Immortals, when they arrived, they found nothing but empty space. They looked around at the rubble, but dared not enter.

“So, she got away again. This Demoness’s craftiness knows no bounds. This time, however, she abandoned her physical body and paid a heavy price to fuse her soul into the body of one of those ants from South Heaven.”

“The Bridge of Immortal Treading was destroyed by Ancestor Ji long ago. However a mighty force protects it and reforms it every one thousand years. The starry sky cannot go against it and Ji Immortals cannot enter it. We cannot go in, but, she will be forced to come out eventually. When she does, we’ll be waiting for her!” The eight Immortals gave a final look at the Bridge of Immortal Treading before turning and disappearing.

*

1. In Chinese, Zhixiang is 芷香 zhǐ xiāng – Zhi is a type of plant root. Xiang means “fragrant” or “incense”. Madam Deathblade also humorously pointed out that in Chinese, her name is a homophone for “paper box.”

Chapter 455: Step on the Stone, Enter the Void

Meng Hao's vision blurred. As soon as everything became clear again, he sent out his Spiritual Sense as he looked around vigilantly.

"Is this the Realm of the Bridge Ruins?" He hesitated for a moment as he looked down at the Immortality Bridgestone he held in his hand. It was this object that had brought him to his current location.

He was surrounded by destruction. A variety of colors could be seen in the sky which was sometimes red and occasionally pitch black. Lightning danced about up above, leaving behind what seemed like cracks.

The land was in complete ruins. There were corpses lying about which had been there for who knew how many years. Vestiges of the passage of time could be seen everywhere. Where he stood now was apparently once a city.

Death Qi filled the air; this world seemed to be like a cage, a place where, if you got stuck too long, you would end up being entombed there just like the Death Qi.

Meng Hao frowned slightly as he put away the Immortality Bridgestone. He looked around as he carefully reviewed the events which led up to him arriving here. After a long moment, his eyes glittered as he recalled the scene outside when the eight Immortals left, only to suddenly return.

Muttering to himself for a moment, Meng Hao proceeded forward carefully. This place seemed to make his Spiritual Sense much weaker. It was difficult to see very far in any direction. In fact, his range now seemed to be limited to about fifteen hundred meters. Looking up at the lightning in the sky, Meng Hao dispelled any notions of flying up.

Time passed. Soon it was a month later. During that time, Meng Hao had been able to explore about half of the entire location. He encountered no other life forms, including any of the other Cultivators from the Western Desert.

This world was very small, and did not seem to have a regular shape. Its borders were formed by jagged edges, beyond which was nothingness. Meng Hao currently was standing on one such border.

In front of him was pitch blackness, gloomy and cold. It seemed capable of swallowing up anything and everything as it surrounded this region. Muttering, Meng Hao lifted up his hand and made a grasping motion. A nearby rock immediately flew up into the air and landed into his hand. He tossed it out toward the blackness. As soon as it touched the blackness, it bounced back to land in Meng Hao's hand. He looked down at the rock and noticed that the part that had touched the blackness looked as if it had been sliced with a knife. It was completely flat and smooth.

Meng Hao's frown deepened as he slowly backed up. This black void gave him a sense of incredible danger. He could only imagine what would happen to his body if he happened to run into the blackness.

"Something's not right. If this is the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, then why am I the only person here? Besides... this place seems too small. Furthermore, there is none of the Celestial Soil that the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather mentioned!

"Other than the ruins of that city, I haven't seen any of the remains of the Bridge of Immortal Treading!" Meng Hao turned to once again continue his careful explorations of this world.

By the time another half month went by, Meng Hao's face was grim. He stood in the very center of the world, looking at a stone stele.

The stele was cracked, but not broken apart. It was in relatively good condition, and on its surface could vaguely be made out some rather large characters.

"Harmony City...." said Meng Hao softly. A ponderous look appeared in his eyes. He suddenly thought back to the eight Immortals he had seen on his way here, as well as the woman, Demoness Zhixiang.

"Celestial Demon Sect. Masquerading as a puppet. Demoness Zhixiang, trying to evade a deadly chase...." Sinking into thought, Meng Hao sat down, crossing his legs.

“That Demoness Zhixiang comes from a Sect called the Celestial Demon Sect. She conned the Young Master of those eight Immortals out of his treasure. Then she turned herself into a puppet to evade their pursuit.

“After she fled, why would the eight of them pursue us again, looking flustered and exasperated...?” Suddenly, a look of concentration filled his eyes.

“Actually, she didn’t flee! She used some other method to trick her eight pursuers and lead them away. They quickly realized something fishy was going on and returned as quickly as they could. Although, if you look at it from that perspective... well, perhaps she did something completely different that I couldn’t possibly imagine. Or perhaps she came to the Realm of the Bridge Ruins on her own power, to explore it. The final possibility... is that she is actually among us Cultivators who came from the Western Desert!” Meng Hao sat there silent and unmoving. This Demoness was someone who was being chased by eight Immortals, and clearly had a sublime Cultivation base.

A person like this was someone that Meng Hao had no desire to provoke. There was little need for further analysis. Meng Hao determined he would need to be vigilant and on the lookout. Although the Western Desert Cultivators seemed to have been scattered, he had the feeling that his third guess was the most likely one to be true.

“Who is she hiding with....” thought Meng Hao. Suddenly, he looked up into the sky to see a dark figure approaching at high speed. This dark figure was not a Cultivator, but rather, an enormous rock!

The rock was no less than two thousand meters wide. It whistled down from up above, causing lightning to spring up wherever it passed, and shattered the air. It seemed as if some incredible crushing force were descending.

It moved with incredible speed as it bore down. A huge pressure formed, causing the land to shake. Meng Hao’s pupils constricted, and he was just about to retreat when he suddenly sensed that this two thousand meter wide rock was actually not going to strike into the world he was in.

Actually, it became an arc, changing directions and shooting off into another area of the sky.

Meng Hao stared in shock before taking a deep breath as he watched the enormous rock slam into the blackness that lay at the border of this world.

As it did, the void of the blackness seemed to shatter, and a huge gap became visible. The rock sailed through it and then disappeared.

All of this happened in the short amount of time it takes for an incense stick to burn. Meng Hao had little time to think about the matter. When the rock disappeared into the black void, his pupils constricted and his mind felt as if lightning were crashing around inside of it. He suddenly thought back to when he had been approaching the Bridge of Immortal Treading, and had seen the gaps between the various bridge stones, and the dust therein.

“That three thousand meter rock was one of the countless pieces of dust that I saw earlier. They are constantly flying about in the gaps between the stones which make up the Bridge of Immortal Treading!

“In that case, I am definitely on the Bridge of Immortal Treading. The year it collapsed, it broke apart into countless fragments. If I want to leave here, then the only way... will be with the aid of that dust!” His mind reeled as he came to this new understanding. He took a deep breath as he sat down cross-legged to wait quietly.

Time went by. According to Meng Hao’s understanding, time passed differently in this place than in the outside world. If months or years actually passed on the outside, that would be something that the Cultivators who entered this place could not hide. Furthermore, the Crow Soldier Greatfather wouldn’t have left that part out.

Three months passed, during which time, Meng Hao saw six huge rocks come and go. He did not act rashly, but rather, carefully observed what happened to the rocks after they slammed into the black void. Finally one day, a rock suddenly neared that was roughly two thousand meters wide.

When this particular rock appeared, Meng Hao took a deep breath. His body suddenly vanished. When it reappeared, he was in mid-air, stepping

down onto the rock that was shooting through the air.

The instant he set foot onto it, Meng Hao suddenly felt as if there were some terrifying force getting ready to pull his body apart. He rotated his Cultivation base and the glow of three totems emerged. In this manner, he was able to force himself into a state of stability. He immediately sat down cross-legged and stared out straight ahead.

The rock moved with incredible speed. In the blink of an eye, it passed over the land. In the space of about ten breaths, it reached the black void. Meng Hao's heart beat nervously. This endeavor was a gamble; however, having observed what happened with all the other rocks, he was confident.

In the blink of an eye, the rock was upon the black void. It slammed into it, causing a rip in the blackness, a gap which it then passed through. As it shot through, Meng Hao settled his Qi and concentrated. Sitting there cross-legged atop the rock seemed frightening, but was actually not dangerous. He was now out in the black void.

The moment he entered the void, Meng Hao suddenly felt coldness. The intensity of this coldness was such that it could freeze the soul. Meng Hao quickly rotated his Cultivation base to fight back against the cold.

His eyes were wide as he looked around. The blackness seemed endless. However, he was able to see beams of colorful light flying about here and there.

Each of these beams was an enormous rock!

"This method should work great. This Realm of the Bridge Ruins contains the remains of the Bridge of Immortal Treading. The people who come here move about between the remnants of the Bridge of Immortal Treading by means of these rocks!" His body began to quiver because of the cold. He rotated his Cultivation base, but that alone did not suffice. His body was starting to grow stiff. Eyes glittering, he circulated the power of his fire totem, forcing his body to not be stiff with cold. Despite this, a layer of frost appeared on his skin. It looked almost like he was turning into a statue of ice.

“With this method, I should be able to hold out for quite a bit longer. Thankfully I have the Everburning Flame. Otherwise, without preparing cold-repelling items ahead of time, it would be difficult to survive here.” The cold continued to grow more intense around him. Meng Hao sat there motionless, ensuring that none of the heat left his body, and his life force continued to remain.

Time passed by. Meng Hao wasn't sure how long the rock had carried him through this world of blackness. Suddenly, a rock nearly one thousand meters large appeared off in the distance. From the way it whistled toward him, it seemed it would brush past Meng Hao and his rock.

As the two rocks got closer and closer, a light “eee!?” noise suddenly could be heard.

“So I've run into someone who didn't come with a cold-repelling treasure! What luck! Hahaha!” This voice belonged to a man, and as the other rock neared, Meng Hao could sense that a middle-aged man sat cross-legged in meditation upon it.

His Cultivation base was at the early Nascent Soul stage, and his body glittered with totem tattoos. On his forehead was a golden totem tattoo that looked like a lion. He was surrounded by five white stones which emitted a shield, enveloping the man and fighting back against the cold.

As the man's words rang out, he licked his lips. His eyes filled with a sharp glow, and as his rock neared Meng Hao's, the man suddenly stood up. He vanished, and when he reappeared, he was standing on Meng Hao's rock. He lifted his hand, and a golden lion magically appeared. It roared as it pounced toward Meng Hao.

“I'll kill you to put you out of your misery, and then I, Xue, will have one less person to compete with, and a greater chance at success!”

Chapter 456: Changes of the Lotus!

The golden lion roared as it neared. Suddenly, Meng Hao's eyes snapped open. They had been closed the entire time in his efforts to not waste even a scrap of energy. It was in this manner that he could use the power of the Everburning Flame to fight back against the bitter coldness of the void, and prevent his life force from being exterminated. After all, he had not come prepared with any cold-resisting magical items.

When he saw the middle-aged man and felt his killing intent, Meng Hao had maintained his motionlessness.

He was waiting; waiting for the man to near him. That way, he could conserve the most amount of energy when killing him. The man wanted to rob Meng Hao of his life; how could Meng Hao not prepare to take the man's cold-resisting treasure after that?

Almost the same moment that Meng Hao opened his eyes, he sprang into motion. His body immediately disappeared, then reappeared next to the man. The man's face filled with surprise as he realized that his previous assessment of the situation was incorrect; Meng Hao's sudden movement proved this.

"His soul hasn't been frozen by the cold!" the man thought, his scalp growing numb. "The ice on his body wasn't fake. Neither is the cold emanating off of him; that's impossible to fake. In that case... he really doesn't have a cold-resisting magical item. But, without that, how could he possibly stay alive?!" The man instantly shot backward, trying to put some distance between himself and Meng Hao.

Meng Hao gave a cold snort. He suddenly shook his body, causing layer after layer of ice to crumble off of him. The Everburning Flame exploded with power, expelling massive amounts of coldness out of his body. It merged with the chunks of ice around him to transform into a frigid ice tempest that shot toward his opponent.

The man's face flickered as the tempest slammed into his golden lion. A boom could be heard, and blood began to ooze out of the corners of the

man's mouth. His face turned green as coldness entered his body.

He continued to fall back with urgency, using minor teleportation to return to his own rock. However, even as he reappeared, Meng Hao also popped into being on the same rock. He lifted his right hand, causing the Lotus Sword Formation to appear.

The power of Time rotated out explosively. As it neared the man, his face fell and he slapped his bag of holding. A black statue of a closed-eyed monkey appeared. It immediately began to emanate a black glow; at the same time, the man began to mutter an incantation. Suddenly, the statue opened its eyes to reveal a bloodthirsty gleam.

The man's expression became savage and he said, "Statue, kill this... huh?"

Suddenly, his expression changed and his body began to tremble. His hair immediately turned white, and his skin began to dry up and wither. It was as if countless years had passed by in an instant.

"This...." The man was panting as he once again retreated. Without hesitation, he spit out some heart blood and used its power to try to get out of range of the power of the Lotus Sword Formation. Unfortunately, he failed, and his body continued to wither. During this critical moment, his eyes filled with despair. He suddenly lifted his hand up and levelled a blow against his own head. A boom could be heard as his Nascent Soul suddenly emerged. It used a minor teleportation to attempt to get out of range of the Lotus Sword Formation.

"What magical item is this!?!?" he said, his voice shrill and filled with an unprecedented level of terror. His Nascent Soul began to shake violently; it wouldn't be able to survive very long in the bitter cold.

As for his physical body, it died in the blink of an eye, transformed into nothing more than ash, obliterated by Time itself.

All of this takes some time to describe, but actually happened faster than the spark flying off of a piece of flint. The power of the Lotus Sword Formation was vastly increased in this place. Not even Meng Hao had been aware that something like this would happen. He stared in shock.

It took him only a moment to come to his senses, though. With a cold snort, he moved forward and grabbed the man's bag of holding, including the monkey statue, which the man had only half activated. He also collected up the five small, white rocks. Then he flashed an incantation gesture with his left hand, causing the Lotus Sword Formation to return.

After that, his body flickered as he returned to his two thousand meter wide rock. He looked back at the middle-aged man's Nascent Soul, and the killing intent in his eyes faded.

"Fellow Daoist, save me..." he, his voice shrill with fear. "I'm from a sub-Tribe of the Western Desert's great Goldenroar Tribe. What happened just now was a misunderstanding, you...." The man's Nascent Soul trembled; cracking sounds could be heard as ice began to form on its surface.

The two rocks were only temporarily near each other. As of this moment, they were now moving apart, each one heading off in a different direction. Meng Hao realized that taking the time to kill the man completely would be a waste, and as such, had returned to his own large rock.

The man now only had his Nascent Soul left, and no cold-resisting treasure. He would die for certain.

Therefore, Meng Hao did nothing. He sat down cross-legged on his large rock. He then took out the five small rocks and studied them for a moment. He was about to erase the branding seal on them, when it suddenly began to fade away on its own. Meng Hao looked thoughtfully back toward the smaller rock which was disappearing into the void. The middle-aged man's Nascent Soul was now completely frozen solid.

"The cold in this void is shocking," thought Meng Hao, quickly branding the small stones to himself. Immediately, a glow appeared, surrounding Meng Hao and reducing the cold by more than half. Meng Hao let out a sigh of relief. Now, his confidence in being able to proceed through the void on this large rock was even greater.

Sitting there cross-legged, he produced the man's bag of holding, opened it, and glanced over the contents. There were quite a bit of Spirit Stones

and a random collection of odds and ends. There were quite a few magical items, but Meng Hao ignored them, searching instead for jade slips.

He found a total of eight. After glancing them over, he selected one, which he began to study closely. After a moment, he lifted his head up, and a bright glow appeared in his eyes.

“So, the great Tribes really are well-equipped to come to this place. They even have maps!” The jade slip he held in his hand contained a simple map. The map depicted four locations in which the fragments of the bridge formed large land masses. One of them was the place that Meng Hao had just come from.

“It seems this guy was heading toward Harmony City. However, I explored the place thoroughly and didn’t find anything unusual.” Meng Hao frowned. He continued to look through the bag of holding, eventually pulling out a jade box.

The box emitted a soft glow. Meng Hao didn’t open it immediately, but studied it closely to make sure there wasn’t anything dangerous about. Finally, he opened it, whereupon a dense Qi sprang out. The Qi seemed to contain a medicinal aura that seemed capable of moving his spirit. In addition, it gave him an indescribable feeling that was similar to ultra high-grade Spirit Stones, except, even stronger.

After taking only a single breath, Meng Hao’s spirit was shaken, and his skin went tight.

Inside of the box was a finger sized clump of black soil which was where the powerful Qi was emanating out from. After examining it closely, two characters sprang up in Meng Hao’s mind.

“Celestial soil!” His eyes glittered as he examined it. After doing so, he was now certain that this soil did contain the power of the five elements.

“Too bad there’s so little. If I had a lot more, I could use the same method I used with the Fire-type power to make my own Earth-type totem!” Meng Hao’s heart was beating as he closed the box and then put it away.

“If I want to get more Celestial Soil, it will require robbing others. Well... then rob I shall!” His eyes filled with determination. To Meng Hao, the matter of forming his Earth-type totem was just as important of a reason for coming to the Realm of the Bridge Ruins as was acquiring a Demon Spirit. He looked out into the void and began to recall the shocking power of the Lotus Formation earlier.

“The power just now far exceeded the ordinary power of Time. It was able to cause a Nascent Soul Cultivator to abandon his physical body in the blink of an eye. It made time pass so quickly that even minor teleportation wouldn’t work. The only way for him to get away was to cause his Nascent Soul to emerge. Just now, the Lotus Sword Formation emitted Time power equivalent to one thousand years!”

Meng Hao began to pant as he took out his Wooden Time Sword to look at.

No matter how he studied them, however, they appeared normal. Meng Hao couldn’t find any signs of change whatsoever.

“Could it have something to do with this void?” he thought. “Or is it because, as I speculated, time flows differently in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins than outside in the Western Desert?” After thinking about the matter for some time, Meng Hao couldn’t come up with any more clues. Nonetheless, his eyes flickered with a bright glow. If he could figure out the true reason for the increase in power, then maybe he would be able to cause the Lotus Time Formation to permanently increase its power.

“In any case, even if it only has this effect in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, it’s still an incredible advantage for me!”

Meng Hao put away the Wooden Time Swords and look out into the black void. Up ahead, a large land mass was approaching. The rock he was on was tiny when compared to this massive, unmoving mass.

“I’m here!” said Meng Hao, rising to his feet. The jade slip he had acquired from the man had a description of the location up ahead. Just like the place Meng Hao had come from, this was... one of the broken remnants of the Bridge of Immortal Treading.

Of course, the Bridge of Immortal Treading was incredibly massive, so each of the tens of thousands of fragments were so large they were like continents.

Meng Hao's two thousand meter wide rock shot rapidly through the void toward the giant land mass, emitting a piercing shriek. Meng Hao once again sat down. He collected the cold-resisting magical item, once again igniting the Everburning Flame to battle against the suppressive cold.

Closer.... Closer....

A massive boom could suddenly be heard. Meng Hao felt the rock shaking beneath him, a tremor which ran up into his own body. The rock shredded through the void; as it burst through, a bright light suddenly became visible.

Meng Hao instantly sent his Spiritual Sense out. Lightning filled the sky in this world, filling it with cracks. However, as he looked around calmly, he realized that this world seemed more stable than the one he had been in before.

Mountains rose and fell off into the distance. There were even lakes and rivers. The whole place was very large. From his vantage point up in mid-air, it seemed this land mass was probably about ten times bigger than the previous one.

As the rock whistled through the air, Meng Hao stood up and examined his surroundings. Suddenly, a look of concentration filled his eyes, and he frowned.

Off in the distance, he could see seven beams of light twisting through the air, locking in battle.

Of the seven people within the beams of light, the two highest Cultivation bases were the mid Nascent Soul stage. Those two were fighting back and forth, causing rumbling booms to fill the air. As for the other five, they were obviously allies of the two who were fighting.

The two mid Nascent Soul Stage Cultivators were both men. One wore a violet robe, the other a white one. Both were handsome, and had

extraordinary bearings. They continuously unleashed various divine abilities as they attempted to prevent the other from snatching... a white glow that floated in the air not too far away from them!

Within the glow, Meng Hao could see a finger-sized clump of Celestial soil.

Chapter 457: Yi Chenzi

At the same moment in which Meng Hao caught sight of this group of people, they also looked up into the sky at the two thousand meter rock whistling through the air. They saw Meng Hao standing there atop of the rock, his hair whipping about, his face expressionless.

His eyes shone with a bright light as he suddenly teleported from atop the rock to reappear about thirty meters away from the group.

Meng Hao made a slight noise of surprise. He had originally intended to teleport directly next to the clump of glowing Celestial Soil. His appearance in this location seemed to indicate that something had interfered with his minor teleportation.

Almost the same instant that Meng Hao reappeared, one of the seven, a ruddy-faced old man, gave a cold harrumph. He waved his right hand, causing a red sea to magically appear. It shot up into the air and then began to descend as a red rain which roared toward Meng Hao.

“Since I can’t teleport, well....” A bloody glow suddenly rose up around Meng Hao. It flickered, and then Meng Hao disappeared. Shockingly, when he reappeared, he was directly in front of the ruddy-faced old man. The speed with which he moved was astonishing, causing the old man’s pupils to constrict. He fell back, raising his right hand up to summon another red sea. It almost look like a sea of blood as it roiled around him.

A booming sound filled the air as Meng Hao shot forward. Eyeless Larva silk whizzed around him, emanating a silver glow. It sliced into the incoming red sea, blocking it completely.

The ruddy-faced old man’s face flickered and he continued to back up. Unfortunately, he was too slow. Meng Hao’s hand formed into a fist which slammed out into the air. The motion caused a violent windstorm to rise up and sweep out in all directions. Facing up against this attack, the old man’s hands flickered in an incantation, causing his totem tattoos to begin to glow as he attempted to defend himself.

The sound of an explosion ripped out, and blood sprayed from the

mouth of the old man. His expression was one of astonishment as he continued to retreat, obviously incapable of blocking Meng Hao.

Meng Hao ignored the man and instead headed back toward the group of people, obviously intent on taking the Celestial soil.

At the moment, none of these people were capable of ignoring Meng Hao. Everything that had happened just now had occurred with incredible speed. The fact that Meng Hao had just forced a Nascent Soul Cultivator to retreat left them filled with shock.

Even the two mid Nascent Soul stage Cultivators were frowning. Unfortunately, they were at a critical point in the battle. The clump of Celestial soil was right next to them, and neither was able to snatch it away.

“Kill that man!”

“Exterminate him!”

The men actually yelled out at exactly the same time, simultaneously unleashing divine abilities on each other. One of them summoned a violet crocodile. As for the other, a white crane materialized next to him. The two continued to fight.

As for the four others who were fighting around them, they didn't hesitate for a moment. They all suddenly changed directions and shot toward Meng Hao.

As the four neared, the Wood character on Meng Hao's forehead flickered. Suddenly, an enormous tree appeared around him, which in turn was covered with shapeless flames that shot up into the sky.

“Disseminate!” Meng Hao's hands flashed in an incantation, then jerked his arms out wide. A flame sea roared into being, with Meng Hao at its centre. It roiled out in all directions, setting everything aflame. Within the manifestations of Meng Hao's Wood-and Fire-type totems, golden droplets suddenly began visible. The flame sea continued to spread out, filled with the shocking power of Metal-, Wood-, and Fire-type totems.

His four opponents' faces flickered, and they used various methods in

response. Next to one, an enormous Xuanwu turtle appeared. Another waved his hand, causing a red gigantic centipede to roar into being next him.

As for the other two, each of them caused a howling Cyclops to magically appear to fight the flame sea.

The flame sea was like an enormous mouth, waiting to seep over the four and consume them, and the roaring it caused was shocking. It swept over the Xuanwu turtle, which let out a miserable shriek as its body was ripped into pieces. The Nascent Soul Cultivator controlling it tumbled backward, blood spraying from his mouth.

As for the gigantic centipede, it was actually fire-resistant. However, when the golden droplets hit it, it was transformed into a golden statue, which was then melted by the flames. The Cultivator controlling it was astonished to find that his entire arm had turned the color of gold. An immense pressure weighed down on him that seemed capable of turning his body to gold in an instant.

As for the two Cyclopes, their screams were the most wretched of all as their bodies were torn to shreds. The fragments were then transformed into gold, which then evaporated into the air.

This was the first time Meng Hao had truly unleashed the full power of this three great totems. As soon as the magic spread out, the four Nascent Soul cultivators were forced to retreat, coughing up blood the entire time.

Meng Hao's body turned into a long beam that whistled through the air amidst the flame sea. The fire stretched out behind him almost like a cloak. The golden droplets and the flaming tree seemed like decorations on the cloak.

If you could paint a picture of the scene, Meng Hao's imposing manner would be shocking to the extreme!

The scene shook the two mid Nascent Soul stage Cultivators. They glanced at each other, and simultaneously stopped fighting. Instead, they unleashed their divine abilities in the direction of Meng Hao.

These two mid Nascent Soul Stage Cultivators were beyond the compare of the early Nascent Stage Cultivators from moments ago. Both the fearsome totemic crocodile and the gigantic white crane instantly shot toward Meng Hao, emanating ferocious auras that mixed with the crushing weight of the mid Nascent Soul Stage to descended onto Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered. Moments ago, he had been watching these people fighting over the Celestial soil while he flew along on top of the two thousand meter large rock. During that time, he had already formulated a plan for how to achieve his objective, which was not to kill these people, but to snatch the Celestial soil!

Even as the two mid Nascent Soul stage Cultivators neared, Meng Hao waved his right hand, causing ripples to suddenly emanate out. They instantly turned black in color, and then solidified into the first streamer of the flag of three streamers. Ji Nineteen was temporarily unbound as the streamer shot out.

The flag of three streamers was the most powerful magical item that Meng Hao possessed. When it appeared, the sky grew dim. The violet-robed man's face fell, and he immediately retreated. Unfortunately, despite flashing incantations, employing various divine abilities and producing magical items, he was incapable of fighting back against the sweeping blackness which shot toward him.

A boom echoed out, and blood sprayed from the man's mouth. Killing intent, but also shock, filled his eyes as he was flung backward several hundred yards before finally being able to come to a stop.

At the same time, Meng Hao continued forward at top speed. Lifting his hand toward the white-robed Cultivator, he suddenly pointed out.

"Demon Sealing, Eighth Hex!"

As soon as the Demon Sealing Hex appeared, the white-robed man's expression flickered. Countless strands rose up that only Meng Hao could see. They immediately bound the man up, completely sealing him down.

Of course, the sealing would not last for very long, only the space of a

single breath. However... that was all the time Meng Hao needed.

As he shot forward toward the Celestial Soil, the surrounding seven Nascent Soul Cultivators all watched on, eyes filled with killing intent and even more so, anxiety.

However, it was at this exact moment that ripples suddenly appeared in the middle of the air not too far off. A figure appeared, a young man wearing a long black robe. His head was unusually small and completely out of proportion with the rest of his body. He looked someone like a rat; his expression was sombre, and his eyes glowed with bloodthirstiness. Laughing evilly, he shot forward with speed that exceeded Meng Hao's, heading directly toward the Celestial soil.

He had been using some special technique to remain hidden in the area, undetectable. He had originally planned to wait until the two fighting parties were at a deadlock, and then suddenly make a move and wipe them all out.

But then Meng Hao showed up. The way he swept the people aside was shocking, but also opened up a chance for this young man. Without hesitation, he made a decisive move.

"Many thanks, Fellow Daoist!" cried the small-headed Cultivator. "It would be impolite for Yi Chenzi to turn down a gift like this Celestial soil!" As he reached out to grab ahold of it, killing intent flickered in Meng Hao's eyes. The Eyeless Larva suddenly flew out. Its silk began to wrap around the clump of Celestial soil at the exact same time that the Cultivator Yi Chenzi grabbed onto it.

A bang could be heard as the finger-sized clump of Celestial soil suddenly split into two pieces. One was dragged back toward Meng Hao by the Eyeless Larva, the other was grabbed by Yi Chenzi, who immediately turned and shot off in the other direction.

When the seven other Nascent Soul Cultivators saw the small-headed Yi Chenzi, their expression immediately filled with shock.

"Yi Chenzi!" 1

“That’s Yi Chenzi, the guy who betrayed and the slaughtered the entire Gryphon Tribe!”

“Dammit! He’s evil to the core! I heard he made living sacrifices of his own Clan to further his cultivation!”

Meng Hao grabbed the Celestial soil and then slapped his bag of holding to produce the blood-colored mask. He immediately put it on, causing his Cultivation base to explode with power, and a Blood Qi to rise up. His aura spread out in all directions, causing the Cultivators to feel complete astonishment. The pupils of the two mid Nascent Soul stage Cultivators constricted. As of this moment, they had no desire whatsoever to participate in the conflict between Yi Chenzi and Meng Hao.

“Nobody owns the Celestial soil,” said Meng Hao, “so it belongs to whoever manages to snatch it! If you have the skill to escape with it, then it will belong to you!” With that, he shot forward with incredible speed. The distance between the two immediately lessened. Meng Hao waved his right hand, causing a blood-colored face to appear. Rumbling filled the air as it shot toward the fleeing Yi Chenzi, whose face immediately fell. He quickly performed an incantation with his left hand, causing a glistening fish scale to appear in his palm. He threw it out behind him, where it instantly began to expand until it was about ten meters tall.

A boom rattled out as the power of Meng Hao’s Blood Immortal face slammed into its blocking force. Yi Chenzi coughed up some blood, then suddenly vanished. When he reappeared, he was already three thousand meters away. He turned back, a sinister smile on his face.

“Draconic Vulture Transformation!” he cried. Immediately, the fish scale exploded out in size. Black Qi boiled up into the sky, transforming into an enormous vulture. The vulture’s eyes were bright red as it charged toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao’s face was completely expressionless as he said, “A single word.”

Instantly, the face once again appeared. Its lips began to move as amorphous ripples began to spread out. The seemingly horrifying vulture

suddenly began to tremble, then suddenly collapsed into pieces. Meng Hao, moving as fast as lightning, shot through the collapsing pieces of the vulture.

This caused Yi Chenzi's face to fall. He immediately spun around and once again began to flee.

“Dammit, how come that bastard has so many divine abilities. He has three totems, Metal, Fire and Wood. And what magical item was that mask just now?”

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he employed a minor teleportation as he shot in pursuit of Yi Chenzi.

*

1. Yi Chenzi's name in Chinese is 一尘子 yī chén zǐ. It's a really weird name. Yi means “one.” Chen means “dust.” Zi means “son” or “child”.

Chapter 458: A Faint Sound!

Two people, one chasing the other through the air at top speed.

Meng Hao wore the blood-colored mask, and his eyes glowed with coldness. Eyeless Larva silk circulated around his body, emitting a droning sound. Occasionally he would employ minor teleportation to get closer to Yi Chenzi.

As for Yi Chenzi, he shot forward with all the speed he could muster. His Cultivation base was at the mid Nascent Soul stage, and he possessed extraordinary divine abilities. He had a vicious personality, and was actually quite infamous throughout the Western Desert.

He was once a member of the Gryphon Tribe. Through a chance bit of luck, he had acquired an evil magic. In order to cultivate this evil magic, he had secretly begun to sacrifice members of his own Tribe to the totems on his body. The enticement of this secret technique was impossible to resist. When the matter was discovered, he confessed his guilt and managed to acquire the forgiveness of his fellow Tribe members. However, he then secretly used a ruthless method to kill the Greatfather of the Gryphon Tribe, who was none other than his own father!

After that, he cold-bloodedly slaughtered the rest of the Tribe. Regardless of young or old, they were all cut down and sacrificed to mutate his totems. It was in this fashion that he was able to acquire an early Nascent Soul stage Cultivation base.

When all of those things happened, a full sixty-year cycle previous, it had caused a huge sensation throughout the Western Desert. The Gryphon Tribe was a small Tribe, but such matters of Tribe betrayal were appalling to the extreme. Because of that, Yi Chenzi immediately became infamous throughout the Western Desert.

During the following sixty-year cycle, he appeared three more times in the Western Desert. Each time, he slaughtered a Tribe. The first two times had been small Tribes, but the third time was a mid-sized Tribe. It was that occasion which allowed him to step into the mid Nascent Soul stage.

After that, he disappeared without a trace.

As he shot through the air like lightning, Yi Chenzi thought to himself, “If I get enough Celestial soil, I can use it with my secret technique to stimulate the power of my totems. After that, I’ll need a hundred thousand blood sacrifices! That will give me the chance to enter the late Nascent Soul stage!” Each time Meng Hao used a minor teleportation, so did he.

As time progressed, he was able to maintain the distance between himself and Meng Hao, making it impossible for Meng Hao to catch up to him!

The giant face around Meng Hao suddenly expanded to an even larger size and then shot forward, radiating attack energy. Yi Chenzi’s face flickered, but he didn’t slow down in the least bit. Instead, he actually started to go faster.

“Dammit, how can this guy be so fast!?” he thought. Howling inwardly, Yi Chenzi continued to flee. It had been a long time since he had gone all out like this.

“Want to catch me? You’re still not qualified!” Yi Chenzi gave a cold harrumph and then employed the pride of his divine abilities to increase his speed once more.

At the same time, however, Meng Hao suddenly lifted his hand to employ the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex. The instant it appeared, Yi Chenzi suddenly stopped in mid-air. This sudden stop scared him out of his wits. Although he quickly recovered, by the time he did, the rippling power of Meng Hao’s Without a Face had arrived.

A boom filled the air as blood sprayed out from Yi Chenzi’s mouth. However, five fish scales suddenly appeared, which then exploded, giving him a burst of speed that allowed him to escape once more.

“Dammit, what divine ability was that?!?” thought Yi Chenzi, his face pale. Lowering his head in determination, he continued to move along at the fastest speed he could muster.

Time passed by, and soon it was a day later.

Meng Hao was frowning. He looked up ahead at Yi Chenzi, who moved with increasingly greater speed. The killing intent in Meng Hao's eyes grew even stronger. This Yi Chenzi was one of the fastest Cultivators that he had ever encountered. He also seemed to excel in one particular escape art which allowed him to merge into the air. When coupled with minor teleportation, its power was even further increased.

Seeing the distance between them once again grow greater, Meng Hao caused a bloody glow to surround him. A Bloodburst Flash caused his speed to increase dramatically. His body blurred until it looked like a ghost, and then he used a minor teleportation to close the distance again.

Unfortunately, as soon as he neared the man, Yi Chenzi would once again disappear, transforming into a green smoke that moved a hundred times faster than before.

In the midst of this incredible increase in speed, he used teleportation, causing the effect to be even greater.

"That art again!" thought Meng Hao. Now the distance between them was once again increased. Meng Hao was shocked, and his killing intent grew even greater. He continued to alternate between Bloodburst Flash and minor teleportation. He was now around three thousand meters away from Yi Chenzi, who was just about to use his escape art.

Meng Hao slapped his bag of holding to produce a series of magical items. Many of these he had acquired after coming to the Western Desert. Some were from the Five Poison Tribe's war of invasion, and quite a few were from the Goldenroar Tribe Cultivator.

He waved his arm, causing the items to turn into beams of light that shot forward.

"Boom!" growled Meng Hao, his eyes flickering coldly. Instantly, the dozens of magical items began to tremble and then explode. Meng Hao hated to lose such valuable items. However, now was not the time to sit around thinking about such things. As the magical items exploded, a roaring sound rose up and intense ripples spread out in all directions.

As the power of the explosion spread out, Meng Hao caused the Lotus

Sword Formation to appear. Spinning Wooden Time Swords transformed into a beam of light that shot forward.

Meng Hao could have borrowed the momentum of the exploding magical items to increase his speed. If he did, he would instantly have been propelled hundreds of meters closer to Yi Chenzi.

However, even using that method, he would not have been able to catch up. Therefore, Meng Hao did not use the blast to increase his own speed, but rather... the speed of the Lotus Sword Formation.

The Wooden Time Swords within the formation were already fast. However, with the additional momentum from the explosive attack, the three thousand meter distance was closed in the blink of an eye. Even as Yi Chenzi was utilizing his escape art, the sword formation appeared behind him, rotating out with the explosive power of Time.

The power of Time caused ripples to spread out in the air. Then Meng Hao frowned. Yi Chenzi's escape art was truly bizarre; even the power of the Time Sword Formation could do nothing from preventing Yi Chenzi from turning into a green stream of smoke that began to shoot off into the distance. That was when the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex suddenly activated.

In the sudden pause it caused, a miserable shriek could be heard. However, the green smoke continued off into the distance nonetheless, whereupon it transformed back into Yi Chenzi.

As soon as he appeared, he coughed up a huge mouthful of blood. His face was ashen, and his hair had suddenly turned white. His body was clearly older, and shock covered his face. He trembled violently, his eyes filled with dread.

"That bizarre divine ability again!" he said, his scalp going numb. "And... another magical item!!" He had just suffered a loss of three hundred years to his longevity. This fact left him completely terrified, scared out of his mind. He coughed up another mouthful of blood and then surged again in retreat.

"Dammit, dammit! This is only half a piece of Celestial soil. Is it worth

it? Well, is it?!?!” Yi Chenzi ground his teeth as he whistled through the air.

Meng Hao’s eyes were cold and hard as he frowned.

“The power of the Lotus Sword Formation is indeed much greater here than in the outside world, but not as much as it is in the void. It’s about seventy percent weaker.

“Could it be that the Time power in the sword formation will only reach the terrifying amount of one thousand years when it’s out in the void?” Meng Hao was lost in thought as he once again continued in pursuit of Yi Chenzi.

Time passed; another day went by.

“How come it’s not here yet,” thought Yi Chenzi. “According to my calculations, it should be right here, right now!” Yi Chenzi looked haggard. That was especially so considering that Meng Hao was continuously consuming medicinal pills. Yi Chenzi had an mixed feeling; however, when he stole something, he would die before giving it back. That was his rule. Gritting his teeth at Meng Hao’s continuous pursuit, he once again used his escape art.

It was at this moment that off in the distant sky, a beam of light appeared. This shooting beam of light was no Cultivator, but rather, a one thousand meter wide rock. This rock was moving at high speed along its orbit. From the look of it, it was near the edge of this particular land mass.

“It’s here!” thought Yi Chenzi, his eyes filling with delight. Even as Meng Hao frowned, Yi Chenzi suddenly leaped up into the air. Meng Hao watched as he performed an incantation gesture, preparing to employ who knew what magical technique. Suddenly, the flying rock off in the distance changed direction and shot toward him.

“So, he can control the rocks in this place!” thought Meng Hao, his pupils constricting. Seeing Yi Chenzi heading toward the rock, Meng Hao’s eyes suddenly filled with a bright glow. At this critical moment, it was without hesitation that he pointed out with his finger and, just as Yi Chenzi was about to land on the rock, employed the Eighth Demon

Sealing Hex.

It happened just as Yi Chenzi was about to transform into green smoke. Yi Chenzi had long since guessed that his opponent would most likely use this bizarre divine ability. Therefore, he transformed into the green smoke and then reappeared on the surface of the rock.

“Hope to see you again someday, Fellow Daoist!” he cried, laughing uproariously. However, it was at this moment that his expression suddenly filled with shock as he noticed that the rock beneath his feet... had suddenly stopped moving.

Meng Hao’s Eighth Hex had not been aimed at Yi Chenzi at all, but rather, the enormous rock.

The moment the rock stopped moving, Eyeless Larva silk suddenly began to spin, binding up the rock. A moment later, the rock recovered its momentum and shot forward. As it did, it pulled Meng Hao in tow.

Being pulled at the same speed as the rock, Meng Hao instantly landed on its surface. He lifted up his right hand and punched out with an explosive fist. Yi Chenzi’s face flickered and he clenched his jaw as he prepared to fight back.

A boom filled the air. Yi Chenzi was sent tumbling off of the rock, blood spraying from his mouth. The Eyeless Larva silk loosened, and Meng Hao teleported off of the rock. When he reappeared, he was directly next to Yi Chenzi. His right hand snaked out to exterminate the man.

However, it was at this moment that the entire sky suddenly turned gray, and a gray mist rolled out to cover the land. Everything became a sea of gray.

At the same time, Meng Hao was astonished to discover that his entire body... was completely incapable of moving. Yi Chenzi was in exactly the same situation.

It was as if everything in the entire world had suddenly been rendered motionless.

At the same time, a crowd of figures could be seen moving through the

mist. They had blank looks on their faces, and they carried chunks of Immortality Bridgestones on their shoulders as they trudged through the mist.

Faint, odd voices could suddenly be heard echoing throughout the world. “When will the Bridge of Immortality reappear like new...? Sir, on what day will we again lay eyes on you...?”

Chapter 459: Title at the end!

All of these figures were somewhat blurry, nor did they seem to have Cultivation bases. There were old people and young people, men and women. All of them seemed frustrated as they hauled along the chunks of Immortality Bridgestones. They trudged through the mist like specters.

As Meng Hao watched the spectacle, a sense of intense danger rose up within him. It made him feel as if he had encountered a dangerous predator. He had the feeling that if these bizarre figures ran into him, he would be dead for sure!

“What are they...?” he thought as he looked at the ghostly figures. There were more than a hundred of them walking through the mists. As they neared and then passed Meng Hao, he felt an intense coldness, similar to what he had felt out in the void.

Next, Meng Hao saw one of the strange figures within the group pass through the giant rock that was floating there in mid-air. When it came out the other side, it was carrying an illusory rock on its shoulders that was completely identical to the gigantic rock.

It was as if it were carrying the soul of that rock as it made its way off into the distance.

Although the one thousand meter wide Immortality Bridgestone still hung there in the air, Meng Hao could sense that it was somehow dead, as if it had lost its power to travel through the void.

As the figures moved off into the distance, their voices continued to echo out.

“When will the Bridge of Immortality reappear like new...? Sir, on what day will we again lay eyes on you...?”

The voices gradually faded away. The churning mist suddenly transformed into storm winds. The storm caused the gray cracks in the sky to begin to spin together, sucking in Yi Chenzi, Meng Hao and even the one thousand meter Immortality Bridgestone.

In fact, many of the ruins and objects within the area were also swept up into the tempest.

There was no resisting it; everything was sucked up. Then, the storm suddenly collapsed, sending everything inside shooting out in all directions.

Meng Hao got the same sensation he had all those years ago when he had been swept up by the wings of the roc. Wind tore at his body, threatening to rip it to pieces as the storm sent him shooting off into the distance.

Were he an ordinary Core Formation Cultivator, he would have been killed beyond the shadow of a doubt. However, Meng Hao had three totems of the five elements, which pushed him across the gap that existed between Core Formation and Nascent Soul. He gritted his teeth and rotated his Cultivation base to dispel the effects of the wild wind.

After about two hours passed, Meng Hao was able to suppress the force of the wind. He performed a minor teleportation to escape from within its devastating power.

When he finally removed himself from the region affected by the wind, blood sprayed from his mouth and his face turned ashen. He had teleported into a mountain range, where he quickly excavated an Immortal's Cave and sat down cross-legged to meditate.

A few days later, the wind gradually died down. Meng Hao left the Immortal's Cave and flew up into the air. He floated there, looking at the chaotic scene left behind by the wind. The wind had swept across the entire land, causing even many mountaintops to crumble.

"Just what exactly are those specters...?" Meng Hao frowned. He had a strange feeling about this mysterious Realm of the Bridge Ruins.

He could find no traces of Yi Chenzi. Considering the level of the man's Cultivation base, he was likely capable of escaping from the wild wind. Furthermore, since he was so fearful of Meng Hao, it was highly likely that he had left this land mass as quickly as possible.

Muttering to himself, Meng Hao looked off into the distance. He was suddenly shocked to find that not too far off, a glowing mass could be seen. Within the glow were some granules of dirt. It was Celestial soil!

His body flickered as he shot toward it. He quickly collected it up, his heart beating wildly. Next, he sent Spiritual Sense out in all directions. Shockingly, he found three more locations in which Celestial soil was floating in mid-air.

Although they were only granules, they were still Celestial soil nonetheless.

“Now I get it,” he thought. “That wind kicked up the Celestial soil that was concealed in the area.... In that case, there must be quite a bit of Celestial soil in the air right now!” His eyes gleamed with joy. Without hesitation he teleported away. It didn’t take long for him to collect the three pieces of Celestial soil, after which he shot off into the distance.

After some time, Meng Hao began to breathe heavily. It had only taken a short while for him to collect together enough Celestial soil to form a clump the size of a fist.

During this time, he saw other Cultivators who were also madly rushing around looking for Celestial soil kicked up by the wind. Some of them were even fighting, although it was never more than a blow or two. After all, time was better spent searching than fighting.

“Celestial soil is critical to forming my Earth-type totem!” thought Meng Hao, his eyes bloodshot as he snatched up every bit of Celestial soil that he could find. If anyone tried to compete with him, he would attack explosively without hesitation.

Two hours later.

Meng Hao’s fist descended onto a Cultivator of the early Nascent Soul stage, sending him flying backward. Meng Hao grabbed the Celestial soil in front of him and then proceeded on his way.

The Nascent Soul Cultivator looked at Meng Hao as he left, and his eyes filled with fear. The blow just now had rattled his Nascent Soul and filled

him with shock.

“Who is that...?”

Six hours later.

Three figures were locked in combat in mid-air. Meng Hao was one of them. He flashed an incantation gesture with both hands, causing a flame sea to roar up. It shot out in all directions, forcing his two opponents to fall back. Meng Hao flicked his sleeve, collecting up the Celestial soil and then shooting off into the distance.

The other two Cultivators gritted their teeth. Their hearts were filled with dread, and they didn't dare to take up chase. The only thing they could do was stamp their feet and then head off in another direction to search for Celestial soil.

Time went by. A day later, Meng Hao's eyes were completely bloodshot. He had snatched enough Celestial soil to form a clump the size of a baby's head. All of it was in his bag of holding. He continued to fly through the air, searching for more. However, it had been almost four hours since he had seen any at all. It seemed all of it had been collected.

“Others collected it up? No problem!” he thought, killing intent filling his eyes. In the Cultivation world, the law of the jungle prevails. Robbing Cultivation resources was common, and something that Meng Hao had long since gotten used to. His eyes shining with killing intent, he shot off to search for other Cultivators.

A day later, the sound of explosions filled the air. An enormous face could be seen collapsing in mid-air. As it did, a middle-aged Cultivator coughed up blood, his face pale and his eyes filled with astonishment. Without hesitation, he pulled a handful of Celestial soil out of his bag of holding and threw it out in front of him, then turned heel and fled.

Meng Hao emerged from roiling mists to snatch it up. Without a moment's pause, he sped off in another direction to search for more Cultivators.

Two days later, a ruddy-faced old man, flanked by two Nascent Soul

Cultivators, savagely slaughtered another Cultivator to snatch up his Celestial soil. The moment they joyfully collected up his bag of holding, a red mist suddenly appeared off in the distance. From within the mist, an enormous face suddenly appeared.

As soon as the ruddy-faced old man saw the face, his heart and mind filled with a roaring sound, and his scalp went numb. He recognized this face. It had appeared days before when he was involved in the 7-person battle, and then met that fearsome Cultivator who had nearly crushed them all.

The two Nascent Soul Cultivators next to the ruddy-faced old man saw the roiling mist. Voices hoarse, they exclaimed, "It's Eccentric Bloodface!"

Their faces immediately fell, and they turned around to flee.

During recent days, the name 'Eccentric Bloodface' had been spread about quite a bit. According to the rumors, he was a fearsome Cultivator who wore a blood-colored mask. His Cultivation base was astonishing, and he robbed people of their Celestial soil. Victims of his robbery were numerous, making it so that few people were willing to stay in this region.

Any who did were extremely vigilant. As soon as they saw the blood-colored mask, they would flee.

The three men from just now immediately began to flee in three different directions. Booming sounds filled the air, and two of the men coughed up blood. Without hesitation, they retrieved the Celestial soil from their bags of holding and threw it out. They knew what Eccentric Bloodface wanted: Celestial soil! If you gave it up to him, he wouldn't kill you. However, if you fought back, then your death was assured.

"Dammit.... If I had known this would happen I would have left with what I acquired earlier. Damn you, Eccentric Bloodface!" The two fleeing Cultivators were panting, and had hearts filled with frustration. However, there was nothing they could do about the situation except consider leaving this area.

A few days later, there were no Cultivators left in the area, only Meng Hao. He had robbed the majority of the Cultivators, and now had a clump

of Celestial soil the size of a human head, as well as a fearsome reputation.

After attempting to gain enlightenment regarding the soil, Meng Hao realized that he still had not collected enough!

Unfortunately, all the other Cultivators had fled, and further searching turned up nothing. It was at this point that a three hundred meter wide rock came whistling toward him. He immediately teleported onto the rock and sat down cross-legged to meditate. The rock shot out into the void as it proceeded on toward the next land mass.

Meng Hao didn't know that the fleeing Cultivators had taken the name 'Eccentric Bloodface' with them and spread it to other regions. It was only a matter of time before almost all of the Western Desert Cultivators heard about him.

As the rock shot through the void, everything turned black. Meng Hao sat there cross-legged, his eyes glittering.

"I ran into a lot of people, but I didn't see that Demoness Zhixiang with any of them.... Although, I didn't see Zhao Youlan either. I wonder where she is." Lost in thought, Meng Hao pulled out the jade slip map and looked it over to confirm his destination. He was currently heading toward the largest of the Immortality Bridgestones in the whole area.

"The Realm of the Bridge Ruins is huge. Every Immortality Bridgestone is a whole world, and there are probably tens of thousands of such worlds. However, the Western Desert Cultivators are only able to explore a few dozen of them."

A few days later, the void was growing even colder. Even with his cold-repelling treasure, Meng Hao was forced to continuously ignite his Everburning Flame to stay conscious. As he looked out into the blackness of the void, his eyes suddenly went wide.

Off in the blackness, he saw a man moving through the void. He wore a long azure robe, and had a sword strapped to his back. He held a flagon of alcohol in one hand as he strolled directly through the void. He took occasional sips of alcohol, his expression morose and filled with

melancholy.

The coldness of the void seemed to be reduced to nothing more than a crisp breeze around him. It blew his hair, and did nothing to cause his stride to falter. He was simply walking along as if everything were normal. The void around him seemed to ripple and distort, and the coldness didn't seem willing to near him, but rather, avoided him of its own volition.

Meng Hao's mind was reeling, and his expression was one of astonishment.

He looked at the man, and the man looked back.

Chapter 459: Eccentric Bloodface

Chapter 460: Azure-robed Han Shan!

The instant their gazes met, Meng Hao suddenly couldn't see the azure-robed man anymore. When he reappeared, he was standing next to Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's scalp went numb; it was impossible to see the level of the man's Cultivation base. Trying to do so gave Meng Hao the same feeling you might get when looking into a deep ocean.

He immediately stood up and bowed deeply toward the azure-robed man. "Meng Hao of the junior generation greets senior."

The man looked over at Meng Hao, then sat down off to the side. He took a sip of alcohol, and, his face as disconsolate as ever, said, "Are you on your way to Sealbreaking Continent?"

"Sealbreaking Continent?" replied Meng Hao, a blank expression on his face. He thought back to the jade slip map, and the description of the place he was headed to. Finally, he nodded.

"So, we happen to be heading in the same direction," said the man with a slight nod. After that he said nothing more. Leaning up against a protruding rock, he drank and looked off into the blackness of the void.

Meng Hao looked at the man hesitantly for a moment, then made his way some distance off and sat down cross-legged. Unfortunately, he couldn't slip into a meditative trance. All he could do was sit there as time passed.

One day, two days, three days.... In the blink of an eye half a month had passed.

During that time, the azure-robed man continued to recline there, drinking. It seemed the alcohol in his flagon was endless. He drank and drank, looking out into the blackness, his expression morose. His bleakness continued to grow more and more apparent.

The stubble of a beard could be seen on his face; it seemed as if it had been a very long time since he was inclined to clean up. His robes were

wrinkled, and although the man should have cut a sorry figure in his state of disarray, his aura was filled with an indescribable charm. As such, he seemed... lonely, but not a mess.

The alcohol flagon he held in hand was crafted from wood, and the woodgrain was even visible on its surface. It was impossible to determine how much he drank during the half month.

He did not speak, nor did Meng Hao. It seemed that this azure-robed man really was just heading in the same direction and didn't feel like walking. Therefore, he had decided to share the rock with Meng Hao.

They maintained their mutual silence for another month as they proceeded onward.

Meng Hao was finally able to slip into meditation. However, he left a sliver of will on the outside. He knew that doing so was essentially pointless, but he was used to the practice and it wasn't something he would stop doing.

One day as the three hundred meter wide rock flew forward, the previously listless and melancholy azure-robed man suddenly sat up and looked off into the distance.

The movement immediately caused Meng Hao to open his eyes. He looked out into the blackness, but saw nothing. The azure-robed man, however, seemed very intent, as if he was completely focused on looking off into the distance.

Meng Hao was puzzled, but didn't show it, and instead continued to look out into the void. Time passed, three days in which the azure-robed man and Meng Hao both looked out into the blackness.

It was on that third day that the world of blackness around them suddenly turned gray. At the same time, the three hundred meter wide rock they were on suddenly stopped moving. Meng Hao's mind trembled as a thick mist began to spread out in all directions. Soon, everything was like a sea of mist.

Meng Hao's scalp prickled as he realized that he couldn't move a

muscle. How could he not understand what was happening? Off in the mists, a group of figures could be seen, shouldering rocks as they marched forward.

They looked frustrated, confused as they approached. Soft voices could be heard echoing out in the mists.

“When will the Bridge of Immortality reappear like new...? Sir, on what day will we again lay eyes on you...?”

Surrounded by the echoing sound, the figures floated through the mist. Men and women, elderly and young, all looked confused. As they neared Meng Hao, he felt a coldness that seemed capable of freezing the soul.

Meng Hao gradually grew colder, until it seemed as if his very life force were about to be extinguished. It was at this point that Meng Hao noticed that this group of people was not the same group that he had encountered on the last land mass, when he was chasing Yi Chenzi.

Next to him, the azure-robed man continued to sit there, occasionally sipping alcohol. As he looked at the group of people, the melancholy in his eyes grew deeper, and the corners of his mouth twisted with bitterness.

He examined them closely, as if he were looking for something. He examined each figure closely, and when he reached the last one, his loneliness seemed to grow deeper. He frowned and took another drink.

The figures moved toward the rock Meng Hao was on, and as they grew close, they suddenly stopped. The blankness and confusion in their faces suddenly turned into viciousness. They looked over at the rock, and the azure-robed man.

The man looked back at them, and then waved his hand. As he did, the figures continued to float on by. They moved off into the distance, their confusion once again restored. Faint voices were again heard.

“When will the Bridge of Immortality reappear like new...? Sir, on what day will we again lay eyes on you...?”

The sound faded off into the distance, and the grayness in the void disappeared. There was no tempest like before. The silence was restored.

As everything returned to normal, the three hundred meter wide rock that Meng Hao was on once again began to move forward at top speed.

Meng Hao's body trembled as he recovered. His heart shook because of this second encounter with these bizarre figures. Without thinking about it, he turned to the azure-robed man and asked, "What are they...?"

After asking the question, Meng Hao realized that, considering the man's Cultivation base, and the days of silence, it was likely that he might not get an answer to the question.

"Bridge Slaves," said the azure-robed man, his voice soft.

"After the Bridge of Immortal Treading was destroyed by Ancestor Ji, the surviving will of the bridge settled in this spot. People who coveted eternity and sought to extend their lives found their wills dissolved, and they became Bridge Slaves.

"They achieved the eternal life they sought, but the price... was that they became slaves of the bridge. Day and night, throughout their eternal lives, they slave away to rebuild the Bridge of Immortal Treading, which of course, can never be rebuilt."

Hearing this explanation caused Meng Hao's mind to spin. He turned to look in the direction the figures had departed in, but all he could see was blackness, as if an enormous screen of darkness were covering over everything.

The man began to mutter bitterly, "This entire world represents only... it represents...." He held the alcohol flagon in front of him, gripping it tightly.

Time passed. Meng Hao asked no further questions, nor did the man say anything further. He reclined there in his silence, staring off into the void, disconsolately drinking his alcohol.

Meng Hao sat there thoughtfully. The term Bridge Slave certainly seemed appropriate. They acquired eternity, but the price they paid was a great one. When he thought of this, it caused Meng Hao to recall the Bridge Slaves' faint voices.

Two more months passed. Up ahead in the void appeared an enormous rock. This was another Immortality Bridgestone, its vastness virtually indescribable. It appeared to be about ten times larger than the land mass he had just come from.

An incredible pressure radiated out from it, enveloping everything in the area as it floated there in the void. Its edges were irregularly shaped, causing Meng Hao to think of the image of the enormous, broken bridge he had seen stretching boundlessly out in the starry sky.

It was at this moment that the azure-robed man suddenly stood up.

“Would you like a drink?” he asked, turning his head to look at Meng Hao. His eyes were clear and filled with a profundity like that of the stars in the sky. This was the second time the man had taken the initiative to speak. The first time was when he had arrived. Considering this was the second time, Meng Hao understood... that he was about to leave.

Meng Hao stood up, clasped hands and bowed deeply. He looked at the azure-robed man, his eyes glittering. After a moment's hesitation, he nodded.

The man smiled, then waved his hand, causing the alcohol flagon to fly over to Meng Hao. Meng Hao grabbed it and, without hesitation, drank a mouthful.

As the alcohol flowed down his throat, a burning sensation exploded out. It felt like fire, and caused Meng Hao's Cultivation base to rotate wildly.

“A bit greedy, aren't we, boy? Well, it doesn't matter. I'll just consider it to be traveling expenses.” The man pointed a finger at Meng Hao, causing his body to tremble. The mouthful of alcohol inside of him instantly formed into something similar to his Gold Core. Strands of Alcohol Qi began to emanate out from it, fusing it with his Perfect Gold Core. He did not experience any growth in Cultivation base, however, he could tell that something inside of him was now different.

“The Alcohol Core within you will enable you to twice wield my Dancing Sword Qi. It can slay anything under the Immortal stage.”

With that, the flagon flew back into the man's hand. He turned and stepped off of the three hundred meter wide rock, walking toward the enormous land mass formed by the Immortality Bridgestone.

As he stepped into the void, he sighed and said, "You ask when will you lay eyes upon me again...? I've searched for you for three thousand years...."

The voice echoed out with unspeakable melancholy and an indescribable loneliness.

Meng Hao's mind reeled. All of a sudden, he could sense a sword skill within his mind. It was branded onto him in the form of a magical symbol. He didn't understand it, but he could tell that he could rotate his Cultivation base to unleash the Alcohol Qi within his Gold Core. He could do this twice to cause the brand to explode out.

As the man headed off into the distance, Meng Hao suddenly cried out: "Senior, may I respectfully ask your name?!"

"Han Shan." 1

His voice echoed out, filled with pensiveness. The man sighed and then disappeared into the void. Meng Hao stood there, bowing deeply in his direction.

After a long time passed, Meng Hao straightened back up. The three hundred meter wide rock he was on slammed through the barrier to enter the enormous land mass formed by the Immortality Bridgestone. There in front of Meng Hao was an enormous world.

*

1. Han Shan's name in Chinese is 韩山 hán shān – Han is a surname. Shan means "mountain".

Chapter 461: Encountering Zhao Youlan Again!

Of all the worlds formed by Immortality Bridgestones in this area, this was the largest one listed on Meng Hao's jade slip map. Meng Hao stood on his three hundred meter wide rock and glanced around the area.

The sky above seemed extremely stable; there were only a few cracks visible. Mountain ranges rose and fell, and ancient ruins could be seen all over.

As the rock shot through the air, Meng Hao looked down at the ground. Suddenly, his gaze flickered as he noticed that the mountains down below did not seem to have been formed naturally. They were connected together in what appeared to be a pattern.

This wasn't the first time Meng Hao had noticed something like this. The previous worlds he had explored also contained similar sights. However, those worlds had been far too small, so the phenomenon was much less obvious.

This world, however, was much larger. As he continued to look down at the mountains from up in mid-air, the more he got the feeling there was something very strange about them.

"They look like magical symbols." That was what made the most sense. He thought back to when he had first come to the Realm of the Bridge Ruins and seen the countless rocks which formed the shape of an archaic bridge that stretched through the stars. He had also seen magical symbols at that time.

Obviously, the mountains that made up this mountain range were nothing other than magical symbols. Because of the vast size of this world, Meng Hao was able to see them clearly.

"The Bridge of Immortal Treading was covered with magical symbols, each of which was most likely a Celestial talisman." Within Meng Hao's body, the Qi of Immortal Shows the Way rotated, and he rapidly blinked

his left eye several times as he employed the Celestial Vision technique imparted to him by the parrot. 1

As soon as he employed the technique, his body trembled. Using his left eye to look down at the land below, what he saw was not a collection of mountains, but rather multiple black dragons, lifting their heads up to the sky to roar.

Many of the dragons were broken, but some were mostly intact. Their roaring was shocking to the extreme.

Meng Hao's entire body trembled, and he began to pant. He felt as if an invisible mountain were crushing down onto his body. Suddenly, the Celestial Vision technique was ended.

However, just before it did, Meng Hao managed to catch a glimpse of something off in the distance that was obviously not a black dragon, but shockingly, a black-colored butterfly. The butterfly was indistinct and invisible to any onlooker. Every time it flapped its wings, nearby black dragons would be sucked toward it and be consumed.

Inside the body of the black butterfly was a large area that was made up of... Celestial soil!

As the image disappeared, beads of sweat broke out on Meng Hao's forehead. He had never imagined that using the Celestial Vision technique would allow him to see such a shocking scene.

As his vision returned to normal, he looked around the land to find that it was just the same as before. The mountains were mountains, and not roaring black dragons. The area off in the distance where he had seen the black butterfly consisted of nothing more than ordinary mountains.

The only unusual thing about that particular area was that it was a point of convergence for several mountain ranges.

"Bridge Slaves, black dragons, butterflies.... this Realm of the Bridge Ruins is so full of mysteries." Meng Hao stood thoughtfully atop the large rock as it whistled through the air. As it began to veer off in a different direction, he looked back toward the area where he'd seen the butterfly.

“What I saw just now was most likely Celestial soil. I couldn’t possibly be mistaken about that.... If I could get a chunk of Celestial soil that big, then I maybe I can form my Earth-type totem!” The area he had seen with the Celestial Vision left his heart shaken and excited.

“Rewards come only when you take risks. If you want to rise above others, you have to pay the price!” His eyes filling with determination, he transformed into a prismatic beam that shot off at top speed toward the area where he had seen the butterfly.

According to Meng Hao’s analysis, of the more than twenty people who had come to this place from the Western Desert, it was unlikely someone else had Immortal Shows the Way and a Celestial Vision technique. Therefore, it was most likely that he was the only one able to see the butterfly.

As such, the chances were relatively small that he would have to fight over the Celestial soil.

Since that was the case, Meng Hao would of course not be willing to give up this opportunity. Without the slightest hesitation, he continued on forward. Time passed by, and soon seven days had passed.

During that time, Meng Hao never stopped moving. On two occasions, he employed the Celestial Vision technique to once again observe the black butterfly consuming the black dragons. He could sense the boundlessness of the butterfly’s aura. It was on the eighth day that he finally arrived.

It was a place where ten different mountain ranges all converged together. There in the middle was an enormous basin, which was filled with roiling white mist. It prevented Spiritual Sense from extending out very far, and seemed to be imbued with a spirit that could conquer mountains and rivers.

Meng Hao flew around it once, and then began to frown. He observed the flowing mist with flickering eyes. Finally, he produced a flying sword which he flung out, causing it to whistle through the air toward the mist.

The instant it entered the mist, Meng Hao sat cross-legged on the border

of the basin. He closed his eyes and sent out a fine thread of Spiritual Sense to connect to the flying sword as it shot down through the mist.

The mist was dense, and the flying sword continued on through it for the time it takes an incense stick to burn. Finally, it emerged into the basin below. Meng Hao could see a dazzling glow. Stretched out below him was a shocking scene; buildings constructed entirely of Celestial soil. Suddenly a figure loomed up within his Spiritual Sense. A booming sound could be heard as the flying sword exploded. A force of extermination then began to shoot back through the Spiritual Sense toward Meng Hao.

His face flickered, but he was prepared. Almost the same instant in which the flying sword was destroyed, he severed his connection, preventing the exterminating force from reaching him.

Having cut off the Spiritual Sense himself, Meng Hao's face went pale.

"Buildings constructed completely from Celestial soil.... Just what place is this exactly!?" Meng Hao was breathing heavily, and his eyes glittered. Although he had only been able to glimpse the area beyond the mist for a brief moment, it was enough to completely shock Meng Hao.

"After the Bridge of Immortal Treading was destroyed, it transformed into the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. After all these years, who knows how many times Western Desert Cultivators have come here....

"I can't believe that after all these years, no one found this place. And yet, here it is. For there to be much Celestial soil shows how dangerous this place must be! Anyone who tried to enter in the past must have died!"

When Meng Hao's train of thought reached this point, his heart suddenly quivered. He waved his hand, and he suddenly vanished.

Not very long after he vanished, a beam of light appeared off in the distance. It was a woman wearing a long black garment. Her features were beautiful and her skin was like jade. It was none other than... Zhao Youlan!

She made her way along with caution. After arriving in this place, she did the same thing Meng Hao had done; she flew around in a circle, then

found a place to sit near the edge. She was just about to employ a technique to scout out the mist when suddenly her phoenix-like eyes flickered. She waved a beautiful hand, causing a white spider to shoot out in a beam of whiteness and head toward the mist.

Just when it seemed on the verge of running into the mist, it suddenly jerked into a different direction and shot... directly toward the spot where Meng Hao had vanished from.

“Don’t dare to show your face?” she said coldly. “Get out here!” The white beam of light shot toward the seeming emptiness. Just as it was about to reach it, ripples appeared, from within which stretched out a finger.

The finger tapped onto the beam of whiteness, and a miserable shriek could be heard. The light faded away. Meng Hao emerged, his eyes filled with hard coldness.

“It’s you!” said Zhao Youlan; her pupils constricted and her eyes filling with cold killing intent. Her arm had long since been restored, but her expression still radiated stabbing hatred.

Meng Hao’s eyes narrowed. For Zhao Youlan to show up here caused many questions to fill his mind. The fact that she was being so cautious indicated that she knew about the bizarreness of this location.

Even more importantly, when he’d met her before, her Cultivation base had been merely at the great circle of Core Formation. Now, however... it was in the mid Nascent Soul stage. From the ripples of her Cultivation base, he could tell that she was at the peak of that stage, on the verge of stepping into the late Nascent Soul stage.

In less than a year of time, she had experienced incredible progress. Meng Hao was well aware that such a feat was something rarely seen in the world!

“Well, that leaves only one possibility,” thought Meng Hao, his eyes flickering.

As for Zhao Youlan, killing intent flickered within her eyes. She actually

admired Meng Hao, but that only served to fuel her desire to kill. The instant she saw him, she leaped up into the air. A three hundred meter wide white glow surrounded her, and an enormous white spider magically appeared. She immediately shot toward Meng Hao.

Obviously, the influence of the sealing of the Spider Branch's totemic Sacred Ancient was now gone.

As Zhao Youlan shot toward him, Meng Hao donned the blood-colored mask. An enormous face appeared, sending out ripples in all directions.

A roaring sound filled the air, but then Meng Hao vanished. When he reappeared, he was directly next to Zhao Youlan. His fist descended, but even as it did, Zhao Youlan grew blurry and disappeared. She reappeared behind him, and raised her hand. Her thumb and forefinger were touching, and the other three fingers were raised. Killing intent radiated out from her eyes as she tapped down toward Meng Hao's back.

He gave a cold snort. Looking down, his body flickered as blood colored ripples spread out in all directions beneath him. A bloody glow rose up into the sky as five figures became visible, none other than Meng Hao's Blood Clones.

Rumbling sounds filled the air, and Zhao Youlan's face flickered. She once again disappeared.

The two of them teleported back and forth in mid-air as they fought. Booming sounds echoed out in all directions as a dance of divine abilities played out.

Moments later, Zhao Youlan disappeared in the midst of an explosion to reappear three hundred meters away. She lifted her delicate hand, on which could be seen, shockingly, a drop of blood.

She tossed out the blood drop, and a sound like the shrill cry of a bird filled the air. The blood drop expanded, transforming into a red phoenix. It spread its wings, and flames leaped up everywhere. Surrounded by fire, the phoenix let out a powerful cry and then shot toward Meng Hao.

As it passed through the air, an astonishing, scorching heat roiled out in

all directions. Meng Hao's face was grim as he fell back. Eyeless Larva thread spun around him even as the Flame Phoenix engulfed him.

As soon as the flames engulfed him, killing intent appeared in his eyes. His cold voice echoed out in all directions.

“Fire? I have that too!”

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1. He got the Celestial Vision technique in chapter 318.

Chapter 462: Demoness Zhixiang!

As soon as the words left Meng Hao's mouth, the Flame Phoenix enveloped him. Suddenly, his Fire-type totem tattoo caused shocking flames to erupt off of Meng Hao.

Using fire to defeat fire!

The fire exploded out, instantly encircling the Flame Phoenix. Meng Hao stood there in the midst of the sea of flames, looking like some sort of devilish divinity. He waved his hand, causing the enormous image of a tree to magically appear around him. It melded into the flame sea, causing the intensity of the flames to increase rapidly. Meng Hao flicked his sleeve, sending the flames shooting toward Zhao Youlan.

It moved with incredible speed, and in the blink of an eye, was closing in on Zhao Youlan. Her delicate brow furrowed, and she waved her hand to cause a small white shield to appear.

The shield immediately began to expand, spreading out in an instant to completely cover her. The flame sea slammed into it, but was completely blocked.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered coldly. With a cold harrumph, he caused his Metal-type totem to appear, melding it into the flame sea. Golden droplets appeared which shot toward Zhao Youlan. She once again used the white shield to defend herself. However, the golden droplets began to spread out and merge with each other outside of the white shield.

In the blink of an eye, while the white shield expanded out to completely cover her body, she was, in turn, completely surrounded by the golden droplets, which formed something like a sphere. All of this happened before Zhao Youlan could do anything.

"You...." she said, her face flickering.

Moving at incredible speed, Meng Hao shot out from within the sea of flames, appearing directly beneath the white sphere. He lifted his hand up, causing the golden sphere to begin to vibrate. He roared as he used all the

strength he could muster to heave the golden sphere in the direction of the mist.

“Since you like to hide in the protection of that shield, well, I’ll add another layer of protection for you!” he said as the golden sphere whistled throughout the air toward the mist, with Zhao Youlan inside.

All of this takes quite a bit of time to describe, but actually happened in an instant. In the battle between the two, neither had been able to acquire the upper hand. However, Meng Hao’s quick thinking prevailed; as soon as the golden sphere touched the mist, the mist began to churn violently. Suddenly, a sharp cry could be heard coming from inside the golden sphere.

The sound of it was shocking, causing much of the mist to roil away. In fact, now the buildings down below were somewhat visible.

Cracks spread out over the surface of the golden sphere, and within the space of a single breath, it shattered. The sound of the cry entered Meng Hao’s ears and caused his mind to tremble. It was like a sharp blade was stabbing into his brain, causing blood to seep out of his eyes, nose and mouth. His mind became a blank.

It only lasted a moment before fading away. As soon as the sound was gone, Meng Hao’s body returned to normal. Zhao Youlan emanated fierce killing intent as she appeared in front of him. Her delicate hand rose up and pushed down onto the Eyeless Larva silk which was surrounding him.

A bang sounded out and Meng Hao tumbled backward, blood spraying from his mouth. Before he could fall backward very far, Zhao Youlan teleported toward him. A white glow rose up from her hand as she pointed her finger out. For some reason, the Eyeless Larva suddenly stopped moving momentarily.

As the finger attack descended on Meng Hao, a bloody hole appeared on Meng Hao’s chest, and strands of black Qi began to spread out through his flesh.

Meng Hao’s mind was spinning. He was sure that her finger hadn’t actually touched him. However, it had injured him, and in a bizarre way at

that. The black threads burrowed into his flesh, rapidly sucking away at his life force.

Meng Hao's face fell. From the time he had left the Southern Domain, be it during his time in the Black Lands or in the Western Desert, he had never been injured like this. Blood sprayed from his mouth as the Eyeless Larva rapidly continued to spin silk. Were it not for the Eyeless Larva, Meng Hao would surely be dead by this point.

Even still, her divine ability just now was something he couldn't fight back against. He needed a buffer, time with which to retrieve a magical item from within his bag of holding, or perhaps perform an incantation.

However, time was not something that Zhao Youlan would give him. Blood sprayed from Meng Hao's mouth as she continued to press closer to him, once again raising a finger.

This time, it did not touch him, but he coughed up blood nonetheless. The bones in his left arm shattered, and the black strands continued to spread out through his body. Vast amounts of life force were vanishing, and his hair had turned white. Death Qi filled him.

Zhao Youlan got even closer, her killing intent extremely intense. For a third time, she raised her delicate hand. A sense of deadly crisis washed over Meng Hao like floodwaters. His eyes suddenly glowed with a bright light.

With all the strength he could muster, he roared: "Are you Zhao Youlan, or Demoness Zhixiang!?"

At this moment, Zhao Youlan's hand suddenly stopped moving.

Taking advantage of this sudden pause, Meng Hao ignored the wounds to his body. He knew that this was a critical moment, and that his best option now was to teleport away. He needed to heal his injuries, otherwise his life would be in danger. However... he did not choose to do that.

When it came to lifesaving measures, he had the Agarwood as well as the Alcohol Core and the Dancing Sword Qi. However, Meng Hao had experienced many things throughout his years of practicing cultivation. As

far as this particular deadly crisis was concerned, it had not reached the point where he needed to use those lifesaving methods.

Instead, he chose to use this precious instant of time to slap his bag of holding. The Lotus Sword Formation appeared, rotating rapidly and exploding with the power of Time.

Even Zhao Youlan could never have predicted that during the short moment in which she paused, Meng Hao would actually choose not to flee. Instead, laughing in the face of death, he actually chose to attack.

This caused her to hesitate in surprise. She and Meng Hao were relatively evenly matched. The only reason she had been able to dominate him so easily just now was because she had managed to get the upper hand by taking him by surprise.

Killing intent flickered in her phoenix-like eyes. She was just about to make an attack, when suddenly her face fell. As of this moment, she could feel her longevity slipping away. Her face flickered as she abandoned any thoughts of attack and suddenly shot backward.

Despite that, her moment of hesitation just now had caused three hundred years of longevity to disappear. As she fell back, face flickering, a look of savagery appeared on Meng Hao's face. He quickly produced a medicinal pill which he popped into his mouth, and then shot forward.

"Now, it's my turn!" he said. Followed by the Lotus Sword Formation, he appeared in front of Zhao Youlan. He pulled his fist back and then punched her in the pit of the stomach.

A boom rang out. Zhao Youlan was able to avoid being hit in a vital spot. However, blood sprayed from her mouth as she was flung backward. Meng Hao continued to move forward, once again attacking her with the Lotus Sword Formation. Another three hundred years of longevity vanished. Zhao Youlan's face was deathly pale as she continued to retreat.

"Allow me to help you retreat," he said. His fist slammed into her belly, causing blood to shower out of her mouth. She tumbled backward, now in much the same position Meng Hao had been in moments ago. She had lost her position of superiority and couldn't even fight back. Now she was

being dominated.

Meng Hao's body flickered, and he appeared in front of her once again. Intense killing intent roiled out as Eyeless Larva silk shot out toward Zhao Youlan. It was at this point that she let out a disconsolate wail. At the same time, an indistinct figure appeared on her shoulder. It was very small, about the size of a hand. It looked like a small person, a woman. However, it was not Zhao Youlan.

She wore an anxious expression, and as soon as she appeared, she let out a scream. The scream caused Meng Hao's mind to reel once more. Blood sprayed out of his mouth as he backed up. He employed the full power of his Cultivation base to send the Eyeless Larva silk out to strangle Zhao Youlan.

Seeing the Eyeless Larva silk nearing, the eyes of the tiny person on Zhao Youlan's shoulder filled with a fierce look.

"You insect, do you really dare to mess with an Immortal!?" A mysterious glow appeared in the little person's eyes. Suddenly, a bizarre red flower appeared in front of Zhao Youlan. Faces could be seen on the petals of the flower... Meng Hao's face!

The flower... suddenly shattered. As it did, Meng Hao's mind reeled. It felt as if his soul were about to shatter.

"Immortal? So what?!" he responded. It was at this moment that Meng Hao suddenly caused the Alcohol Core within him to begin to rotate. Using the method that was fused into his mind, he spit out a mouthful of Alcohol Qi. Instantly, it began to transform into the shocking will of a sword. Rumbling sounds immediately emanated off of Meng Hao.

The sword will roiled up, instantly filling the entire continent he was on. All of the Cultivators here felt their hearts shaking and trembling.

The face of the tiny person on Zhao Youlan's shoulder instantly filled with fear and disbelief.

"That's Sword Immortal Han Shan's Dancing Sword Qi!"

The Alcohol Qi swept about outside of Meng Hao. Within him, Sword Qi

began to condense. At the exact moment in which the Sword Qi was about to explode out... the sky suddenly turned gray, and a mist began to rise up.

“Dammit! The Bridge Slaves again!” Meng Hao’s entire body was suddenly stuck in place. However, this time, he wasn’t completely incapable of motion. The Alcohol Qi spread out, and the Sword Qi continued to condense inside of him. He could still move, but it felt as if he were trudging through mud.

Zhao Youlan’s face instantly fell. The little person on her shoulder vanished. Suddenly, Zhao Youlan, like Meng Hao, was capable of slow, simple movements.

Alarm filled her eyes.

At the same time that this was happening, a group of figures appeared within the mist in the basin. Faint voices could be heard as the Bridge Slaves walked past Meng Hao and Zhao Youlan to head off into the distance.

“Don’t tell me this place is where the Bridge Slaves reside?” thought Meng Hao as he watched the Bridge Slaves walking out from within the basin. His mind and heart reeled. It was at this point that he noticed the last Bridge Slave in line. It was a young girl, about fifteen or sixteen years old. As she walked, she suddenly turned and looked at Meng Hao and Zhao Youlan. Her expression shifted from one of frustration and confusion, to viciousness. Her body flashed as she shot toward them.

An intense coldness instantly pressed down onto Meng Hao, filling him with shock.

Zhao Youlan suddenly began to speak, her voice filled with unprecedented fear. “Meng Hao, we need to join forces. Otherwise we will both die this day!”

Chapter 463: Little Darling

Meng Hao's pupils constricted. He was in front of Zhao Youlan, and the person the Bridge Slave girl was charging toward was none other than him.

As the words came out of Zhao Youlan's mouth, the tiny person magically appeared once again on her shoulder. The little figure's expression was one of anxiety as it performed an incantation with both hands and then pointed forward.

Instantly, a red flower materialized in front of Meng Hao. Shockingly, on each petal of the flower could be seen the face of the girl. As soon as it appeared, the flower began to disintegrate.

At this point, Zhao Youlan coughed up a mouthful of blood. The body of the tiny person on her shoulder flickered and grew even more blurry; it seemed to be extremely exhausted.

At the same time, the charging girl's body suddenly stopped in place. An expression of pain filled her face and she let out a soundless scream. Then, her face grew even more vicious, and a fearsome aura exploded out of her. Everything in the area suddenly flickered, and the surrounding mist seethed.

"Quickly... use your Dancing Sword Qi to cut her down!! Don't let her get near us...."

At this critical moment, Meng Hao's eyes filled with resolve. He caused the Alcohol Qi to surge out, and then caused the congealed Sword Qi to emanate out as well. The two of them merged together into a shocking sword-shaped amalgamation of Alcohol Qi. It shot through the air toward the girl's head, then passed directly through it.

Her body trembled, and the mist around her churned. Suddenly, she stopped. The vicious expression on her face disappeared to be replaced by a look of catharsis.

"Daddy, mother...." she said softly. "Are you still here...? Where are

you...? Why did you leave me alone here...? It's been so long... so long....” The girl no longer seemed evil, but rather, lonely and helpless. Murmuring the entire time, her body slowly disappeared.

In the spot where the girl had disappeared, a slender strand slowly took shape.

Meng Hao was touched by the girl's words, and suddenly thought back to Han Shan's story regarding the Bridge Slaves. Sighing, he reached out and grabbed the slender strand.

The other Bridge Slaves off in the distance didn't seem to have noticed anything, and continued to move off into the distance.

After they were gone, the grayness disappeared, as did the mist. Strangely, there was no tempest this time.

After the colors returned to normal, Meng Hao's eyes flickered. He clenched his fist and once again punched out. Simultaneously, Zhao Youlan's lips opened and a beam of white light shot out of her mouth toward Meng Hao.

The two magics slammed into each other and a huge boom rattled out. Both parties fell back. The tiny figure on Zhao Youlan's shoulder performed an incantation with both hands, preparing to once again materialize the power of her bizarre flower.

It was at this moment, however, that the Alcohol Qi once again began to roil within Meng Hao.

Immediately, the tiny figure stopped moving and stared at Meng Hao. As of now, Meng Hao could see that this figure was shaped like a woman. She was extremely beautiful; not even Zhao Youlan could compare.

She sat on Zhao Youlan's shoulder, looking very much like a Nascent Soul. However, she was far more limber than a Nascent soul, plus, her body emanated a pleasant aura very much like Celestial soil.

There was a thin, transparent line connecting her hand to Zhao Youlan's body. It appeared that Zhao Youlan currently had no mind of her own, but rather, was being controlled as a puppet.

As of this moment, Meng Hao felt rather confused. He wasn't sure exactly what was going on between Demoness Zhixiang and Zhao Youlan.

Zhixiang suddenly smiled and then spoke in a charming, melodious voice: "Little bro, your Dancing Sword Qi could definitely hurt me. In fact, there's a seventy percent chance that it could slay my Immortal Divinity. However... in the end, your Cultivation base just isn't strong enough to evade my final counterattack before dying.

"In that case, what's the point of us fighting? This place is one of the locations where the Bridge Slaves live. Instead of one of us dying, why don't we explore the place together? What do you say?"

He looked over at the tiny Demoness Zhixiang. For her to call him 'little bro,' didn't seem very appropriate. However, he had to admit that what she said made sense.

"Just now, her actions against the Bridge Slave weren't fake," he thought. "I was closer, but she still took action to protect herself. She thought I simply had one strand of Sword Qi, but when she found out that wasn't the case, she changed her mind." He glanced over at the mist in the basin. When it came to the bizarreness of the mist, regardless of whether it was in terms of experience or technique, he simply wasn't powerful enough to handle it on his own. Joining forces with her wasn't necessarily out of the question.

As he was considering the matter, Zhao Youlan looked at him and frowned. Inwardly, she said: "Big sis Zhixiang, this guy is endlessly crafty. Plus, he's cruel and merciless, completely cold-blooded. Also his decisiveness is incredible. If you work with him, you have to be very cautious."

Zhixiang's reply echoed out inside of Zhao Youlan's mind. "Well, now I know that you really do love your big sis, my precious darling."

Zhao Youlan blushed.

Sensing that her face was growing red, Zhixiang laughed, causing Zhao Youlan's blush to deepen.

“Little bro, what do you think? There are plenty of treasures here. Big sis isn’t greedy. I just want half. You can have the rest. What do you say?” With that, the tiny figure on Zhao Youlan’s shoulder laughed lightly. She lifted a hand and pointed toward the mist. A strand of Qi shot toward the mist, causing it to seethe and then slowly grow thin. Zhao Youlan’s body shot down into the mist.

“If you agree, then come on over. Big sis is waiting for you!” Demoness Zhixiang’s voice carried with it a touch of allure, causing Meng Hao to frown again. Then, his eyes glittered. Filled with caution, and keeping the Sword Qi prepared, he followed down into the mist.

They flew down in single file, piercing through the mist. Eventually they were able to make out the basin, and the luxurious buildings. Each of these buildings was completely constructed from Celestial soil, filling the basin with a thick aura of Celestial soil.

“Immortals used to live in this place,” said Zhixiang from her position on Zhao Youlan’s shoulder. “It’s one of the palaces used by the ninety-nine preeminent Immortals as a guard garrison for the Bridge of Immortality. After the bridge was destroyed, the ninety-nine Immortals died and merged into the Bridge of Immortality. They wished to restore the bridge and its position in the world. When they came back to life, they had no physical bodies. However, their palaces remained, filled with treasure.” As they neared the palaces, a glimmering shield suddenly appeared, blocking their way. A powerful aura radiated out, emitting thick pressure along with magical shadows.

Zhao Youlan spit out a mouthful of blood, and Demoness Zhixiang lifted her right hand and waved it toward the blood.

“Congeal!”

Immediately the blood turned into a red mist which then formed into a gigantic red flower. The flower floated forward and touched the shield. As soon as it did, it sank into the shield, merging into it.

The entire shield began to distort. In the blink of an eye, veins seemed to spread out through the shield. It began to flicker rapidly and then,

dissipated. The power that blasted out upon its dissipation caused Meng Hao to narrow his eyes. He would not have been able to break this shield unless he used the Dancing Sword Qi.

“I’ve suppressed the defences,” said Zhixiang, “but it will only last for four hours. All of the palace structures here should have garrison treasures. Little bro, as you can see, there is a main hall in the center, with palace buildings stretched out on either side. You take one side, and we’ll meet in the middle.

“As for how many treasures you can acquire, that will depend on your own skill.” Zhixiang laughed, and Zhao Youlan gave Meng Hao a cold glance. Then, they headed directly for the palace buildings on the right side.

Meng Hao looked at the suppressed shield and the giant red flower floating there in mid-air. It was this flower which was suppressing the power of the shield, allowing them to enter.

“Four hours? I can’t trust her on that point. At most, it will probably last for two hours.” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. After a moment of observation, decisiveness filled his eyes and, without hesitation, he shot forward toward the group of palace buildings on the left.

“With my Cultivation base, I would normally never be able to get into a place like this. Whatever treasures are in the buildings, they are not things I could take. If I get too greedy, then I might end up paying a horrific price.

“Therefore, I will stick to my original plan. I don’t need treasures, I just need Celestial soil!” Eyes shining brightly, his body flickered and he appeared in front of one of the palace buildings. After looking it over carefully, he saw that the main door was shut tight with the power of some type of sealing.

Meng Hao did not spend time thinking about how to open the door. A flying sword appeared in his hand and he knelt down. Rotating his Cultivation base, he used the flying sword to try to pry up one of the floor tiles. Unfortunately, a cracking sound could be heard as the flying sword snapped in two.

Frowning, Meng Hao's body flickered as he flew up to the roof and began to try to pull up one of the roof tiles. Unfortunately, the roof tile was extremely tough, and no matter what he did, he couldn't pull it up.

"This stuff is really sturdy," he thought, his eyes flickering with sharpness. He rotated his Cultivation base with full power, causing the Time Sword Formation to appear and unleash its power on the tile. A moment later, he pulled up on the tile. Crack! The tile was pulled up successfully by Meng Hao.

His heart pounded with excitement. The tile was only the size of a hand, but the entire thing was made from Celestial soil. He put it away and immediately began to use the same method to continue dismantling the building.

Very quickly, all of the tiles on the palace building's roof had been collected up by Meng Hao. Next, he went to work on the floor tiles. It didn't take long before they were all placed into his bag of holding.

"Rich! I've really struck it rich!" Panting, eyes gleaming, Meng Hao's eyes next moved to the palace building's guardian lions. [1] Having successfully collected them up, he next looked over at the building's eaves.

[tl: [1] = https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_guardian_lions]

Chapter 464: Pinkie Finger!

Soon, the eaves were gone. Next, Meng Hao's gaze came to fall upon the steps leading up to the palace building. After that were the columns. Next, the wall coverings.

It didn't take long for a previously extravagant palace building to be completely blank and clean. The main structure was there, but now, it looked completely different, to a very shocking degree.

Every single thing that could be taken off of the outside surface, was gone....

Were it not for the restrictive spells and seals protecting the inside of the palace building, Meng Hao would tear down the entire structure. Trying to contain his excitement, he looked over at the next palace building. Filled with excitement, he leaped toward that building and began to dismantle it.

As for the Immortals who built these palace buildings, before their consciousnesses merged into the bridge, they placed the restrictive spells and seals in place because they were well aware that people might be interested in the items within. However, they had never imagined that someone like Meng Hao would happen to make his way into this place. He wasn't interested in the treasures inside, but rather, wanted to plunder the construction materials....

Time passed by. With bustling industriousness, Meng Hao proceeded along from one palace building to the next, completely dismantling their exteriors, leaving them stark and bare.... The only thing left behind were the bare palace structures; anything that could be pried up was taken by Meng Hao.

Even the grass on the ground seemed to have absorbed some of the Celestial Soil Qi. Seeing how extraordinary it was, he collected it up without hesitation.

"If I don't keep grabbing stuff until my hands cramp, then my name isn't Meng Hao!" he said, his eyes gleaming as he wrenched up a floor tile. If

any of Meng Hao's acquaintances saw him now, they might think they were looking at a stranger. The look in his eyes was completely different than the coldness that usually resided there.

This was a part of his personality that he kept buried deep within, the part of him that lusted after anything valuable.

Despite having reached his current level of Cultivation base, one cannot forget about the matter in which he owed Steward Zhou three pieces of silver [1]. Of course, after beginning to practice cultivation, the fervor he had shown toward that silver had shifted to cultivation resources.

[tl: [1] = The fact that he owed three pieces of silver was mentioned in chapter 1 and a couple other chapters later on.]

For example, Celestial soil. At the moment, there was nothing he was more passionate about than Celestial soil.

After all... aspirations are a good thing. With aspirations, Meng Hao could be happy despite being tired or in pain. Right now, he was like a locust in human form. Every extravagant palace building that he encountered would be seemingly engulfed in a storm. After the storm passed by, the building would be completely bare.

Gradually ten buildings, twenty buildings, thirty buildings... after two hours had passed, more than seventy palace buildings had been completely dismantled by Meng Hao.

His expression was one of excitement, and he was breathing heavily. At the moment, there weren't even thirty buildings left. Meng Hao was just getting ready to go at the rest of the buildings with a final spurt of energy, when Zhao Youlan suddenly staggered out from a large palace building on the opposite side of the basin.

After she emerged, the entire palace building collapsed with a rumbling sound. Zhao Youlan looked excited. The tiny Zhixiang perched on her shoulder appeared even more excited. Shockingly, she held a small green flask in her hand.

"It took two hours to get this one item," said Zhixiang excitedly.

“However, this small flask is a treasure that once belonged to one of the nine most preeminent of the Immortals. Two hours is a long time, but it was worth it. Precious darling, we must quickly go to the next... uh...? Huh? What?” When her gaze fell upon Meng Hao, her eyes went wide and she gaped. She even rubbed vigorously at her eyes, not daring to believe what she was seeing.

When Zhao Youlan saw the strange scene, her eyes also went wide as they filled with astonishment and shock.

Both of them... could do nothing other than be completely shocked. The tableau that faced them now was completely different from that which they had seen before entering the palace building earlier.

The previously lush and verdant grass in the area was completely gone. Only bare, uneven ground remained....

The Celestial tiles were nowhere to be seen. The floors were completely barren....

The auspicious beasts protecting the palace buildings, so imposing and extraordinary, had vanished....

The columns, carved with dragons and phoenixes, were now missing....

The matchlessly extravagant wall decorations, which had once covered the outside of the palace buildings, were as bare as if they had been swept over by a fierce tempest....

There were thirty or so palace buildings which retained their original appearance. However, the other seventy or more had become nothing more than empty frames.....

Completely clean; spick-and-span.

Demoness Zhixiang stared in shock, and began to murmur to herself subconsciously, “Is the Heavenly Hound from Planet East Victory here? Or the Locust Immortal of Planet North Reed?” [2]

[tl: [2] = In chapter 407, the planet was described as North Furnace. That was either a typo on the part of Er Gen, or he chose to change the name.

In Chinese the word for Furnace and Reed are complete homophones, and the characters actually resemble each other.]

Everything was too bare, as if it had been licked clean by a dog, or swept over by an army of locusts.

Even as Zhao Youlan and Zhixiang were struck motionless from shock, they saw Meng Hao standing in front of an intact palace building, viciously prying up a floor tile with a flying sword. The sword was broken and twisted, and seemed to emit shrieks of humiliation.

A bang could be heard as the floor tile popped up. Meng Hao waved his sleeve to collect it up. Licking his lips, he used the same techniques he had picked up while dismantling the other seventy buildings to continue his work. The floor tiles were sturdy, but once you got one up, collecting the rest was simple.

Meng Hao had long since caught sight of Zhao Youlan and Zhixiang. However, he didn't spend any effort paying attention to them. He was immersed in his work of prying up the floor tiles. The two women watched on, stupefied.

Zhao Youlan was breathing heavily, her phoenix-like eyes filled with disbelief. It was as if this was her first time ever seeing Meng Hao. How could she ever have imagined that the cold, astute, vicious, and merciless Meng Hao, would do something like this?

"This guy really might have some Heavenly Hound blood in him. Or maybe he really has practiced some of the cultivation of the Locust Immortal. Dammit, he doesn't even leave the floor tiles behind." Zhixiang was panting. She could see the concentration in Meng Hao's eyes, which caused her to feel a bit suspicious. "Isn't he afraid of the curse?"

Zhao Youlan stared at the strange scene and suddenly started to think that this new Meng Hao was actually more terrifying than the usual Meng Hao. The fervor with which he was dismantling the palace buildings was beyond her comprehension. Because of that, she found the situation even more horrifying.

This was even more the case when Meng Hao finished with the floor

tiles and then took away the guardian lions. After that, he cut down the pillars and then started to pull off the wall decorations. Zhao Youlan took a deep breath.

She almost couldn't believe it. In fact, she was certain that if Meng Hao somehow found his way to the Five Poisons Tribe, something completely terrifying would occur. It would probably only take a few hours for the entire Tribe to be uprooted and wiped clean.

Zhixiang was filled with misgivings and hesitated for a moment. Finally, she called out, "Um, hey... Fellow Daoist...."

"Stop bothering me!" said Meng Hao, not even turning his head. He ripped a wall decoration off, then pulled out a flying sword to continue his work.

"You know," replied Zhixiang immediately, "the big main hall in the center is made from even better material. That Celestial soil is even more refined."

Her words caused Meng Hao to suddenly pause in the middle of pulling off a wall decoration. He turned to look over at Zhao Youlan and Zhixiang.

Zhixiang immediately continued, "Compared to the main hall, all the other materials in this place are like trash. The Celestial soil over there... um, the floor tiles over there are worth a hundred times more than the ones over here!

"Fellow Daoist, you're clearly innately skilled and beyond ordinary. You have unique hobbies and are obviously a great man, an amazing hero! I think we really need to cooperate one more time, what do you think?

"You dismantle the main hall, and I'll open the restrictive spells. That way, your dismantling work will go even faster. Then, we can split the treasures inside fifty-fifty. What do you say?"

When Zhao Youlan heard Zhixiang's words, her face grew taciturn. There was no way she could associate the terms 'great man' and 'amazing hero,' with Meng Hao. The only thing she could see was a monster of dismantling.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and he said nothing for the space of a few breaths, and then said, "Just wait a moment."

"No problem," replied Zhixiang excitedly. "Fellow Daoist, I understand that you need to meditate for a moment to rest yourself. No problem at all. As for me I can...." Suddenly, her eyes went wide with disbelief. As soon as Meng Hao finished speaking, he went back to ripping the wall decorations off. Only, this time, he went at it even faster than before.

Zhixiang was breathing heavily as she watched Meng Hao sweep over the palace building, and then moved onto the next one. In the following hour, the rest of the thirty or so remaining palace buildings were completely swept clean. Finally, he looked over at the nearly hundred palaces in the area Zhao Youlan and Zhixiang had come from, and a look of regret appeared on his face.

He looked back toward the majestic palace building in the center. "Is that the main hall you mentioned?" he asked.

The palace building was surrounded by walls, inside were four majestic structures that were completely beyond ordinary. Meng Hao's professional eyes swept the place over and noticed that the floor tiles were nearly two square meters and shined like gold. The Celestial Soil Qi that they emitted was thick to the extreme.

Then he noticed the columns, which were thick and solid. The wall decorations were transparent like jade, shocking to the extreme. He glanced at the palace building's main door and could tell that the Celestial Soil Qi that it emitted was incredibly dense.

Under Meng Hao's professional gaze, the places on the walls that were appropriate to begin deconstructing were apparent. As for the floor tiles, he quickly identified the best one to start with. He also took note of which roof tiles to take without disturbing the restrictive spells.

His sharp gaze fell upon Zhao Youlan, causing her to take a deep breath; she suddenly felt as if her clothes were being stripped away. Noticing that Zhixiang wasn't paying attention, she casually lifted up her hand and held up her pinky finger. When she was sure that Meng Hao saw it, she slowly

lowered her pinky finger.

Off to the side, Zhixiang had an expression of admiration on her face.

“So, it turns out this guy has a specialty. His name is Meng? He seems to be a Grandmaster of dismantling ancient Immortal palaces without touching the restrictive spells.”

Chapter 465: A Demon Spirit Appears!

Zhixiang suddenly looked very serious. “Grandmaster Meng, this Bridge of Immortal Treading was built by the Immortal Demon Sect many years ago. The place we are in now is the lowest of the three worlds that compose the Bridge of Immortality, the residence palace of the 99 Immortal Demons. This most majestic of the palace buildings is a local spell locus, and most likely one of the hubs of the Bridge of Immortality.

“There are 3,600 such hubs here. There are precious treasures sealed inside, used in past years to provide a constant supply of the power of the Essence of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

“The restrictive spells here are the most powerful. Even if I were here with my physical body, opening this building would be quite difficult. However... with your assistance, Grandmaster Meng, it should be much simpler.

“Grandmaster Meng, would you please tell me which parts of the outer wall would be the easiest to remove?” This was the first time she had acted so politely toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao had noticed Zhao Youlan’s obscure gesture with her pinky finger, but his expression didn’t change at all. He looked at Zhixiang, thinking for a moment about why she was calling him Grandmaster Meng. It only took a moment for him to realize that it must be because the ease with which he had dismantled the buildings earlier left her shaken.

He cleared his throat and then once more looked regretfully back at the other section of buildings. Then, he returned his attention to the main hall, studying it for a moment. Finally he pointed toward a certain section.

“Right side, row seventy-three, ninth piece from the top!” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered with sharpness as he looked at the particular piece he had just referred to. Based on his previous experience, that was definitely the best place to start.

Hearing this, Zhixiang looked over silently for a moment before her eyes filled with determination. She quickly began to perform an incantation.

Zhao Youlan took a deep breath and also began to incant. The two of them pushed their arms out at the same time, causing two beams of light, one white and one red, to shoot through the air toward that particular piece.

In the blink of an eye, they landed, causing the entire wall to glow brightly.

“Left side, row thirty-three, seventh piece from the bottom!” said Meng Hao. Once again, Zhao Youlan and Zhixiang released attacks.

“Right side, row one hundred fifteen, second piece from the top!” This, of course, was all based on Meng Hao’s previous experiences. The wall glowed and began to shake.

Suddenly a booming sound rang out. Finally, a section of the wall exploded, causing the wall’s spell formation to crack, flicker, and then disappear.

Zhixiang took a deep breath and looked somewhat tired out. However, her face quickly filled with enthusiasm. Zhao Youlan hurried over, with Meng Hao following close behind. Without the slightest hint of anxiety, Meng Hao began to collect up the pieces. Zhao Youlan and Zhixiang waited just outside the main hall, watching as the perimeter wall surrounding the palace building disappeared rapidly. After collecting up the final piece, Meng Hao contentedly walked over and began to examine the floor tiles, completely ignoring Zhixiang and Zhao Youlan.

The two women watched on, not daring to interfere. After a moment, Meng Hao stood above one particular floor tile, then squatted down to examine it closer. He took a few steps back toward where there was a small crack on the border of the tiled area. He looked up.

“I’m not sure how to break the spell formations in this place, but as far as the floor tiles go, I have to say that this is the place to target with your divine abilities. Hitting it there will send a crack out that will loosen all the tiles in the area.” Having said this, Meng Hao took a few steps back.

Zhixiang’s eyes glittered. She flickered an incantation, causing a beam of light to fly out toward the cracked tile. A boom filled the air. At first, it

didn't seem like anything had happened. Zhixiang frowned, and a sharp look appeared in her eyes. Both hands flickered in an incantation, and she spit out a mouthful of Qi.

Zhao Youlan instantly reacted to this. Trembling, she spit out a mouthful of blood, which fused with the Qi to transform into the image of a finger.

The finger obviously was filled with shocking power. The instant it appeared, Meng Hao's pupils constricted, and the Dancing Sword Qi within him began to circulate. Meng Hao's reaction seemed casual, but in fact he was constantly considering ways in which to cause his opponents to drain their Cultivation bases. Throughout this situation, he had constantly been on guard; even though they were working together, it was all because of mutual profit, not because of some impregnable alliance.

The finger seemed to be filled with power that could harm even the Heavens; as soon as it appeared, the sky dimmed and an incredible pressure weighed down on the area. It shot toward the crack, slamming into it, and causing everything to tremble. Cracking sounds echoed out as the floor tile filled with cracks. One of the cracks spread out in just the way Meng Hao had described. More intense roaring sounds filled the air.

The shaking was so intense that the other floor tiles of this palace building filled with three more gigantic cracks.

A moment later, the shaking stopped. As of this moment, all of the restrictive spells outside of the palace building were gone. Zhixiang's face was pale, and she was breathing heavily.

"You need to go faster," she urged Meng Hao. "My technique to suppress the shield won't last for much longer. We need to get into the main hall as quickly as possible."

Meng Hao's eyes glittered. Feeling somewhat anxious, he quickly produced a flying sword and began prying up the floor tiles. Without the restrictive spells in place, there was nothing protecting the floor tiles. With Meng Hao's professional technique, the floor tiles quickly began to disappear into his bag of holding. However, it was at this moment that his

eyes suddenly narrowed.

The earth beneath the floor tiles was not smooth. Instead, complex magical symbols became visible as he collected up the tiles. The symbols bore the appearance of a sealing mark, a seal that looked like a butterfly.

Zhixiang looked down at the butterfly seal and then casually remarked: "That seal is the restrictive spell covering this area. However, I've disabled it; it doesn't function anymore."

Meng Hao nodded, then pried up the final floor tile. Suddenly, he looked up and then performed a Bloodburst Flash and then a minor teleportation. In the blink of an eye, he was far off in the distance.

Once he was away from the main hall, he blinked his left eye several times in succession, pouring the Qi of Immortal Shows the Way into his left eye. Immediately, his view of the world changed.

The majestic palace hall was now a mass of black mist, the source of which was the butterfly seal in the hall's square. An enormous black butterfly was visible, struggling against the silver strands which were wrapped around its body. It looked like the strands were on the verge of collapsing.

It seemed that the floor tiles in this place had been suppressing the butterfly's true form. Now that the tiles were gone and the restrictive spell broken, it was in the process of freeing itself.

At the same time, countless roaring black dragons were flying toward the butterfly, intent on consuming it. However, as they neared, the bizarre butterfly sucked them in, using them as power to assist in freeing itself.

Standing next to the butterfly was Zhao Youlan, who for some reason had a bitter smile on her face, and grief in her eyes. A despair existed therein that was no longer possible to cover up.

Shockingly, with his Celestial vision, Meng Hao could see that Zhixiang, perched on Zhao Youlan's shoulder, had a red thread coming out of her to wrap around the butterfly, as if she were attempting to make some sort of connection with it.

Meng Hao immediately began to fly away. There were still a handful of floor tiles that he hadn't collected up. As for Zhixiang, her face flickered, and when she looked up and saw Meng Hao, she laughed coldly.

Her face was grim, and she obviously knew that Meng Hao had some clues as to what was happening.

"This guy is profoundly astute!" she thought. "However, there's something unique about him. He's capable of taking away the Celestial soil that the Immortal Demon Sect cursed for all time. From ancient times until now, he must be the first person who came here unprotected and not only evaded death, but also took away the Celestial soil!"

Zhixiang frowned. It was for this very reason that she had opted to enlist Meng Hao's help in disabling the restrictive spells. However, at the most critical moment she had been found out by him and he seemed to be leaving. Although he had taken most of the floor tiles, there were a few left that, while seemingly random, were actually cleverly positioned.

"Grandmaster Meng, what is the meaning of this?" asked Zhixiang lightly. Her voice seemed sweet, but also filled with allure.

"There's no special meaning," he called back. "It's just that my bag of holding is full." He quickly flew out of the palace building area.

He had acquired enough Celestial soil for now and did not wish to participate in any more of Demoness Zhixiang's scheming. As for Zhao Youlan, he now understood what was going on. Earlier, outside the basin, he had had his doubts.

Granted, there was some rancor between him and Zhao Youlan. However, it hadn't reached the point where he felt he needed to attack her to resolve the situation.

After all, the war between the Five Poisons Tribe and the Crow Divinity Tribes had started because of an invasion. He had tried to kill her that time, but only once, not twice.

Despite that, Zhao Youlan had immediately attacked him earlier. At first glance it might seem that she had plenty of reasons to do so, but upon

careful analysis, her actual motives were unclear.

In fact, now that he thought about it, perhaps the gesture she had made earlier with her pinky finger had been an intentional distress signal.

In any case, Meng Hao had no intention of staying behind in this place in some attempt to rescue Zhao Youlan.

A sharp look appeared in Zhixiang's eyes and she gritted her beautiful teeth.

"Well, considering the situation, it looks like I have no choice, right...?" she said with a sigh. "What a pity. Youlan, precious darling, it goes without saying that I'm going to have to possess you." She suddenly flew off of Zhao Youlan's shoulder. Zhao Youlan began to tremble. It only took a few breaths worth of time for her aura to completely change. She was no longer cool and elegant, but rather bewitching and charming.

Her body flickered as she reached out and pushed down five times onto the ground. Booms rang out as five floor tiles suddenly cracked into pieces. At the same time, the silver strands holding down the black butterfly suddenly dissipated. The butterfly flew into the air!

As it did, flames erupted on its body. It was now no longer invisible; thanks to the burning, it was now colorful in appearance and visible to anyone who looked its way. It had now transformed into a colorful, hand-sized butterfly, completely eye-catching in all aspects.

In the instant that the butterfly appeared, it flapped its wings, causing an enormous windstorm to sweep across the entire land mass. Simultaneously, an incredibly intense Demonic Qi rolled off of it.

It had Demonic Qi and possessed consciousness. Even as he retreated, Meng Hao saw the black butterfly transform into a colorful one, and it caused his mind and heart to shake. Suddenly, two words appeared in his mind.

"Demon Spirit!"

Chapter 466: The Agarwood Appears Again to Wrest Away the Demon Spirit!

There was no other term which could be used to describe this colorful butterfly which floated in mid-air. It had transformed from blackness, almost as if it had been reborn from within death. No intense feeling of danger emanated off of the colorful butterfly. The only thing it radiated was intense, natural beauty.

As it fluttered its wings, a thin, colorful dust could be seen floating around it, as well as a bright glow. The butterfly immediately began to fly up into the air.

Zhao Youlan... or perhaps it would be better to say Demoness Zhixiang, flew up in pursuit, her eyes glittering. The main reason she had come to the Realm of the Bridge Ruins was for this very Demon Spirit!

“With it, I will be qualified to enter the Primordial Immortal Demon Plane. As a disciple of the current generation of the Immortal Demon Sect, I will definitely be able to snatch some good luck once I get into that ancient plane!” Zhixiang performed a minor teleportation, and in the blink of an eye was next to the butterfly.

Meng Hao’s eyes shone brightly. As of this instant, he gave up any notions of fleeing. As far as he was concerned, this thing... was exactly what he had come to the Realm of the Bridge Ruins to acquire.

With a Demon Spirit, the two thousand members of the Crow Divinity Tribes would be qualified to enter the Black Lands, and would thus have a chance to survive the Apocalypse.

There was no time to think. Meng Hao’s body flickered as he Bloodburst Flashed and then teleported. All the Blood Qi in his body rose up as he shot toward the butterfly Demon Spirit.

As he sprang into action, he circulated the Alcohol Qi within him, preparing to use the Dancing Sword Qi.

Killing intent flickered within Zhixiang’s eyes. However, in the exact

moment in which both of them shot up into the air after the colorful butterfly, the butterfly shot forward, its body becoming a blur. A moment later, it was a few hundred kilometers away. Were it not for the intense, glowing light that emanated off of it, it would have been able to disappear without a trace.

Meng Hao's face flickered as he teleported once again; Zhixiang pulled back the divine ability she had been about to use. Both ceased thoughts of attacking as they shot in pursuit of the Demon Spirit.

They moved with incredible speed, although Zhixiang was a bit faster than Meng Hao. However, her merging with Zhao Youlan was not complete. Furthermore, Zhao Youlan was actually still only at the Core Formation stage; Zhixiang had been able to force her Cultivation base up to the Nascent Soul stage. Even still, it was impossible for Zhixiang, an Immortal, to employ her full level of power using this body.

Even if she could push Zhao Youlan to Spirit Severing, it wouldn't match up to her speed in Immortal Divinity form. If she pushed the body too far, it was very likely that it would shred to pieces in mid-air.

Every time the butterfly Demon Spirit shot forward, it moved a few hundred kilometers. In fact, in one particularly stunning moment, it traveled over five hundred kilometers in one shot.

Fortunately, the colorful glow it emitted was like a bright lamp on a dark night, clearly pointing it out. Were it not for that, Meng Hao would have been incapable of tracking it down.

Unfortunately, the butterfly Demon Spirit's frantic flight did not go unnoticed for very long. Soon, it began to attract the attention of other Western Desert Cultivators in the area.

As the Cultivators became aware of the butterfly, they immediately came to think of Demon Spirits. All of them had come to the Realm of the Bridge Ruins with one of their goals being to search out the Demon Spirits that came to being here.

Instantly, the eyes of these Cultivators turned red. This Demon Spirit represented a chance for survival for their respective Tribes. It only took

one glance for any Cultivator in the area to cause the full power of their Cultivation bases to explode as they shot toward the butterfly.

On this land mass, the colorful butterfly instantly gave rise to a storm of fighting.

Meng Hao frowned. Seeing this happening, he decided to hold back from joining in the fray. However, he did not lessen his speed at all as he continued in pursuit.

As far as Zhixiang went, she had long since disappeared. Meng Hao knew that she was definitely in the area of the Demon Spirit, waiting for the perfect moment to make her move, most likely when the butterfly slowed down a bit.

At a certain point, an area of distortion suddenly appeared in front of the butterfly Demon Spirit, and a man appeared. His body was festooned with totems, most noticeably his forehead, upon which could be seen a black dragon. The aura and ripples coming off of this man made him seem thoroughly frightening.

Furthermore, his Cultivation base was at the late Nascent Soul stage!

This was the first person of the late Nascent Soul stage that Meng Hao had seen in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. He was tall and strapping, his features somewhat crude, with thick, bushy eyebrows and large eyes. As soon as he appeared, he let out a roar and lifted both of his arms up. His body suddenly began to expand; green veins bulged out on his skin, and an enormous, lifelike black dragon suddenly exploded out from behind him.

The butterfly Demon Spirit was only the size of a hand, and had no Cultivation base. It obviously couldn't count as something powerful. Anyone could grab it and take it away. However, its speed was indescribable, giving it an incredible power. As soon as the man appeared in front of it, it shot forward, slamming into him. An incredible boom filled the air.

Amidst the booming, the burly man's body trembled. All of his totem tattoos flickered. The black dragon lifted its head into the air. The man lifted his head up and roared as he shot back a full three thousand meters

before coming to a halt.

However, he still held the butterfly firmly with both hands.

There were more than ten people in the area who had been attracted by the butterfly Demon Spirit. All of them recognized this man and were thrown into a commotion.

“That’s Xu Bai of the great Black Dragon Tribe!”

“The great Black Dragon Tribe is from the Western Desert East region, and has a Spirit Severing Patriarch, a true great Tribe!”

“Great Tribes with Spirit Severing Patriarchs do not need a Demon Spirit to be qualified to enter the Black Lands. Xu Bai is a powerful expert of the great Black Dragon Tribe. Word has it that he is the next Tribe member likely to rise to Spirit Severing. Why does he want to snatch a Demon Spirit!?”

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. The scene just now had shaken him inwardly. This burly man named Xu Bai had already made quite an impression on him. It seemed that the majority of his Cultivation base power was focused on his physical body, which was something very unique.

However, as soon as Xu Bai took control of the Demon Spirit, a soft laugh could be heard coming from seemingly nowhere. Ripples suddenly flickered, and a red glow could be seen. Within the red glow was a man wearing a long red robe. He was thin and possessed a feminine air. The instant he appeared, magical symbols appeared all around him, all of which were unique, and emanated a bizarre glow. Actually, upon closer inspection, each of these magical symbols seemed to be a life force.

Even more bizarre, there was no totem tattoo on the man’s forehead. Furthermore, in the places of his body not covered by his robe, a vast assortment of magical symbols could be seen.

As he laughed softly, his femininity seemed to increase. In concurrence with his appearance, he lifted his right arm and waved it gently in front of him. Instantly, a vast array of magical symbols appeared and began to converge together. As they did, they transformed into a gigantic hand

made of magical symbols. It immediately shot at top speed in the direction of Xu Bai.

As it neared, it seemed to be closing in on the butterfly Demon Spirit, as if to snatch it.

“Chen Mo!!” roared Xu Bai.

As his voice echoed out, the other surrounding Cultivators’ faces were instantly filled with astonishment.

“Chen Mo? That’s Chen Mo from the great Demon Talisman Tribe. He reached the late Nascent Soul stage two hundred years ago!”

As the rumbling echoed out, Xu Bai’s face filled with ferocity. He loosened his grip, and the butterfly flapped its wings, extricating itself and dodging away from the gigantic hand formed from magical symbols.

It was at this exact moment in which the butterfly freed itself that suddenly, Zhixiang’s figure appeared. She reached out her delicate hand and grabbed the butterfly, then flickered and disappeared.

The speed with which she moved made it so that nobody could detect her beforehand. The faces of Xu Bai and Chen Mo instantly filled with shock. To have the Demon Spirit snatched away in front of their very noses left both of the men feeling completely humiliated.

However, the moment in which Zhixiang disappeared, Meng Hao’s eyes filled with a cold glow.

“Drop it,” he said coolly, Alcohol Qi spreading out from within him. Zhixiang’s cold laugh could be heard echoing out in the air.

“If you hadn’t used the Dancing Sword Qi before, then using it now all of a sudden would have worked on me quite well. Unfortun....” Before she could even finish speaking, she stopped. That was because the Alcohol Qi had ceased spreading out of his body; not even a scrap could be detected. Despite that, shocking ripples were suddenly emanating off of Meng Hao.

The ripples filled the entire area for fifteen thousand meters in every direction. The sky dimmed and all of the surrounding Cultivators’ faces

fell. As for Chen Mo and Xu Bai, their pupils constricted as they felt an intense sense of crisis.

It was in this shocking moment that a three thousand meter long beast appeared in front of Meng Hao.

Its body was that of a dragon, while its tail was that of a phoenix, and it had two dragon's heads. The shocking, three thousand meter long creature instantly emanated a horrifying aura that pressed down on everything within fifteen thousand meters.

This was none other than the Agarwood!

Meng Hao possessed the Agarwood legacy and could use it three times to avoid death. When the Agarwood appeared, its body flickered and it began to roar. Its body actually disappeared at this point, but its power transformed into an attack that shot forward, causing everything around it to shake.

The air for fifteen thousand meters in every direction seemed about to collapse. Zhixiang's body was instantly forced to reappear in mid-air. Blood sprayed from her mouth and her face was covered in shock.

"Agar... wood..." she thought, her expression one of complete disbelief. She had long since ceased to look down on Meng Hao. His usage of the Dancing Sword Qi caused her to be vigilant. Then there was the fact that he wasn't affected by the Immortal Demon curse. That had filled her with suspicion, and caused her to change her plans. But now.... In the short time in which she had known Meng Hao, everything she had seen and experienced, including Meng Hao's scheming and his fighting, caused him to occupy a place of extreme importance in her heart.

Blood continued to spray from her mouth as she shot backward involuntarily. The attack just now caused her to lose her grip on the butterfly. Meng Hao's eyes gleamed brightly as he shot forward, flicked his sleeve and collected up the butterfly.

Xu Bai's face flickered as he tried to retreat. However, the power of the attack caught him up too, and he was sent tumbling backward like a kite with its string cut. He ended up several hundred kilometers away, where

he coughed up eight mouthfuls of blood.

Chen Mo met a similar fate. Despite retreating and trying to use a magical technique to protect himself, he ended up several hundred kilometers away, coughing up blood.

Considering that this happened to the two of them, there is no need to go into detail regarding the other ten people present.

All of them felt rumbling throughout their entire bodies. The bodies of three or four directly exploded and their Nascent Souls fled. The others sustained severe internal injuries. All of them immediately pulled out the Immortality Bridgestones that had brought them to this place and crushed them. As they did, their bodies began to disappear.

This was not a minor teleportation, but rather, greater teleportation. It was a way of leaving this place, the only method of returning to the Western Desert. Any Cultivator in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins could use this method to escape at any time. However, once they left they could not return. In essence, it was a way of giving up.

Chapter 467: Soil Vortex!

As soon as Meng Hao laid hands on the Demon Spirit, he placed it into his bag of holding. Then he turned, transforming into a beam of colorful light. Moving as fast as lightning, he shot past the group of people who had been forced to fall back by the Agarwood attack.

There were only three people present who could pose a threat to Meng Hao: Zhixiang, Xu Bai, and Chen Mo.

At the moment, though, Xu Bai and Chen Mo were coughing up blood. Their retreat had momentarily cost them the chance to give chase. However, considering they had Cultivation bases at the late Nascent Soul, it wouldn't be long before they could collect themselves and begin to pursue him.

As for Zhixiang, she was definitely a most formidable adversary, difficult to contend with and worthy of being called Demoness by others.

If all three of them worked together, he would be forced to use the Agarwood and the Dancing Sword Qi. Otherwise, it would be difficult to escape with his life.

Even still, in Meng Hao's analysis, the end result of such a situation would be mutual loss for everyone.

At the moment, there seemed to be one more possible choice in front of him. That was to take out his Immortality Bridgestone and use it to teleport out of this place.

That option, though, was something he would pick only as a last resort. He had obtained a lot of Celestial soil, but right now it was impossible to tell if he had enough to create his Earth-type totem.

Once he opted to leave, there would be no way to return, and he would have lost this fortunate chance.

Therefore, he whistled off into the distance at top speed, brow furrowed.

Behind him, the eyes of Xu Bai and Chen Mo glittered as they took in deep breaths. After the Agarwood attack and Meng Hao's sudden

departure, they had no time or inclination to heal their wounds. Instead, they unleashed minor teleportation as they began to chase Meng Hao.

They were determined to acquire that Demon Spirit!

As the two of them began to give chase, Zhixiang transformed into a beam of light. Three people, one in the lead, and two bringing up the rear, all shot off with incredible speed in the direction of Meng Hao.

Meng Hao frowned. Right now he had to decide what to do. He could keep ahold of the Demon Spirit for the sake of the Crow Divinity Tribes. The price he would pay would be that he might not have enough Celestial soil. His other choice would be to think about himself first, and abandon the Demon Spirit.

After the space of a few breaths passed, his eyes began to shine with determination. To make his Earth-type totem become a reality didn't necessarily require the use of Celestial soil. A multitude of different types of soil existed in Heaven and Earth. However, right now there was only one Demon Spirit!

The instant he made his decision, he slapped his bag of holding. Immediately, the Immortality Bridgestone appeared. He was just about to crush it when, suddenly, Zhixiang's voice transmitted into his head.

"Meng Hao, even if you have some more clever moves, considering you're being pursued by me and two late Nascent Soul Stage Cultivators, then the only way to keep your hands on that Demon Spirit is to leave the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. You have no other options.

"However, I can tell that you have some other reasons for coming here. That's why you don't want to leave, right?

"Therefore, I have a proposal. Why don't we team up? I know that our last cooperation didn't go very well, and that no matter what I say to you right now, you won't trust me. Therefore, let me present you with a show of good faith!" The instant Zhixiang finished transmitting her words, her body suddenly stopped. She spun in place and then began to perform an incantation with both hands. Two red flowers instantly materialized in front of her.

The two flowers floated toward Xu Bai and Chen Mo. The petals of these two flowers resembled the faces of none other than those two men.

Then, the flowers began to collapse into pieces. In the space of a single breath, the pieces transformed into gray ashes. Immediately, blood sprayed from Xu Bai's mouth, and his body sagged. Next to him, Chen Mo trembled and coughed up blood. The two of them immediately stopped in their tracks, their faces filled with both viciousness and astonishment.

Zhixiang wasn't finished. Her phoenix-like eyes glittered as the two men stopped in place. She lifted her right hand and pointed toward them. Immediately, both Xu Bai and Chen Mo coughed up blood. Looking even more flabbergasted, they began to retreat.

All their opponent had done was raise her hand, and suddenly they were injured. It was as if they had fallen into a bizarre reality with a new set of rules.

"Injure first, attack second?"

"Everything's been turned around. It's a divine ability that bends the rules of reality? That's a Spirit Severing technique!" Their faces immediately filled with shock, and their minds spun. Without hesitation, they fled at top speed.

Zhixiang lowered her hand and watched indifferently as the two left. Then she turned and shot back toward Meng Hao.

With his Spiritual Sense, Meng Hao could detect some of the things that had just happened. However, he did not stop moving, and kept his Immortality Bridgestone held tightly in hand, ready to crush it at any moment.

"That was my show of good faith," said Zhixiang. "They won't be able to heal their wounds in a short period of time, and surely won't have the gall to continue to pursue further."

"Meng Hao, this time, I sincerely wish to cooperate you. Last time, I truly made some mistakes. This time... why don't we truly work together in the spirit of cooperation?"

“You don’t need to respond, nor tell me your decision. In the easternmost region of this land mass is a mountain crag that juts out. I will wait for you there for one month. If you come, then we can work together, and you can acquire a lot more Celestial soil. If you don’t wish to come, then I won’t force the matter.” Zhixiang didn’t pursue him. Having finished her transmission, she stopped and watched Meng Hao shoot off into the distance. It was impossible to tell what she was thinking. After a long moment passed, she turned and headed toward the east.

Meng Hao frowned. He was having a hard time analyzing Demoness Zhixiang’s words and actions. She was just too changeable. One minute they were fighting each other, the next she was acting like this.

Although he was hesitating, he didn’t reduce his speed at all. He proceeded onward for eight days, until he was absolutely certain that no one was pursuing him. It was only then that he stopped to rest.

Three more days passed, and then he proceeded onward. Six days later, he stopped again. By this point, he was about eighty percent certain that Zhixiang was in fact not following him.

“Could it be that she really changed her mind?” he thought with a cold laugh. He was currently sitting cross-legged in an Immortal’s cave that he had carved out. As far as leaving the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, he really wasn’t willing to do so. Eyes glittering thoughtfully, he produced some Celestial soil and sent his consciousness into it, slowly attempting to gain enlightenment.

He used the same method he had used to study the fire. He closed his eyes, and the structure of the Celestial soil appeared in his mind. When the structure was complete, he would be able to use the Earth-type totem seed given to him by the Crow Divinity Tribes to fully congeal his Earth-type totem tattoo. That was the method he planned to use.

Time passed. During the following ten days, everything around Meng Hao was quiet and peaceful. No one disturbed him. On the outside, many of the other Western Desert Cultivators had already left this place.

Finally, Meng Hao opened his eyes, and they shone with a bright light. In

his mind, he had already completely outlined the basic structure of what could be referred to as a grit formed from Celestial soil.

“Not bad....” he thought, taking in a deep breath. From within his bag of holding, he produced the weak Earth-type totem seed that he had acquired from the Crow Divinity Tribes. It was flickering, and about to fade away; he had been carefully protecting it this entire time. Clenching his teeth, he branded it onto his right arm.

The instant the Earth-type totem seed was branded onto his arm, Meng Hao’s will caused the Celestial soil grit in his mind to merge with the five Crow Divinity Tribes’ Earth-type totem seed.

All of this was controlled by Meng Hao’s will, but even he wasn’t sure if he would succeed. All he knew was that he had used this method with the Fire-type totem, and based on his analysis, it should work similarly with the Celestial soil.

The merging process took a few days. Shockingly, when it was complete, something that looked like an indistinct vortex appeared on his right arm. It was yellowish-brown in color, and as soon as it appeared, an incredible gravitational force emanated out from it.

This gravitational force didn’t attract spiritual energy, but rather, the Celestial soil in front of Meng Hao. Instantly, the Celestial soil was sucked into the vortex and consumed.

Meng Hao’s mind shook. He immediately began to produce more clumps and chunks of Celestial soil. As soon as they appeared, they were sucked into the vortex. A few more days passed. Meng Hao had produced every bit of Celestial soil in his bag of holding, and all of it had been sucked into the vortex. Afterwards... the gravitational force was still there!

Furthermore, the force had not lessened, but rather, become stronger, as if it were transmogrifying.

Meng Hao had the intense feeling that if he’d had enough Celestial soil, he could cause this vortex to transmogrify into a totem tattoo. It would be the fourth of the five elements totem tattoos, the Earth-type.

When that happened, his Cultivation base would shoot up again, allowing him to easily crush the early Nascent Soul Stage, and surely defeat the mid Nascent Soul stage. As for the late Nascent Soul stage, he would at least be able to hold his own in a fight.

As of now, he was a truly powerful expert of the Gold Core stage. He was absolutely powerful enough to ignore the divide between the stages. From ancient times until now, he was the only Core Formation Cultivator who could ever do something so shocking.

In order to reach this point, a Perfect Gold Core was required, and the five elements needed to be refined to their ultimate form. Enlightenment based on being a Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy was also required, not to mention that being a Demon Sealer was a prerequisite!

The only person who could possibly tread this path was Meng Hao. He now had a peak Perfect Gold Core that could battle the Nascent Soul stage!

One could imagine that one day, when he possessed all five elements, and his Cultivation base was at the Perfect Five-Colored Nascent Soul stage, he would be in a realm that completely defied the Heavens. He would absolutely be the most powerful person on South Heaven who was underneath the Spirit Severing stage.

Chosen from all the great Sects, and all the Clans, could be crushed beneath his feet.

Meng Hao's Nascent Soul path was that of the Five-Colored Nascent Soul, a path forged by himself, a path of Perfection!

"I need more Celestial soil!" he thought. He covered the vortex with his sleeve, but the gravitational force was still there, and growing stronger. Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he walked out of his Immortal's cave and transformed into a colorful beam of light that shot through mid-air.

Several days later, he returned to the basin. He stood on the edge, frowning. There was no longer any mist there. All of the palace buildings below had been reduced to ash and wreckage.

Frowning, he walked down into the wreckage, whereupon bits of Celestial soil floated up into the air and then shot toward Meng Hao's arm. However, the place had been destroyed, and there was not much Celestial soil remaining. After the vortex sucked it all up, its gravitational force grew even more terrifying.

He stood there silently, his face filling with determination.

“When practicing cultivation, Cultivators must not allow dread into their hearts. They must always proceed forward! That Demoness Zhixiang is an Immortal... but for the moment, she's fallen into the mortal world. There's no reason not to cooperate with her one more time.”

Chapter 468: Thirty Thousand Worlds

Days later, in the eastern part of this landmass, was an area with a mountain crag that jutted out, forming a platform. The long, thin platform stretched out past the border of the landmass into the void beyond.

When you stood on this platform, you were surrounded on all sides by blackness.

A woman sat cross-legged at the far end of the platform. She was beautiful and had a look of indifference on her face. This was none other than Zhixiang, who had been sitting here meditating for more than a month.

After ceasing her pursuit of Meng Hao, she'd come here to wait in the peace and quiet.

After an entire month passed, she'd continued to wait, confident that Meng Hao would come. Although they hadn't known each other for long, Meng Hao had left an incredibly deep impression on her.

Suddenly, Zhixiang opened her eyes and looked off into the distant sky. A slight smile appeared on her mouth when she saw a beam of colorful light shooting toward her.

Within the beam was Meng Hao. His green robe and long black hair danced about in the wind as he flew, making him look less like a Cultivator and more like a scholar. However, his grave, stern face and cold eyes also made Meng Hao seem as if he were like a sharp, unsheathed sword.

She saw him, and he saw her.

It must be said that Zhao Youlan had been beautiful, but not consummately beautiful. However, after being possessed for a while, Zhixiang's Immortal Divinity began to meld more firmly with her. Slight changes could be seen within Zhao Youlan's body. Most were changes in disposition. In any case, these changes made this mixture of Zhao Youlan and Zhixiang show signs that in the future, she might reach that level of

consummate beauty that Zhao Youlan never had.

One could imagine that in the future, this combination of Zhixiang and Zhao Youlan would change, and become completely different.

Meng Hao looked at Zhixiang and thought about Zhao Youlan, and the ruthlessness that existed in the Cultivation world. Zhao Youlan had tried to get him to save her. However, their relationship was not such that Meng Hao would risk death to attempt to rescue her. It was out of the question.

In the Cultivation world, the law of the jungle prevails. Meng Hao would do nothing.

Looking around, his expression was the same as ever. He strode forward across the jutting platform, nearing the Zhixiang-possessed Zhao Youlan.

“I knew you would come,” said Zhixiang with a slight smile that contained a mysterious allure.

Meng Hao came to a stop next to her. His expression cool, he calmly said, “How could you be so sure?”

“Because you and me, we’re the same type of person,” she said, turning to look at him. Within her eyes could be seen a rare gleam of admiration. “When people try to kill us, we run. When facing death, we possess the will to live. In the midst of our struggles, we seize luck. In order to further our cultivation, we charge into the most dangerous of situations. We achieve our goals by fair means or foul!”

Meng Hao declined to comment.

Zhixiang spoke again, her voice soft and pleasant like a beautiful bird. “I know that you need vast quantities of Celestial soil. Unfortunately, the records maintained by you Planet South Heaven Cultivators only have information about a few of the Immortality Bridgestone worlds. The Bridge of Immortal Treading contains tens of thousands of worlds. Comparatively speaking, what you know of counts for little. Even the expression ‘a single hair out of nine ox hides,’ does not suffice to describe it.

“Throughout all the years that the Western Desert Cultivators from South Heaven have been exploring the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, they have only been to those few places. The Celestial soil that remains is negligible.

“The only way to get your hands on the amount that you need is to leave this landmass. Don’t confine yourself to this one area; go to places further away, places that the Planet South Heaven Cultivators have never been to.

“That is where you will find great quantities of Celestial soil. In fact, there is one landmass which is completely constructed entirely of Celestial soil.” When Zhixiang spoke, her expression was not one of flattery. Instead, her eyes were bright and glittering, like deep impenetrable pools of limpid autumn waters.

“It’s not that the Planet South Heaven Cultivators who have come to this place do not wish to explore more regions. Rather, those areas unknown to them are full of danger and peril. That, coupled with the fact that they are unaware of the paths leading to them, ensure that they never go there.” Zhixiang smiled faintly. She couldn’t actually see Meng Hao from where she was sitting, nor could she see that he was listening intently. The breeze caught her hair, causing it to dance about. She reached up and twirled a strand of hair around her fingers. Other strands of hair fell to partially cover her face, making her look even more charming than before.

Meng Hao glanced over at her, but said nothing.

“The correct paths cannot be traveled by riding randomly on the dust rocks that flit about the void. That is because the dust rocks which lead to those worlds do not appear in a set place or time. They can only be located by means of a special augury technique.

“That special technique requires constant adjustments, and is something that Planet South Heaven Cultivators have no ability to master. Luckily, I happen to know of one such path. Although it does not lead to the deepest areas of the Bridge of Immortality, it does go twenty thousand worlds deep.

“This is my second expression of good faith, and proves that I don’t care

about you acquiring that particular Demon Spirit. Actually, I hope that you can help me to get a second one!

“In return, I’ll take you into the depths of the Realm of the Bridge Ruins to get more Celestial soil.” She turned and looked at Meng Hao, her expression one of sincerity. It seemed as if this partnership was, as she said, very different than the first.

Meng Hao smiled slightly. How could he possibly trust this Demoness Zhixiang at the drop of a hat? Trust was a difficult thing to exist between Cultivators. Most of the time, partnerships were forged out of necessity.

“What good is a Demon Spirit to you?” asked Meng Hao suddenly.

Zhixiang hesitated, then looked at him one more time. Finally, she seemed to reach a decision.

“This partnership will be a manifestation of our mutual good will. If it ends happily, then we can enter into a yet another partnership... and I can once again manifest my good will. Very well, I will tell you why I need the Demon Spirit.

“Demon Spirits are good for only one thing. They are keys which can be used to enter the Primordial Immortal Demon Plane. Anyone who possesses a true Demon Spirit is qualified to return two hundred years after the opening of the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. At that time, the truly blessed location can be entered, the Primordial Immortal Demon Plane!”

“The Primordial Immortal Demon Plane....” said Meng Hao thoughtfully. Her words seemed quite plausible, and would also explain why the Heavenly Court Alliance of the Black Lands wanted Demon Spirits.

“The Bridge of Immortal Treading was created many years ago by the ancient Immortal Demon Sect. The purpose was to lead the branches of the Sect which existed on the four great planets toward Immortal Ascension. However, in the war with the Ji Clan, the bridge was destroyed. Members of the ancient Immortal Demon Sect set up an all-powerful spell formation, sacrificing their own lives to ensure that the Bridge of Immortality would manifest once every thousand years. It also ensured that the Primordial Immortal Demon Plane would remain intact.... After

the war, the surviving Cultivators, after experiencing the vicissitudes of time, founded a new Immortal Demon Sect.

“I... am disciple of that Sect.”

Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and his expression flickered slightly.

“Because of the life sacrifices made for the Primordial Immortal Demon Plane, a curse was left behind. Any Cultivator who touches items from the Primordial Immortal Demon Plane would die a horrible death. However, you... dismantled a spell locus on the third level of the bridge.

Unexpectedly, the curse did nothing to you. That is why I think we should work together.

“Even the Ji Clan fears the curse, and as such, permits the Realm of the Bridge Ruins to exist, and to manifest every thousand years.” Having said all this, Zhixiang looked over at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao kept silent for a moment, then indifferently said, “It opens once every thousand years. Countless years have passed. I wonder, how many times has it manifested so far?”

“The Primordial Immortal Demon Plane truly does only open every one thousand years,” Zhixiang explained slowly, “and can only be entered with a Demon Spirit. However, a Demon Spirit is born only once every thirty thousand years. So, for all intents and purposes... this is actually only the third time it has opened.

“As for Demon Spirits, they don't exist only within the Realm of the Bridge Ruins; they can also be born on the outside. It is possible for them to appear in any place that contains vestiges of the ancient Immortal Demon Sect.

“Therefore... in two hundred years, there will no doubt be quite a few people who go to the Primordial Immortal Demon Plane. In fact, people will most likely come from all the four great planets. Even some of the secretive great Sects from the Ninth Mountain and Sea will probably appear.

“After all, long ago, the ancient Immortal Demon Sect... was the number

one Sect of the Ninth Mountain and Sea! One of its members was the Lord of the Ninth Mountain. At that time, the Ji Clan was under its command. Later, the Lord of the Ninth Mountain and Sea went missing. That was when the Li Clan was covered over by the Heavens [1]. The Ji Clan occupied the Mountain, seized its Essence and forged the Immortal Sealing Dais. Within the Ninth Mountain and Sea, anyone who wishes to practice Cultivation must tread the path of the Ji and become an Immortal of the Ji Clan. Anyone who refuses to follow their path is a renegade Immortal.

[tl: [1] = The Li Clan being covered by the Heavens was mentioned in chapter 321]

“Such matters do not have much to do with you. That you are aware of them is enough. If you ever have the chance to reach Immortal Ascension, then you will be forced to make a choice at that time.

“However, based on my observations, sooner or later, you will be an Immortal among these stars!”

She concluded her speech very calmly. However, Meng Hao’s heart and mind were trembling. As he thoughtfully considered everything she said, he realized that it didn’t matter whether or not he believed her. He had put a lot of thought into the matter before making the decision to come here. He turned to look at Zhixiang.

“When do we set out?”

Zhixiang’s eyes filled with a bright light. She realized that for some reason, her admiration for Meng Hao only continued to grow. Such decisiveness and lack of carelessness was only possible for people who were extremely stupid and narcissistic, or... extremely confident in their path of cultivation.

“So,” she said to herself smiling, “he’s not afraid of schemes and intrigues. In any case, I’m an Immortal.... This arrangement is good. We’ll work together, and I won’t hide anything more from him. Our partnership should work well this time!”

“I’d planned to wait for you for three more days before leaving.”

“Three more days?” he said, looking at her. “Very well.” With that he walked off to the side and sat down cross-legged to meditate, declining to comment further.

Three days passed in a flash. It was at this point that far off in the sky, a meteor could be seen. It moved with incredible speed toward them.

“That’s the rock!” said Zhixiang as it neared. She suddenly sprang into action, shooting toward the giant rock. Almost at the same time, Meng Hao teleported.

The two of them appeared on the rock and exchanged a glance. Immediately, the rock tore a hole into the border of the world and shot out into the void.

Out in the boundless blackness, one man and one woman rode the huge rock off into the distance.

Meanwhile, far out ahead of Meng Hao and Zhixiang, an azure-robed Cultivator with a sword strapped to his back strode out through the void. He held an alcohol flagon in his hand from which he occasionally drank. He looked lonely and bleak.

“You ask when you will gaze upon me again...? I’ve been looking for you for three thousand years.... Where are you? Thirty thousand worlds, countless Bridge Slaves. I’ve already been to twenty thousand worlds, and I’ve encountered countless Bridge Slaves. But you... where are you?”

“Xue’er, answer me! I will take you away from this place. It doesn’t matter who tries to stop me. It doesn’t matter if I die the cruelest death. It doesn’t matter if my body and spirit are annihilated. I will... take you away!!”

Chapter 469: The Depths of the Bridge Ruins

In the blackness of the void, there exists an indescribable coldness. This was a coldness that could, in the briefest of moments, freeze the body of a Nascent Soul Cultivator until it cracked into pieces.

Anyone who possessed a physical body but no cold-resisting treasures would be destroyed.

Only someone who cultivated a divine ability related to fire, and also had a fitting magical item, would be able to survive for long here.

At the moment, Zhixiang was sitting cross-legged on the large rock. She looked over at Meng Hao with her phoenix-like eyes. This was their tenth day traveling through the void. During that entire time, they hadn't spoken to each other at all. Each sat on one end of the rock, some distance away from each other.

A glittering shield surrounded Meng Hao, preventing the cold on the outside from entering. At first, it had been quite stable, but as the rock continued further into the depths of the void, the shield formed by the five small white stones was gradually beginning to flicker. The further they went, the more it seemed as if it might collapse.

On previous occasions in which Meng Hao had ventured into the void, he had always spent more than ten days in the darkness. This time, however, was different than those previous times.

The cold here was many times stronger than before. Furthermore, the deeper they traveled into the void, the more shocking the cold became. It was so fearsome that even with the protective treasures, it was getting to the point that it was becoming unbearable.

Meng Hao had long since noticed that the rock he was sitting on had actually turned white. The frost which covered everything was growing thicker and had turned into thick ice.

Zhixiang didn't seem to be having any problems dealing with the cold.

She was sitting there cross-legged, surrounded by the freezing cold, looking the same as ever. She had nothing to protect her; she simply rotated her Cultivation base, seemingly sucking in and absorbing any of the coldness that neared her.

This caused Meng Hao to feel even more vigilance than before regarding her.

He could sense that she had looked at him just now. His eyes opened and their gazes met. Cracking sounds could suddenly be heard from Meng Hao's protective shield. Fissures appeared on its surface, spreading out and growing in quantity. Soon, they covered the entire thing. The shield did not collapse, but it obviously would in a short period of time.

Once it shattered, the coldness would instantly rush in toward Meng Hao.

A contemplative look appeared in Zhixiang's eyes as she thought to herself, "Perhaps I thought too much of him. I overlooked the problem of the cold; if he can't get across the void on his own power, then I guess we'll need to change the terms of our partnership. After all... power is the foundation of any cooperation, and also the basis of respect." Despite this, she smiled.

Zhixiang's eyes glittered as she looked at Meng Hao and his shield, which was clearly about to shatter. It really had never occurred to her that he might not be equipped to cross the void in this way. "Fellow Daoist Meng, the coldness here is not something that ordinary Nascent Soul Cultivators can resist. You may have a strange Cultivation base, but I'm afraid you won't be able to survive either. Why don't you come over here by me? Anything within ten meters of me will be kept safe."

Even as the words came out of her mouth, cracks spread out like a spiderweb over his shield. It didn't seem as if it would last much longer. It was at this point that Meng Hao spoke coldly: "There's no need."

His voice was calm and yet powerfully shocking. It seemed to carry an unspeakable confidence as well as grim feeling. When Zhixiang heard his response, her eyes filled with a look of concentration.

She watched as Meng Hao slowly reached his hand out and pushed against the shield. A boom could be heard as the shield trembled and then collapsed. As it did, the five white rocks around Meng Hao all exploded.

The shield disappeared, causing Zhixiang's eyes to go wide. Meng Hao's actions completely exceeded her powers of anticipation. How could she have guessed that Meng Hao would dare to personally destroy his own protective shield in such a way?

The instant that the shield collapsed, the surrounding cold from the void rushed in toward Meng Hao. In the blink of an eye, it completely covered him.

However, he continued to sit there cross-legged just as before, his expression placid. He lowered his right hand and closed his eyes to meditate quietly. It was as if he didn't feel the surrounding cold whatsoever.

Zhixiang looked at him for a long time, having been completely shaken by Meng Hao. She was an Immortal, so she could ignore the cold. But Meng Hao had decisively destroyed his own useless shield, and then relied on only himself to fight back against the cold.

She looked over at him, once again filled with the same admiration as before, if not more. "Ordinary Cultivators, faced with a disintegrating shield, would all take the chance and hope that the shield held. However, this guy did no such thing. He is thoroughly decisive!"

She took him even more seriously now that she could see how he resisted the cold. It seemed that at the moment, he was not out of sorts in any way.

As she sat there thoughtfully, Meng Hao closed his eyes. They didn't speak any more, but rather sat in silence as the rock continued to fly onward. Half a month passed, and the fearsomeness of the cold continued to grow.

At one point, Zhixiang opened her eyes and performed an incantation with her right hand. As she did, Meng Hao looked over and watched. In recent days, Meng Hao looked the same as he usually did, but actually,

being in this cold was like training in a type of cultivation.

His Fire-type totem tattoo was fused with his Everburning Flame. The words Everburning represented life. In the icy cold of this void, an eternal fire burned inside of him, igniting his spirit, making his own will everburning.

Although the cold pressed down upon him, his spirit burned with eternal flame. All he had to do was exercise a thought, and his body would restore itself. This was what qualified him to cross this void.

He continued to watch Zhixiang's fingers flash in an incantation. Her eyes shone with a glimmer that indicated she was performing augury. Suddenly, she stretched out her left hand and then pushed it down toward the rock. Before it could touch the surface, Meng Hao's eyes glittered. Immediately, Alcohol Qi spread out through his body, and the shocking Dancing Sword Qi appeared. It seemed that if Zhixiang touched the rock, then the Dancing Sword Qi would explode out.

Seeing this caused Zhixiang to pause and turn her beautiful head to look at him.

"Fellow Daoist Meng, what is the meaning of this?"

"Why don't you tell me, Fellow Daoist Zhixiang?"

After thinking for a moment, Zhixiang slowly replied, "Based on my augury, I can tell that we have arrived at an unfixed intersection node. I must cause this one thousand meter dust rock to stop temporarily. Then, we will wait in this position for seven days."

"How exactly can you persuade me to trust you about this?" said Meng Hao coolly, his expression the same as ever.

Zhixiang frowned, then gave him a deep, thoughtful look. Finally she laughed.

"Fellow Daoist Meng, if you want to learn my augury technique, you can just say so, there's no need to go about it this way." Despite her words, she still sat there thoughtfully for a moment. She knew that Meng Hao was endlessly crafty and viciously decisive. He was not a person who could be

easily fooled. After a bit of thought, Zhixiang decided that what was most important was that their partnership proceed smoothly. The fact that he was not affected by the curse was something that would prove very helpful to her later. She clenched her jaw and then made a grasping motion toward the void. Immediately, the coldness in the area rushed toward her palm, then coagulated into a crystalline jade slip.

She branded it with some information, then tossed it over toward Meng Hao. Meng Hao grabbed it and scanned it with Spiritual Sense. It contained information about how to use augury to find one's position within the void. It also contained a large map which now floated in his mind.

His expression was the same as ever as he crushed the jade slip, then performed an augury incantation, which gave him the same information Zhixiang had just referred to. After this, he closed his eyes.

"He looks young," thought Zhixiang, "but is astute and acts with foresight. He's as wise as a Demon! A person like this who reaches Immortal Ascension will be completely inhuman!" Resigning herself to this fact, she snorted internally and then pressed her right hand down onto the big rock.

A rumbling sound could be heard. The ice on the rock shattered as layers of power surrounded the rock, causing its speed to suddenly reduce. After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, it was completely motionless within the void.

Seven days later, a white beam of light approached from off within the distance. Another dust rock was now shooting toward them. When it neared, both Meng Hao and Zhixiang performed minor teleportations. After they appeared on the surface of the new dust rock, it changed directions and headed off into the distance.

It was in this manner that the following five months passed. The two of them switched rocks at least ten times, proceeding through void.

Unfortunately, at one point they failed to encounter a passing dust rock at an intersection, and as such were unable to proceed along in the way

they had originally intended. After performing various auguries, Zhixiang and Meng Hao changed their path. Eventually, an enormous landmass appeared in front of them.

The borders of this landmass were red, like some bizarre shield. It was huge, containing mountains and ruins. The whole place was very peaceful; it seemed to have been a very long time since anyone had been here.

“The paths of the dust rocks of the Realm of the Bridge Ruins are not eternally fixed,” said Zhixiang calmly. “Even though we suffered a setback, with both of us performing augury, I’m eighty percent confident that we can find a dust rock in this place that will allow us to proceed. I’ve never been to this particular landmass before, but from the look of it, few people have been here in the past tens of thousands of years. After all, we are now approaching the twenty thousand worlds area.”

Meng Hao nodded. They stood on their rock, allowing it to shoot toward the red shield. In the instant it passed through, a rumbling filled the sky. The echoing sound caused Meng Hao’s expression to suddenly change.

It wasn’t just him. Upon entering this strange new world, Zhixiang’s eyes went wide with astonishment.

Chapter 470: Violent Changes!

“Do you wish to attain eternal life?”

“Are you qualified to defy the Heavens and live forever?”

“Do you want to have a type of life that is unique in all Heaven?”

Meng Hao’s mind buzzed. As soon as he entered this world, three sentences entered his ears. They were not spoken by the same person, and they resounded like thunder into his mind and heart.

At the same time, he saw that the sky of this world was a familiar gray color. No gray mist covered the ground, but Meng Hao could see hundreds of thousands of figures, all of them Bridge Slaves, moving at high speed in the direction that he and Zhixiang were standing in.

They moved with incredible speed. In the blink of an eye, these hundreds of thousands of Bridge Slaves neared. However, they did not even glance at Meng Hao and Zhixiang. Their expressions were frustrated, even anxious, as if they had just received a summons. They charged past Meng Hao and Zhixiang, pouring out through the border of the world and into the void.

In the space of about ten breaths, hundreds of thousands of Bridge Slaves had all charged out into the void. After they were gone, the only thing that remained were the faint echoes of their voices.

“When will the Bridge of Immortality reappear like new...? Sir, on what day will we again lay eyes on you...?”

To have so many Bridge Slaves whistling through the air directly next to him caused Meng Hao’s scalp to go numb. He panted as the rock he stood on suddenly stopped moving. Zhixiang looked over at Meng Hao, obviously shaken by the huge number of Bridge Slaves in this world.

Both Meng Hao and Zhixiang heard the voices of the Bridge Slaves, although the voices didn’t seem to be directed just toward the two of them. The words uttered by the hundreds of thousands of Bridge Slaves seemed to be a collective expression of their heartfelt wishes.

Meng Hao and Zhixiang remained motionless as the Bridge Slaves swept

past them like spectres. As they left, the world returned to normal. The grayness disappeared, and normal color returned. Meng Hao found that he was completely soaked with cold sweat.

As for Zhixiang, her expression was still one of fear. Even for her, her first thing she thought upon seeing so many Bridge Slaves was that she was going to die.

“According to my understanding,” she said, “it is only because of their hellish destiny that the Bridge Slaves of the Realm of the Bridge Ruins instinctively gather together in groups of a few hundred. But there were so many just now. Could it be that this place... is some immense historical remnant of the ancient Immortal Demon Sect?”

“Is that why there were so many of them gathered here? If my speculations are correct, then why would they all leave so suddenly? Their expressions looked anxious. Such emotion should be impossible. Unless....” Suddenly, her eyes filled with terror.

“Unless they were summoned?” said Meng Hao slowly, his eyes glittering as he gave voice to his own speculation.

The two of them stood there silently. As they did, the restored world around them all of a sudden began to tremble violently. Everything shook as the previously clear sky suddenly filled with fissures. The fissures grew bright as a piercing shriek suddenly filled the air.

The ground was quaking so hard that it seemed it might collapse. This entire Immortality Bridgestone landmass seemed to be emitting a shocking howl which echoed into Meng Hao’s ears, shaking him and causing him to cough up a mouthful of blood.

He lost control of his body. It felt as if some incredibly powerful force had slammed into his face. He was tossed backward with a bang, slamming into the border of the void with a bang.

Fortunately, this part of the border had been ripped open, and wasn’t completely restored. Meng Hao flew like a kite with its string cut, directly out into the void.

Simultaneously, blood also sprayed from Zhixiang's mouth. Several tremors ran through her and it seemed she was incapable of standing up to the force. However, she was apparently still in control of her body as she tumbled backward out through the gap, into the void.

Meng Hao's face was pale and his mind spun. The coldness of the void surrounded him completely, and his body instantly began to grow stiff. Even worse, his torso was mangled bloodily; numerous bones were broken. Blood spurted out of countless wounds.

It was a critical moment. As for Zhixiang, she was tumbling backward, but clearly wasn't seriously injured. A violet light appeared in Meng Hao's eyes as the Violet Pupil Transformation took effect. By sacrificing some of his life force, he was able to heal some of his serious injuries.

The faster the healing went, the more life force was drained away.

Meng Hao's chest quickly recovered, and all of his injuries vanished. Even his Cultivation base was at the peak of its power. However, the price had paid... was the loss of a sixty-year cycle's worth of life.

Meng Hao's instant recovery caused Zhixiang's eyes to flicker. She could tell that whatever technique he had used to force such a quick recovery would have come at some great cost. As the two of them continued to fall back, they exchanged a glance and then looked back toward the enormous, trembling landmass.

The only thing they could see was the gigantic landmass shaking. Occasional roars could be heard, which grew stronger and stronger until finally, a gray mist rose up from within the landmass.

The gray mist looked like a gigantic mushroom cloud. As it exploded out, it churned and seethed, transforming into an enormous beast. It looked like a qilin, completely formed out of mist. However, if you looked closely, it was clearly... a Bridge Slave.

Except, this enormous qilin was vastly more powerful than an ordinary Bridge Slave.

After it appeared, the mist-qilin lifted its head up and roared. It suddenly

charged forward, its expression anxious, as though it had been summoned.

Meng Hao and Zhixiang were extremely close. Even if they used minor teleportation, even if Zhixiang relied on her incredible speed, there was no time to evade. They could only stare blankly as the gigantic qilin beast shot toward them. In the blink of an eye, its mist had enveloped them.

Roaring sounds filled the air. More blood sprayed from Meng Hao's mouth. He quickly summoned the Lotus Sword Formation to rotate around him rapidly. The power of Time radiated out in waves.

By the time Meng Hao had coughed up four mouthfuls of blood, the Lotus Sword Formation radiated the fearsome power of a thousand years of time, which managed to melt all the mist its range – thirty meters in every direction. Of course, compared to the entire massive frame of the qilin beast, that was a paltry size.

The result was that Meng Hao was carried along with the beast as it shot forward.

At the same time, Zhixiang coughed up several mouthfuls of blood. Then, she employed one of her own Immortal Divinity techniques to resist the mist. Just like Meng Hao, she cut out a space for herself within the body of the enormous qilin beast.

They exchanged a mutual glance, and could see the somber look in each other's eyes. They had been put into this situation involuntarily. However, there was no need to discuss how to extricate themselves. At the moment, that would leave them out in the void, directionless, exiled. If that happened, it would mean being lost forever, with no choice but to use an Immortality Bridgestone to give up and leave.

"Why do that when I can just hitch a ride on this qilin beast?" thought Meng Hao, his eyes glittering. "Let's see what sort of thing it is that can summon Bridge Slaves!" Although the situation seemed to have taken a turn for the worse, he didn't really have any other options. Since he still had his Immortality Bridgestone, if anything went truly bad, he could leave in an instant.

It was impossible to say what Zhixiang was planning. Most likely, after

possessing Zhao Youlan, she too could use the Immortality Bridgestone to leave.

The two exchanged no words, but simply went along with the roaring qilin beast as it flew onward.

The coldness of the void was incapable of penetrating the mist. The blackness outside almost seemed like black waters as the qilin shot forward with fearsome speed.

The qilin beast moved far, far faster than the dust rocks. It was incredibly huge in size, making Zhixiang and Meng Hao seem like nothing more than mosquitos within it.

It carried Meng Hao and Zhixiang with it as it sped deeper and deeper into the Realm of the Bridge Ruins.

Time passed. After seven days, they had traveled further than they could have traveled in a month on a dust rock.

A month later, Meng Hao's mind trembled. Up ahead in the void, he had just caught sight of a matchlessly huge giant waving its arms. Its body was made of mist, and it bore the semblance of a Bridge Slave. Furthermore, it was charging... in the exact same direction as the qilin!

At the same time, Meng Hao saw a vast army of spectre-like Bridge Slaves, hundreds of thousands of them, all flying at top speed in the same direction.

As they continued to travel, he saw more and more scenes like this. It seemed almost as if all the Bridge Slaves in the entire Realm of the Bridge Ruins, big ones, small ones, were all appearing and heading toward the same place.

Meng Hao wasn't the only one who was shocked by this. Zhixiang was panting. Her understanding of this place was even greater, and her speculations gave rise to a gripping fear inside her heart.

"Don't tell me... that they're going... to Bridgesoul Mountain!?"

Even as Zhixiang's heart trembled, a mountain appeared off in the

distance.

The mountain let off a mysterious glow as it hung there in the middle of the void. There were no Immortality Bridgestones near it. There was only the gigantic, enormous mountain!

Countless names were written onto the mountain, each one of which let out a mysterious glow. They looked like magical symbols, covering the entire mountain. It was hard to say, but it appeared as if there were several million names written there.

Every time the names pulsed with light, the faces of the Bridge Slaves who were nearing the mountain would grow more anxious, and they would fly forward with greater speed.

At the top of the mountain was a palace that brimmed with an aura of archaic rot. Within the palace was blackness, and silence.

In another location near the mountain was a person. He stood there, an azure sword swirling through the air around his body, and alcohol flagon in his hand. He wore a long, azure robe, and his hair danced in the air. His eyes gleamed with a fierce glow.

This was none other than... Han Shan!

He suddenly spoke, his voice filled with an icy cold that made the coldness of the void seem warm. "I'll say it one more time. I want my wife... returned to me this instant!"

Chapter 471: Frost Soil Demon Emperor

His voice echoed out within the void, slamming into the incoming millions of Bridge Slaves. However, it didn't hurt them, but rather bounced off of them, turning into countless echoes. It was as if millions upon millions of voices were responding to Han Shan.

Because of the way he spoke, his aura exploded out in a way that the word 'monstrous' couldn't even begin to describe. Even the greatest heroes could only accomplish half of what was currently occurring!

Meng Hao's mind reeled when he saw Han Shan and the result of his one sentence. He also saw that the Bridge Slaves were not capable of defending themselves against the power of Han Shan. Rather... Han Shan wasn't willing to hurt them.

Or you might even say that he feared accidentally injuring them!

He feared accidentally injuring the person he sought!

Meng Hao thought back to when he had first caught sight of Han Shan, and the expression in the man's eyes when he looked at the Bridge Slaves. It was a searching look, a disconsolate look; it seemed as if he was seeking for the only woman in his life.

It was a woman named Xue'er, his wife.

His lonely search had lasted for three thousand years....

Even as Han Shan's voice echoed about, he suddenly lifted his hand. A grim glow appeared in his eyes as he suddenly made a chopping motion toward the mountain. Instantly, Alcohol Qi roared up.

Meng Hao also had Dancing Sword Qi, but if you compared it to the amount Han Shan wielded, it was like comparing a firefly to the brilliant moon!

Alcohol Qi spread out, filling Heaven and Earth. Inside, figures could be seen, all of them resembling Han Shan. As the Qi continued to multiply, more and more figures appeared, until there were no less than a hundred thousand!

These hundred thousand figures of Han Shan all began to spit out Alcohol Qi. As they did, a vague image started to become visible.

The vague image was a depiction of a world. It was a complete world, with a sky, land, living people. All of it was very realistic, as if this world belonged to Han Shan.

An azure sword suddenly appeared in Han Shan's hand. It chopped down, emitting a monstrous Sword Qi, which spread out and transformed into the image of an azure dragon. Its roar ripped into the void and it began to congeal the Alcohol Qi and absorb the image of Han Shan's world. Then, it shot urgently toward the palace at the top of the mountain.

Deadly ripples spread out as it moved. It focused its power, something that far exceeded the divine abilities of normal Cultivators.

In the blink of an eye, the roaring azure dragon shot through the void shattering everything. At the same time....

A cold snort could be heard from within the palace. The instant the snort echoed, the coldness out in the void increased to a terrifying level.

The azure dragon stopped in mid-air, its body already pure white. In the space of a single breath, it was turned into a statue of ice.

Next, the void began to fill with a sheet of whiteness. The whiteness was frost which appeared out of nowhere. The frost began to merge together into a shapeless mass which spread out in the void. It seemed to stretch as far as the eye could see, with no end, filling the void to create a huge landmass.

A landmass of Frost soil!

The landmass of Frost soil was not ice, but rather, a specific type of soil. It contained dense Immortal Qi, several times more so than Celestial soil.

"Frost Soil Demon Emperor!!" said Zhixiang, her voice hoarse, her face filled with shock and disbelief. She immediately produced an Immortality Bridgestone and crushed it.

However, once she did, her face immediately fell. The teleportation

power of the Immortality Bridgestone did not manifest.

Zhixiang's face drained of blood.

"The Frost Soil Demon Emperor could not possibly be alive! Didn't he die in battle against the Ji Ancestor?!?!"

"His corpse was taken away and transformed into one of the Immortal Sealing Daises on one of the four great planets, Planet South Heaven! His Immortal Divinity was ripped out and refined into one of the Ji Clan's Nine Treasures, the Frost Lamp!

"All of his disciples and his entire bloodline were taken by the Ji Clan and refined into the Frigid River, which flows through the main gate of the Ji Clan and can never freeze over!"

Zhixiang's face grew even paler as she murmured these words. Even though her words were soft, they echoed out within the misty body of the qilin beast and drifted over to Meng Hao, who was relatively close to her.

At the same time, a voice echoed out from within the palace. When it did, the Frost soil landmass quaked, and the faces of the surrounding Bridge Slaves were no longer filled with frustration. Instead, they brimmed with viciousness. Their eyes turned red and began to emanate crazed killing intent.

A cold voice could be heard: "Enter my Immortal Demon world, and life or death no longer rests in the hands of the Heavens. With eternal life, what is the point of fate?" As it stopped speaking, it gave a light sigh.

Next, the masses of Bridge Slaves in the area began to charge toward Han Shan. The qilin beast in which Meng Hao and Zhixiang sat roared, along with the dozens of other beasts similar to it that were present, and charged toward Han Shan.

Han Shan gave a dour, bitter laugh filled with grief. It grew louder and louder until it seemed to be the only sound in Heaven and Earth.

"Enter the Celestial Demon world and sever all mortal fate.... I have no such faith!" Han Shan lifted his flagon up to take a drink of alcohol, then turned and shot toward the mountain. As he did, he made another

chopping motion.

The movement of his hand caused everything to shake. A massive fissure opened up ahead of him which then transformed into a sword aura that shot toward the mountaintop. As it got closer, it transformed from something amorphous into something with a shape. However, it quickly became white and, like the azure dragon, exploded into pieces.

At this moment, the Bridge Slaves were closing in on Han Shan, millions of them. Han Shan's eyes were red as he turned to face them. He waved his arm, causing a blast of Alcohol Wind to sweep out across them.

"I don't want to hurt you. Just bring out my wife.... All of you, don't force my hand!" He turned and sent more prismatic bands of Sword Qi flying out. In quick succession, nine swords appeared.

The first band of Sword Qi was three thousand meters long!

The second band of Sword Qi was thirty thousand!

By the time the ninth sword appeared, the vast, boundless sword Qi permeated the entire world of the void. The nine bands of sword Qi then combined, transferring into an enormous azure Sword Soul which stabbed toward the mountain.

As the Sword Soul neared, it began to turn white. Cracking sounds could be heard as it got closer and closer. It began to turn dim, and frost appeared on its surface, which cracked and collapsed. This exterminated eight bands of Sword Qi, leaving only one behind. This one slashed down toward the palace.

Roaring sounds filled the sky. Everything shook, and the palace twisted as an ancient hand appeared from within its depths. The forefinger of the hand pointed out, and the sword Qi collapsed.

Han Shan coughed up some blood. He looked up toward the palace, a savage look on his face as he roared: "Bring her out!!"

Meng Hao's mind was reeling, and his breath came in ragged pants. He could only watch the scene, his face blank. Everything that was happening far exceeded the comprehension level of a Gold Core stage Cultivator.

Even Zhixiang was like a cicada in winter, cautious and solemn. She did understand what was happening, but this only served to fill her with more fear.

It was an old man who had shattered the Sword Qi. He now stood there outside of the palace, wearing a white robe, looking like a transcendent being. His expression was cold, and a mysterious fire burned within his eyes. He gazed coolly down at Han Shan.

“Sword Immortal Han Shan, during the past several thousand years, a new almighty force has arisen in the Ninth Mountain.... A man.... He... he looks like the image which hangs in the ancestral shrine of the Sect. He looks exactly like the Frost Soil Demon Emperor....

“I will give you a single chance. If you can kill all the Bridge Slaves in the space of one hundred breaths, then your wife will appear for you to see. Furthermore, I can guarantee that your wife is not among the Bridge Slaves outside this mountain.”

Han Shan glared up at the old man. It was in this moment that the eyes of the Bridge Slaves grew bright red and their faces filled with madness, as if they wished to devour Han Shan alive. It was also in this moment that the first of the Bridge Slaves actually reached him.

“Screw off!” cried Han Shan, his killing intent billowing up to the Heavens. The sword in his hand swept out, causing a prismatic Sword Qi to appear, along with billowing Alcohol Qi. Everywhere it passed, thousands of Bridge Slaves would explode.

His killing will had erupted, and Han Shan was going mad. His guilt, his three thousand years of torment, overwhelmed him with madness. He shot toward the Bridge Slaves.

At some point, a boy had appeared next to the old man. He stood there, smiling and counting aloud, “One, two, three....”

Booms echoed out as Han Shan’s slaughter reached a pinnacle. It was as if he possessed no powers of reasoning. Everywhere he went, the only thing that existed was a man and a sword. Vast quantities of Bridge Slaves were being slaughtered.

Sword Qi rocketed up, and a gigantic python was slashed. Mist collapsed, dispersing everywhere.

However, no matter how Han Shan went about the killing, exterminating millions of Bridge Slaves was not easy to do in the space of one hundred breaths. By the time the boy had counted to thirty-seven, there were still many more left.

Han Shan roared as he lifted up his right hand and tilted the alcohol flagon over. Alcohol flew out, transforming in mid-air into multiple flying swords. Apparently, this alcohol flagon did not contain alcohol, but rather, a sword.

One hundred thousand swords appeared. Behind each of these swords was a figure that looked exactly like Han Shan. Each and every one lifted up their swords, and their eyes filled with madness. They scattered, one hundred thousand people slaughtering millions of Bridge Slaves.

Roaring filled the air as massive numbers of Bridge Slaves died. Gigantic beasts were felled and collapsed into pieces. Eventually, the giant qilin beast that Meng Hao was in was slain by one of Han Shan's clones. It was at this point that Meng Hao personally experienced the fearsomeness of the Sword Qi.

It instantly cut the qilin into two pieces. A boom resounded out and blood sprayed from Meng Hao's mouth. He watched as the Sword Qi neared him. He immediately lost all power to fight or struggle. However, just before the Sword Qi hit him, it stopped for a moment, then went around him.

Meng Hao's face was pale. Although the Sword Qi was gone, he was now surrounded by bitter cold. It enveloped him in an instant, and he lost control of his own movements. He fell down onto the surface of the Frost Soil landmass. In that instant, his body... was instantly covered in frost.

A sense of deadly crisis swept over him. He didn't have any time to think; he immediately ignited the Everburning Flame. The power of his Fire-type totem set his Wood-type totem ablaze, adding to the conflagration.

However, even as the Everburning Flame roared into being, the Earth-type totem vortex on his arm suddenly began to suck in the Frost soil!

Chapter 472: The Soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading!

Despite that, Meng Hao's body was still transformed into a statue of ice. He stood there motionless within the layers of ice; the only thing he was capable of focusing on was ensuring that his mind was not exterminated. However, the vortex on his right arm suddenly exploded with intensity.

Meng Hao could feel the force of the Earth-type power rising up within the vortex. The gravitational force seemed inexhaustible; in fact, you could even say that it approached the point where it could exterminate the power of the Frost soil.

As for Zhixiang, she was an Immortal Divinity who had possessed a physical body. However, at this moment her level of weakness was not much different than Meng Hao's. The Sword Qi avoided her, but she too fell down and instantly became an ice statue. The main difference was that she could hold out for much longer than Meng Hao.

Up above, the boy standing next to the old man smiled and said: "... one hundred."

In the exact instant that his voice rang out, Han Shan's one hundred thousand clones finished exterminating all the Bridge Slaves in the area.

However, it was at this moment that suddenly, within the aura of bitter cold, one figure after another began to appear. These figures were none other than the Bridge Slaves that Han Shan had just slain. They... reappeared with no injuries at all. Not a single was dead.

In fact, when Meng Hao looked out from within the ice statue at the Bridge Slaves, there was one girl who looked familiar.

"So, do you understand?" said the old man coolly.

Han Shan stood there, taciturn. With a bitter look on his face, he lifted up the alcohol flagon and took a drink.

The next person to speak was not the old man, but rather, the boy. "In

my world, if you exercise faith in me, you will never die, can never be slain. Isn't that a good thing? Eternal life. Indestructibility. The only requirement is that you rebuild me."

More voices rang out, not those of the boy, but rather, from the surrounding Bridge Slaves, all in unison. It was almost as if all of these Bridge Slaves were one person.

"Exercise faith in me, and you can live forever!

"Exercise faith in me, and you can never be destroyed!

"Exercise faith in me, and you can exist with Heaven and Earth!

"Exercise faith in me, understand my Dao. My Dao is your Dao...."

Next, the old man, the boy and the Bridge Slaves all spoke together.

"I am the spirit of the Bridge of Immortal Treading. You came here three thousand years ago to prostrate yourself before me. You made a promise to me. You wanted everlasting life, limitless life force so that you could cultivate your Solitary Sword Song.

"At that time, you had only ten years of longevity left. My response to you was that you should exercise faith in me.... However, you... went back on your word!" The last three words came out in a roar of endless fury, filled with madness.

"You clearly consented, then went back on your word, all because of the woman who was with you. She begged and pleaded with you to change your mind. Her persuasion distracted you, and then what she did... made you go back on your promise!

"I never imagined that in order to ensure that you would never exercise faith in me, she suddenly would shout out those very words, right in front of you. She became a Bridge Slave....

"That was what woke you up...."

The voice thundered up to the Heavens, roaring and echoing out in all directions. Han Shan's face was pale and he coughed up a mouthful of blood. This blood was not because of an injury he received; rather, it was

from the intense, violent pain he felt in his heart. His memories suddenly opened up. He saw an image of his wife at his side, begging and pleading, grabbing ahold of his robe as she tried to persuade him.

But he was obsessed. He wanted eternal life. It wasn't until he saw her walking away in front of him, that he... became clear-headed.

"I've thought about it a lot for the past three thousand years...." sighed Han Shan. He lifted his head, and his eyes were filled with decisiveness and determination. He began to walk forward.

The instant he began to walk, the Bridge Slaves around him began to roar, and once again charged toward him. As they did, Han Shan took a deep breath. His azure sword roared, and of the one hundred thousand clones around him, ten thousand disappeared.

His sword swept about, causing the Frost aura in the area to rise up. In an instant, millions of Bridge Slaves were frozen in place.

When this happened, much of Han Shan's hair suddenly turned white and he grew older. This sword move was the Solitary Sword Song which he had created himself. This song was not something that anyone except him could hear. It was sung in his heart, something only he could enjoy, only he could hear.

The song could only be sung once in a lifetime. That one song did not burn of life force, but rather, took life force and merged it into the song, creating a solo of life!

"My choice that year was a complicated one, and in many ways irrational. It was as if I was bedevilled...." As he strode forward, Han Shan waved his sword again. Ten thousand more clones disappeared and more Bridge Slaves became statues of ice. As of now, his hair was completely white.

At the same time, Han Shan's aura exploded up. Because of his solo of life, his Cultivation base and his life force, all exploded up.

Meng Hao had no idea what realm Han Shan's Cultivation base was in, but as of this moment, his level of power completely exceeded anything

that Meng Hao could comprehend.

Life... is simply about how time flows.

Life... is summed up in ten sword blows!

“Later, I wanted to understand if it was really because of your summons....” Han Shan said lightly, walking toward the mountain. He waved his sword a third time. It whistled out, and the frost was unable to block it. It slammed into the mountain, causing the entire thing to shake. The faces of the old man and the boy suddenly flickered.

As for Han Shan, his hair was beginning to fall out, and his body was old and decrepit. He was now far from being middle-aged; he was an old man, his skin sagging and covered with wrinkles. He was no longer majestic and heroic in appearance. However, his eyes and his will were more resolute than ever. They were filled with stubbornness and a lack of regrets.... Even if it meant walking to his death, he would rescue his wife!

“I regret ever bringing Xue’er here.... I originally came with her so that both of us could acquire everlasting life....” His voice was soft as a fourth sword swept out. The names on the mountain were growing dim; the palace on the mountain top was quaking, and cracks appeared on its surface.

“Han Shan, what are you doing?!” cried the old man, his expression bursting with fury and viciousness. Next to him, the boy also wore a savage expression as he glared at Han Shan.

Meng Hao watched on silently from within the ice statue. The vortex on his right arm was madly sucking in the Frost soil. His majestic Cultivation base was slowly beginning to rise up. As this happened, he looked at Han Shan and saw what could only be described as a persistence that would shock Heaven and Earth.

Such persistence was like faith.

“What is my persistence like?” thought Meng Hao.

“I will never forget what happened that day...” said Han Shan. His fifth sword swept out with power to rend the Earth. When it landed on the peak

of the mountain, a roar filled the air and the boy was slain.

The boy was filled with disbelief as he transformed into ice. The last thing he heard before his consciousness disappeared was a voice that, despite seeming on the verge of death, was calm and terrifying.

“I also pondered why you called me here,” said Han Shan. “Back when I completed my Solitary Sword Song, it started to snow. My whole world was frozen over. Everywhere my sword touched, became ice. Then I understood. Then, some old memories came to me....

“I am the Frost Soil Demon Emperor!” A sixth sword blasted out. The boy’s head was completely lopped off, and the palace exploded. Cracks appeared on the mountain top. By now, Han Shan looked ancient; he was surrounded by thick Death Qi, and his entire body was withered.

“More accurately, I am his clone. Countless years ago, I was able to evade the pursuit of the Ji Ancestor. I lived in the world of mortals for countless generations until I finally understood it.” His seventh sword descended and the mountain’s peak began to shatter into pieces. The old man was shaking, and his eyes filled with dread.

It was at this moment, when the mountaintop shattered, that two butterfly Demon Spirits flew out from within, seemingly birthed from the destruction of the mountain. They fluttered in the air as they shot off into the distance.

No one paid any attention to the butterfly Demon Spirits. Han Shan didn’t, the old man didn’t. Not even Meng Hao paid them any attention. Only Zhixiang noticed, but she was locked in ice, and could do nothing but watch as they sped off into the distance.

“I don’t care what your goal is. I only want my wife back.” An eighth sword descended, chopping into the mountain, slashing toward the old man’s body.

The old man seemed to have no inclination to block or fight back against the sword. However, as the sword neared him, the space in front of him suddenly began to grow blurry, and a woman appeared to stand in front of him. She looked up at the sword, and then at Han Shan.

Han Shan suddenly stopped in his tracks. The sword ceased moving. Everything seemed to disappear; the only thing he was looking at was this woman.

She was not consummately beautiful, but rather, exceedingly gentle. She gazed down at Han Shan.

“I won’t go with you,” she said softly. “Nor can I go. I am a Bridge Slave. Starting that year, I became a Bridge Slave for all eternity....” She looked somewhat confused.

“When will the Bridge of Immortality reappear like new...? Sir, on what day will we again lay eyes on you...?” As the woman’s murmuring voice echoed out, the old man began to vanish. As he did, he looked calmly at Han Shan.

“I am the soul of the Bridge of Immortality,” he said. “All of the Bridge Slaves are a part of me. If I give up my memories of this time, then when I die, your wife will become the new Bridge Soul.

“There is no enmity between me and you. All of this was part of our mission, to restore the Bridge of Immortal Treading. Originally, you should have been the Bridge Soul. That is why the esteemed Demon Emperor hid you all those years ago. Now, however, the task will fall to your wife.

“My mission is complete, although not perfectly. My task was to find you and bring you back. This was the final command of the esteemed Demon Emperor before his death: find you, and make you a Bridge Slave.” With that, he faded away.

The instant he disappeared, the confusion in the woman’s eyes faded away. Her eyes were now clear. She saw Han Shan, and recalled her old memories. This was perhaps the first time since she had chosen to become a Bridge Slave, the first time in her everlasting life, that she suddenly saw everything clearly.

With a bitter smile, she looked at Han Shan.

“Kill me, allow me to be released....”

Her words echoed out. When Meng Hao heard them, and saw what was

happening, he sighed.

The clearness only lasted a moment. In the moment when a Bridge Slave becomes the Bridge Soul, the Bridge Slave would have one moment of clearness. After that moment, the Bridge Slave would be awake and conscious, but the previous memories would not be that person's.

That person would be the new soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading.

Chapter 473: Frost Soil Success!

At the moment, the vortex on Meng Hao's right arm was absorbing the power of the Frost soil in the area. This Frost soil, which seemed to be filled with the power to exterminate anything, caused the vortex to gradually begin to coagulate. A glowing white character for Earth was now starting to appear.

When the ancient character for earth became clearer, Meng Hao's Cultivation base began to roar as a new power began to make Meng Hao suddenly... even stronger!

Every beat of his heart sent blood coursing through his veins. A boundary had been reached, and now his Cultivation base grew mow powerful; his Gold Core was even stronger than before.

"It's still not enough.... The aura of this Frost soil is actually much more intense than that of the Celestial soil." His eyes glittered with determination as he rotated his Cultivation base. He focused all his energy on absorbing more power from the Frost soil.

"I've really struck it lucky here to be able to absorb this Frost soil.... If I can use it to form my Earth-type totem tattoo, who knows how much more powerful it will be than a Celestial soil totem...?" His eyes filled with anticipation.

Roaring filled his body. Despite being stuck in the ice statue, the Frost soil in the area continued to be sucked in, causing it to grow thinner and thinner. However, the effect wasn't too noticeable; after all, the landmass formed by the Frost soil was enormous.

Zhixiang wasn't too far away in another ice statue. At this point, she couldn't help but look from Han Shan and the woman over toward Meng Hao.

"What's he doing?!" she thought. Because of the shocking scene that had been playing out just now, she hadn't notice Meng Hao's aura earlier. However, now she did.

She stared with wide, disbelieving eyes, shaken by Meng Hao's audacity.

"He's absorbing... the Frost soil!!

"Frost soil is unique in all the Ninth Mountain. According to the legend, long, long ago, even before Cultivators existed, a land mass was born that was completely white and infinitely cold.

"Eventually, countless years ago, when Cultivators were just beginning to appear in the Ninth Mountain, it gained consciousness. However, as the land of Frost soil expanded, it eventually... turned into a person.

"He swept over the Ninth Mountain and Sea for countless years, and was known as... the Frost Soil Demon! Eventually, he came to be called an Emperor.... The Frost Soil Demon Emperor!

"Now, Meng Hao is actually absorbing the power of the Frost soil! Although this particular area of Frost Soil was created by the Bridge Soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading, clearly, this whole area is the work of the Frost Soil Demon Emperor! If it wasn't, then the Frost soil could not possibly appear!

"What Meng Hao is absorbing is not true Frost soil, but rather an ornamental version of it. However, it still far, far exceeds Celestial soil. There's really not even any way to compare the two.

"According to the ancient records in the Sect, not including Lord Li, there were three Greater Demons in the ancient Immortal Demon Sect. They were the ones who built... the Bridge of Immortal Treading!

"Isn't he worried he's going to take it too far and die?!?!" Zhixiang had really never imagined that the day would come in which she would be envious of a mere Core Formation Cultivator. True, he could slay Nascent Soul Cultivators, but to see him absorbing Frost Soil was shockingly extraordinary, enough to arouse the jealousy of an Immortal.

Even as Meng Hao absorbed the power of the Frost soil, Han Shan's soft sigh could be heard.

He was looking at his wife, his expression one of warmth. He had heard her words just now, and could also see that her expression was no longer

clear, but rather, frustrated again. Deep in her eyes burned a mysterious fire, similar to that which had burned in the eyes of the old man.

“Come be with me, okay?” said the woman softly. There was something very strange in her voice as she looked at Han Shan.

Han Shan closed his eyes and was silent for a moment. Then he smiled, a smile filled with warmth. He knew that the person in front of him was no longer his wife. She had truly become the soul of the Bridge of Immortal Treading.

He knew that the only thing he could do was to kill his own wife. It would be a release; she would no longer be the Bridge Soul, and she would no longer have everlasting life. She would finally be herself.

Han Shan sighed. He was old now, and his face was filled with wrinkles. His aura was no longer how it had been. He was an old man, seemingly on the verge of death.

Perhaps his azure robe could conceal the loneliness he had felt for so long, but it could not conceal his ancientness, nor his exhaustion.

He had searched for three thousand years, had felt guilty for three thousand years. However, when he finally found what he was looking for, it was like this....

Shaking his head, Han Shan waved his hand. Instantly, the ice surrounding Meng Hao and Zhixiang shattered. Zhixiang immediately retreated backward, blood seeping out of her mouth.

With each step she took, her face grew more pale; the coldness was once again pressing down oppressively onto her.

The instant Meng Hao's ice statue shattered, the Frost soil in the area began to shoot toward him. It transformed into an enormous white vortex that surrounded him.

As the vortex spun, the Frost Soil in the area began to disappear as it was sucked into Meng Hao's body. The coldness was oppressive, and an Earth-type aura rose up to the sky.

The sight of this caused Han Shan's wife, the new Bridge Soul, to glance over at Meng Hao.

Han Shan turned his head to look. When he saw Meng Hao, he suddenly laughed.

"It is what it is," he said. "It seems the two of us are bound by Karma.... Let me bestow a bit more luck upon you." With that, he lifted his right hand and then pushed it down toward the Frost Soil land mass. Han Shan's body immediately began to tremble as a white and blue aura began to emanate out from his body and rush down toward the land mass.

As the aura spread out, Han Shan weakened even further, as if his Essence were being drained. He became even older.

The blue and white aura merged into the land mass and instantly, the Frost Soil began to change.

It was no longer just white, but glowed with a blue light. Its aura was completely shocking, and the coldness of it exploded up. The entire landmass began to tremble because of this ancient, archaic aura. It seemed to have existed for a very, very long time.

It had seen countless forms of life, and knew the warmth and coldness of the world. It had experienced life and death, and had existed throughout the ages. It seemed as if... this Frost Soil land mass which had previously not been true Frost soil, suddenly had transformed into that unique, true Frost soil which had once existed in the Ninth Mountain!

The white and blue aura was none other than the true power of the essence of Frost Soil Demon Emperor's clone. Now that he had sent out this power, the land mass below truly was the real Frost soil.

The land shook as it suddenly began to crumble in on itself and grow smaller. As it did, it quickly became more refined and pure. If you were able to stand far up above the Bridge of Immortal Treading, you would be able to see this process happening.

The Frost soil which had once stretched out to cover the entirety of the Bridge of Immortal Treading, shrank down in the space of a few breaths.

In one moment, Meng Hao could see the edges of the land mass.

After the space of a single breath passed, it shrank down to a mass of blue soil only three hundred meters wide!

The whiteness was gone; it was now pure blue. This was the true Frost soil which had given birth to the Demon Emperor in the Ninth Mountain!

In the blink of an eye, three hundred meters became thirty meters. Thirty meters became three meters. Finally... the three meter wide clump of dark blue Frost soil shot directly toward the vortex on Meng Hao's right arm, merging into it.

Roaring filled Meng Hao's mind as his body slowly floated up into the air. His hair whipped about, and an increasingly intense aura rose up from him.

Zhixiang backed up, her expression one of shock. Considering that she knew Meng Hao was now absorbing true Frost soil, she was thoroughly astonished.

It was at this point that the vortex on Meng Hao's arm completely solidified into a blue Earth character. As soon as it appeared, an enormous land mass of Frost soil magically appeared behind Meng Hao.

Upon the land mass was a huge tree, which blazed with raging fire. Above the tree was a great metallic, golden river. This was a depiction of Metal, Wood, Earth and Fire!

Meng Hao's Cultivation base soared. By now, it had completely sloughed off the Gold core. Meng Hao's aura merged with the magical image behind him as immense power roared through him. As of now, if Xu Bai and Chen Mo, those two late Nascent Soul Cultivators, battled Meng Hao, it was easy to imagine how difficult it would be to determine who would live and who would die!

"Take my legacy, and take my sword," said Han Shan. "Leave this place. If ever the day comes in which you can shake the Cultivation base of this bridge, then don't forget to repay my kindness. If my wife and I are still here when you return, then I hope you can rescue us." With that, Han

Shan laughed. He was aged and decrepit now, but his will once again surged, a will which despised Heaven and Earth. He flicked his sleeve, causing an azure sword to appear. This sword had never left his side during the past three thousand years. But now, it turned into an azure beam of light that shot toward Meng Hao.

He flicked his sleeve again, and the alcohol flagon, seemingly filled with boundless sword will, also flew into Meng Hao's hands. Meng Hao felt his heart stirring. He looked up at Han Shan, somewhat in a daze.

What he saw was Han Shan's back. It looked very much the way it had when Meng Hao first saw him. Lonely, bleak, and desolate....

Han Shan waved his hand, and a cold wind sprang into being. It picked up Meng Hao and the shocked Zhixiang, and carried them off into the distance.

The cold wind was incredibly strong. Neither Meng Hao nor Zhixiang could do anything to resist the power of the wind as it began to carry them off into the distance. Despite the force of the wind, Meng Hao managed to turn his head around for one last look.

Han Shan's gentle voice could just barely be heard.

"Three thousand years ago, it was because of you that I refused to become a Bridge Slave. Three thousand years later, it is because of you that I make the opposite choice. I will accompany you in such a life. What harm is there in that...?"

"I will lose my consciousness. I will lose any chance to return. However, as long as I can be with you, neither life nor death are of any consequence...."

"During these three thousand years, I thought a lot. Legacies and Cultivation bases don't really matter. What matters, are dreams.... Without you by my side, I have no world.

"You are my everything.

"I'm willing. I am perfectly happy... to exercise faith."

When Han Shan opened his eyes, they shone only with confusion. All of his loneliness and bleakness were gone.

His wife stood next to him. The two of them turned and made their way off into the distance. They were followed by millions of Bridge Slaves, an army of specters... moving further and further away.

“When will the Bridge of Immortality reappear like new...? Sir, on what day will we again lay eyes on you...?”

Chapter 474: Therefore, You Picked the North

“Senior Han Shan....” murmured Meng Hao. He had Han Shan’s sword, Han Shan’s flagon, and on his right arm was a totem tattoo made from Han Shan’s Frigid soil. These were all physical things. However, deep in Meng Hao’s heart existed the image of Han Shan and his wife.

That image was not desolate or lonely. There was no confusion, only... a husband and a wife, accompanying each other as they walked off into the distance.

“I, Meng Hao, solemnly swear a vow here in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. If in this life the day arrives in which I can shake this Bridge of Immortal Treading, then I will without fail repay this kindness!” Within the bitterly cold wind, Meng Hao clasped hands, looked back toward the Bridge Slave specters, and bowed deeply.

To Meng Hao, his principles demanded that he repay kindness. Kindnesses shown could never be forgotten!

Meng Hao continued to meet people who showed kindness to him in life. If he forgot them, then he did not deserve to be a Cultivator. It was the same with enmities.... Enmities must be repaid many times over.

I will do everything in my power to repay my benefactors!

I will bring tenfold vengeance upon my enemies!

If people do not attack me, I will not attack them. But if someone does attack me, that person shall die!

This was Meng Hao.

In Confucianism, there is a concept of a path of justice that contains two parts. One part involves being kind and tolerating others. The other involves taking action when necessary. After entering the Cultivation world, Meng Hao also had his own path.

This path had nothing to do with Cultivation, but rather, personal

principles. Meng Hao's principles also contained the concept of justice, a justice with two parts. One was the law of repaying kindnesses. The other was bringing death in response to attacks!

Cultivation is about developing confidence.

Cultivation is about learning how to conduct oneself!

Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed for a long, long moment. Next to him, Zhixiang suddenly flew away at top speed, emerging from the cold wind and moving off into the distance. She lifted her right hand, causing a red flower to suddenly appear. She was not attacking Meng Hao; instead, her flower transformed into a sea of flowers that enveloped... a butterfly Demon Spirit that happened to be flying in this area!

Everything happened in the blink of an eye. She laughed as she collected up the butterfly Demon Spirit, her eyes filled with excitement. Suddenly, another butterfly Demon Spirit appeared not too far off in the distance. As soon as it realized it had been noticed, it seemed to suddenly be frightened. It flitted its wings and flew off.

Zhixiang's eyes glittered as she shot pursuit for a moment, but then stopped. This was because Meng Hao had suddenly exploded with Dancing Sword Qi. The threat of the Sword Qi caused Zhixiang to feel quite annoyed. She looked over at Meng Hao. This was not the first time he had done something like this.

She frowned, then suddenly laughed and sped off into the distance away from the butterfly. As she did, her voice drifted back to Meng Hao.

"Meng Hao, although we did not achieve any results because of our cooperation, based on what you now know, if you're interested, then we can come back to this place in two hundred years to enter the Primordial Immortal Demon Plane!

"Perhaps you might even learn of a way to rescue senior Han Shan while you're there. As for that Demon Spirit, if you want it, I won't fight you over it." Her body flickered and then transformed into a red beam of light that disappeared off into the void.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he watched Zhixiang leave. He did nothing to stop her, nor did he respond. Instead, he himself shot out into the void toward the Demon Spirit.

Far off in the distance, Zhixiang performed a minor teleportation, reappearing in the void far away from Meng Hao's location. Suddenly, she coughed up a mouthful of blood. Her body began to tremble slightly, and suddenly a ghost image of her own face appeared. Shockingly, this image was Zhao Youlan's soul, struggling to get free!

"I have no intention of merging with your soul, precious darling. However, you need to abide by our agreement. I'll borrow your body for only two hundred years. Two hundred years later, I'll give it back to you.

"Furthermore, I won't borrow your body without offering repayment. I will ensure that you stay at the late Nascent Soul stage." With that she jabbed her finger down onto her forehead.

This movement caused Zhao Youlan's soul to suddenly grow weaker. A look of fear appeared, and it began to shrink back. Eventually it disappeared; there was no ghost image any more.

"Injured by Frost soil, and twice had bitter cold enter his body. Just now, he even circulated quite a bit of Immortal Essence in his attempt to get that Demon Spirit. This Meng Hao is as crafty as a fox and diabolically cruel.

"If I didn't get out of there, there's no saying that that Meng kid wouldn't actually attack." Zhixiang's eyes glittered. She wasn't sure when, but at some point she had actually come to view Meng Hao as a worthy opponent.

"However, the fact that the curse doesn't affect him will be a great advantage if he helps in the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane two hundred years from now. My plan to acquire a Demon Immortal Body will be much more likely to succeed." With that, Zhixiang slapped her bag of holding to produce the Five Poisons Tribe Immortality Bridgestone. She crushed it, and instantly, her body began to grow blurry. Before long, she was completely gone.

Further back in the void, Meng Hao proceeded along alone. The frigid wind had disappeared completely, and the coldness of the void crushed down onto him. However, to Meng Hao, that coldness actually felt warm.

His Earth-type totem was the unparalleled Frost soil. Compared to that, the surrounding coldness could be regarded as boiling hot.

After his huge success in acquiring the Earth-type totem tattoo, Meng Hao's Cultivation base had skyrocketed. His speed was now much faster than before. Furthermore, the void could do nothing to impede him; he was quite used to it now.

He chased the butterfly for about an hour before catching it and putting it into his bag of holding. With that, he stopped and began to think.

"Two Demon Spirits. One can be used to get the Crow Divinity Tribes into the Black Lands. As for the second... I can decide what to do with that one in two hundred years when the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane opens!" With that, his eyes filled with determination, and he proceeded onward.

As he moved, he pulled out Han Shan's sword. The sword seemed commonplace, completely ordinary. But Meng Hao had seen this sword slice open Heaven and Earth, chop through the void, and unleash the shocking aura of the spirit of a mountain.

"This is an Immortal's Sword!" He ran his left hand across the smooth blade, causing a drone to echo out. The drone contained feelings of grief, farewell, and the hope to reunite.

Hearing the drone caused Meng Hao to think about Han Shan. He sighed.

"Compared to senior Han Shan, I am tiny and weak. Right now, I can't wield you. However, you were gifted to me by him. From now on, you... are my sword!

"I promised senior Han Shan that I would save him in the future. Now, I promise you that when I do save him, I will bring you with me. The day that I succeed in rescuing him, I will return you to senior Han Shan."

The droning faded away. The azure sword slowly grew quiet. Then, it transformed into an azure beam of light that flew into the air and shot back toward Meng Hao. He did nothing to stop it. The azure glow hit him, causing a drop of blood to appear on his forehead.

The drop of blood touched the azure sword, and instantly Meng Hao could sense a clear connection between the two of them. His eyes glittered and he extended his right hand. Instantly, the azure sword's aura rose up to the Heavens as it shot off into the distance.

It moved so quickly that Meng Hao couldn't see it clearly. It shot directly toward a three thousand meter wide rock that was approaching. In the blink of an eye, it shattered the rock into pieces. A boom echoed out, and even before the shattered pieces could explode outward, the sword shot back to hover in front of Meng Hao.

Meng Hao stared in shock and extended his right hand. The sword slowly began to shrink down until it was about the size of a fingernail. Meng Hao swallowed it, causing the sword to merge into him. This was now one of Meng Hao's trump cards, something that, if kept in his bag of holding, would strip it of the element of surprise when being used.

Even as the shattered remnants of the thousand meter rock shot toward him, Meng Hao pulled out his chunk of Immortality Bridgestone, the one that had transported him here to the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. He crushed it in his hand, and instantly, he faded and disappeared.

The North region of the great lands of the Western Desert were rapidly turning into a vast body of water. In the most lowlying of the areas, violet lakes could be seen. The violet rain continued to pour down in buckets. It only continued to grow heavier.

The sky was dark, and no sunlight was visible whatsoever, making it seem like dusk. The whole scene turned into an oppressive weight. A coldness spread out everywhere, a coldness that could exterminate life.

The mountains were all deathly silent. No signs of life could be seen anywhere. The entire Western Desert North region was now devoid of spiritual energy. Rotting corpses of beasts could be seen scattered about in

the rainwater.

Off in the distance, a group of people could be seen moving rapidly through the air. This was a group of about four or five thousand people, all in the process of migration. They were silent, their faces sallow. In recent days, migrating groups like this were a common sight in the Western Desert North region.

However, it was at this moment that a bright beam of light could be seen off in the distance, along with an oppressive aura. It moved at high speed through the air, causing a loud booming sound. It seemed matchless aggressive.

The beam moved with incredible speed toward the group of migrating Tribe members, instantly catching their attention. All of them looked up toward the figure within the beam. The Five Nascent Soul Cultivators of the Tribe instantly looked shocked.

“Yi Chenzi!!”

“He completely slaughtered seven or eight Tribes in the area recently! He uses the people he kills as blood sacrifices to further his cultivation!”

“If Heaven wishes to exterminate our Tribe, then all we can do is be cautious. How come we have to run into this damned Yi Chenzi!”

This approaching beam of light was none other than Yi Chenzi, who Meng Hao had chased in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. In the midst of the chase, the Bridge Slaves showed up, giving rise to a huge tempest. Otherwise, the man would have been killed by Meng Hao.

His head was very small, but he was quite tall and looked like a rat. His appearance made it so that others could recognize him instantly. He flew through mid-air, a vicious expression on his face.

Half a month earlier, he had returned from the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. When he reappeared, he found himself in the same place where he had left, which was on the border of the Western Desert North region. He was not pleased with his journey into the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, and had been left with a thorough fear of Meng Hao.

That was actually the reason he'd come back so early; he could only sigh at his misfortune in running into Meng Hao. Back in the Western Desert, he kept trying to figure out where Meng Hao came from, fearful of running into him again.

After much thought, he came to the conclusion that there was no way Meng Hao could possibly be from the North region. After all, the Cultivation base of the Tribes in the North region was the weakest of all. It had been years since someone had appeared who could be considered Chosen of Heaven. Yi Chenzi also figured that the North region would be most severely affected by the Apocalypse, and would have the greatest collection of migrating Tribes. It was quite suitable for him.

Therefore, he came to the north.

Chapter 475: Return

Booming sounds echoed out as the group scattered. It took only about two hours for vicious looking Yi Chenzi to hold up five severed heads and then begin his blood sacrifice of the rest of the Tribe down below.

The blood sacrifice lasted for two days, after which Yi Chenzi waved his hand to collect up all the spoils. After performing the blood sacrifice, his Cultivation base was creeping toward a breakthrough.

“All I have to do is kill a couple dozen thousand more people, and I can have my breakthrough and reach the late Nascent Soul stage! I don’t know the name of this particular Tribe, but they sure were vicious. Of the four or five thousand people, all of them turned out to have Cultivation bases. They must have left the ordinary Tribe members behind to let nature run its course.” Yi Chenzi’s eyes flickered as he pulled out a jade slip. Inside was a map which depicted the Western Desert North region and described it in detail.

“I can’t afford to provoke the great Five Poisons Tribe, or the great Scorching Ice Tribe. Without a late Nascent Soul Cultivation base, gaining a victory against them would waste too much of my Cultivation base.

“Damn this violet rain. If it weren’t for the blood sacrifices combined with a bit of Celestial soil, I would have run out of spiritual energy and then died.” Mumbling to himself, Yi Chenzi licked his lips and then looked over the jade slip again.

“Five Crow Divinity Tribes? They used to be the great Crow Divinity Tribe, which means they should have sent a representative to the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. They just went to war against the great Five Poisons Tribe.

“This is the Tribe! It’s hard to say how many people they have left, but they used to be a great Tribe. And since they were able to fight back against the Five Poisons Tribe, they must have a lot of resources at their disposal. Most important is that if their representative to the Realm of the Bridge Ruins didn’t die there, then he probably came back with some

Celestial soil. Maybe I can get a bit more Celestial soil for myself.” Eyes glittering with a ruthless glow, he was just about to go through with his plan to travel to the five Crow Divinity Tribes when a tremor ran through his body.

“The person the five Crow Divinity Tribes sent to the Realm of the Bridge Ruins couldn’t possibly be that damnable bastard Meng Hao, could it? I couldn’t possibly be that unlucky, could I?” After thinking about it for a moment, he suddenly laughed at how overly cautious he was being. Twenty three people went to the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. Not counting himself, there were twenty two, all scattered about throughout the whole of the Western Desert. The chances of running into Meng Hao again were extremely small.

Having reaching this point in his train of thought, Yi Chenzi’s eyes filled with cruelty. His body flickered as he shot off into the distance. During his traveling, he would occasionally run into other Tribes which he instantly slaughtered. His entire path was one of blood sacrifices.

Along the way, his Cultivation base grew stronger and stronger. At the same time, his temperament grew more and more ruthless. This was even more the case as he felt himself getting closer to the point of breakthrough. His massacres grew even more savage.

He also moved with greater and greater speed. Soon, he was getting very close to the five Crow Divinity Tribes.

“I can already smell the odor of flesh and blood....” said Yi Chenzi, licking his lips as he whistled through the air. Suddenly, a mountain appeared up ahead.

The mountain was bare, and beneath it could be seen a body of water. It wasn’t extremely large, more a large lake than a sea.

The mountain stuck up out of the middle of the huge lake. At its peaks, a large group of huts had been erected to provide protection against the rainwater. This was the location of the Crow Divinity Tribes. It was now a full five months since Meng Hao had left.

Of the two thousand Tribe members, there were only a bit more than a

thousand left. Several hundred Tribe members had died in the past five months, their life forces exterminated. They had been buried in the mountain, accompanied by weeping, and the funeral dirges of their fellow Clan members. Everyone knew that it wouldn't be long before the entire mountain... existed at the bottom of the sea.

Every day, a Tribe member was sent down the mountain with the specific task of measuring how much the water had risen. This way, they could calculate roughly how much time was left.

"The water has risen less than a meter since yesterday," said the Crow Gloom Tribe Grand Elder. He sat in a hut next to the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather.

The Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather's hair was gray, his face sallow, and his body emaciated. He sat there silently, looking out at the seemingly endless violet rain. When he spoke, his voice was bitter but low, in order to prevent many people from hearing his words. "Five months. Perhaps the exalted Sacred Ancient has already left us. The power of the Thorn Rampart vine is fading.... If he left, that's fine. However, he promised he would return to us with hope." The man's voice was hoarse, and his expression blank.

"Hope...." said the Crow Gloom Tribe Grand Elder. He looked around at the other Tribe members in the huts. They were silent and gloomy. Their eyes were open, but didn't seem to look very different than if they were closed. Many of them had bodies as thin as firewood.

None of them had any hope at all.

As the spiritual energy of Heaven and Earth faded, as the violet rain fell harder, life was exterminated. This made it difficult for the ordinary Tribe members to survive. Even the Cultivators felt their Cultivation bases withering, making it difficult to maintain their place in their current stage.

"He'll come back," said the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather softly. He didn't speak very loudly, but his voice was filled with passion. He believed what Meng Hao said, and he trusted that Meng Hao would definitely return.

The Crow Gloom Tribe Grand Elder let out a soft sigh and was about to say something more when suddenly his expression flickered. He looked up into the air. At almost the exact same moment, the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather suddenly lifted his head up. Within his withered body, his Cultivation base once again began to rotate. His dismal eyes suddenly began to shine with an aggressive glow.

It wasn't just these two. Behind them were two other Tribe members whose Cultivation bases exploded out threateningly as they looked up into the sky.

During these five months, they were always on guard, always filled with extreme vigilance. Three groups of people had come to attack them, and two had been repelled by the Thorn Rampart vine. As time passed, though, the Thorn Rampart vine began to weaken. In the end, it was submerged by the lake and disappeared.

By the time the third group came, the Crow Divinity Tribes were forced to fight. During the battle, the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather wasted much of his Cultivation base to kill an opponent of the early Nascent Soul stage. His action had ended the conflict.

After all, in this Apocalypse of Heaven and Earth, mutual loss, and death were equivalent.

In the blink of an eye it seemed, a fourth group had come against them. This time, it was only one person; however, in the current circumstances, one person was even more dangerous!

This one person approached in a beam of light, emanating a shocking aura. Booming sounds echoed out which carried the power of the peak of the mid Nascent Soul stage. Obviously, this person was just a hair away from the late Nascent Soul stage.

When the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather sensed this Cultivation base, his face flickered with shock. Next to him, the Crow Gloom Tribe Grand Elder was even more astonished.

The faces of the two behind them instantly turned ashen.

Considering their level of power, even if the five Crow Divinity Tribes went all out, they would still be unable to protect themselves.

When Yi Chenzi saw the more than thousand remaining members of the five Crow Divinity Tribes on the mountain peak, he frowned.

“How could there be so few?” he said with a cold harrumph. Such a small number of people left him feeling that this trip had been somewhat of a waste. Nonetheless, he continued on toward the Tribes.

“Not many people, but there’s no need to waste,” he said, his eyes glinting with cruelty. As he neared, he stretched out his hand and pointed a finger.

Immediately, ripples spread out, transforming into a gigantic hand made of black mist. It shot directly toward the mountain.

Seeing the black hand approaching, the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather immediately shot forward at top speed. In the blink of an eye, he was up in mid-air. Roaring, he waved his right hand, causing explosive totemic power to explode out.

His Metal-type totem roared with power as it shot toward the black mist.

A boom rattled out, and the black mist hand collapsed. The Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather coughed up a mouthful of blood as he tumbled backward. When he reached the mountain peak, more blood came out of his mouth, and his body withered. His Spiritual Energy was almost completely dried up. As he laughed bitterly, the rest of the members of the Crow Divinity Tribes rose to their feet, looks of despair filling their eyes.

“Don’t tell me your Cultivation bases are all withered?” said Yi Chenzi arrogantly. “Well, even if they were normal, killing you would be a simple thing for me. I can’t believe the great Crow Divinity Tribe is so weak! Where are your totemic Sacred Ancients? Where are your magical weapons? You’re so weak you can’t even handle a single blow. A Tribe like this doesn’t even deserve to exist. However, dying in the Apocalypse isn’t as good as being a blood sacrifice to advance my cultivation!” Yi Chenzi actually had a special method for dealing with totemic Sacred Ancients, which was one reason he had been able to sweep across the Western

Desert and exterminate so many Tribes.

Wu Chen stood among the crowds. His body trembling, he shouted, “When the exalted Sacred Ancient returns, he will definitely not let you go! If you dare to raise a hand against the Crow Divinity Tribes, then you will face the wrath of the Sacred Ancient!!”

His echoing words immediately caused the fire of hope to burn within the eyes of the members of the Crow Divinity Tribes.

“The Sacred Ancient will definitely return!”

“The Sacred Ancient will come back carrying hope!!”

Yi Chenzi laughed scornfully. “Your Sacred Ancient is going to come back? So, even your Sacred Ancient abandoned you. Even if it does come back, I can seal it and make it watch as I sacrifice all of you.” He raised his hand again.

This time, ripples spread out in four directions to transform into four black mist hands. They linked together into something that looked like a black dragon bursting with killing intent. They immediately shot toward Crow Divinity Mountain.

Just as despair filled the faces of the members of the Crow Divinity Tribes, just when the hand was almost upon them, four tentacles suddenly erupted out from the water below. They moved with incredible speed toward the four hands. At the same time, thorns suddenly spread out around the mountain, completely encircling it.

Unfortunately, the weakness and exhaustion of the vines and the thorns was readily apparent.

It was at this moment that, about four hundred kilometers away from the five Crow Divinity Tribes’ mountain, up above a rushing river, an area of distortion suddenly appeared. It was like a tear in the very air that opened up into a hole.

From within the hole, a figure emerged. He wore a green robe and had long black hair that whipped about in the wind. He was handsome and had an energetic demeanor. This was... Meng Hao!

He had returned in much the same manner as he had left, having been teleported back some distance from where he left. Generally speaking, this was normal. The return spot was usually within about five hundred kilometers of the point of departure.

Meng Hao rubbed the bridge of his nose as he looked around. Having confirmed his position, he sent his Spiritual Sense out. He immediately sensed the vine, and through it, could see in image of what was happening currently in the Crow Divinity Tribes.

Meng Hao's eyes immediately filled with with an unspeakable, raging anger. When he spoke, his voice was like like a freezing wind. His Cultivation base exploded out, immediately causing much of the rain in the vicinity to turn into ice!

“Yi Chenzi!!!”

Chapter 476: How Could You Be Here!?

Outside of the Crow Divinity Tribes' mountain, explosions filled the air. The Thorn Rampart spread around the mountain, forming a protective layer. Vines shot out to fight against Yi Chenzi.

Amidst the booms, the four black mist hands collapsed. Yi Chenzi's eyes suddenly glittered, filling with ruthlessness.

"So, you have a protective treasure like this! You're truly worthy of being a former great Tribe," he said with a laugh. "Unfortunately, in this violet rain, your vines are like a lamp that's running low on oil.... If I add it to the blood sacrifice, the results will be even better." It was at this point that a black moon suddenly appeared behind him.

This moon radiated darkness, and was instantly surrounded by a seething mist. The sight of it made Yi Chenzi seem like some sort of devil. His aura roared up into the sky as he shot at high speed toward one of the vines. As the vine swept toward him, Yi Chenzi licked his lips and then pointed out with his finger.

Suddenly, a black moon magically appeared on his fingertip. When it touched the vine, a roaring sound filled Heaven and Earth. The vine trembled, and then exploded. Massive amounts of viscous fluid sprayed about in all directions. The rest of the vines let out sad and shrill calls.

Yi Chenzi laughed a loud, arrogant laugh. Emanating potency, his expression one of contempt, he neared the mountain's peak. As he closed in, the other vines, ignoring their injured state, once again move to defend.

The vine was a simple life form. Even after fusing with the Thorn Rampart, it was not very intelligent. However, it never forgot the mission assigned to it by Meng Hao before he left.

Protect the Crow Divinity Tribes....

In its primitive mind, it knew that it would accomplish its mission even if it meant dying the cruelest death in the process!

Several vines whistled through the air toward Yi Chenzi, who let out a

cold snort and flicked his sleeve. The black moon appeared in front of him, emanating a black glow which spread out rapidly in all directions. As soon as the vines touched the black glow, they began to melt. Anguished screams could be heard, causing the more than one thousand remaining members of the Crow Divinity Tribes to clench their fists tightly. Grief and indignation filled their eyes.

They knew that the only reason the vines were dying in battle was to protect them.

As the vines were melted by the black glow, and the miserable shrieks echoed out, suddenly, a black beam of light shot out from the violet lake beneath the mountain. It moved with such incredible speed that, in the blink of an eye, it pierced through Yi Chenzi's black glow and shot directly toward his forehead.

Yi Chenzi's expression flickered as a profound sense of deadly crisis filled him. Eyes wide, he let out a roar, the waves of which turned into an attack that battered against the beam.

Then, the black moon once again magically appeared in front of Yi Chenzi. It shot toward the black beam of light, and when they hit each other, a huge boom filled the air. The black moon collapsed, and the black beam of light continued on toward Yi Chenzi.

This black beam was a sharp thorn. This thorn was different from the others; it emanated a strong life force. Actually, this was the main life force essence formed by the amalgamation of the vine and the Thorn Rampart.

Unfortunately, the exterminating power of the violet rain had weakened the vines to a tremendous degree. The same was true of this life force thorn. The fact that it had been blocked twice gave Yi Chenzi enough time to prepare. Even as the thorn shot toward him, he dodged to the side. The sharp thorn cut his cheek as it shot past. Yi Chenzi suffered a flesh wound, but nothing serious.

His eyes turned red as a savagery appeared that hadn't been present before. A bloodthirsty glow radiated out as he licked some blood out of the

corner of his mouth. His entire expression radiated killing intent.

“Any living thing that harms me gets turned into a blood sacrifice....” His eyes flickered with a cold glow as he waved his hand toward the violet lake below. A booming sound could be heard as water exploded up. Ripples radiated out as a thirty meter long vine trunk was wrenched up out of the water by Yi Chenzi.

“So it’s you.... Well, time to die!” He licked his lips, and cruelty glowed in his eyes. He raised his left hand, causing a black moon to magically appear.

He was just about to send it chopping down toward the vine trunk when the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather and the other powerful experts of the Crow Divinity Tribes teleported out to block Yi Chenzi.

“Screw off!” cried Yi Chenzi haughtily. He waved his right hand immediately causing the Greatfather and the others to tumble backward, blood spraying from their mouths, bodies shaking.

Just when the looks of despair appeared on their faces as they realized that they were powerless to fight back, the howl of a wolf rose up. Big Hairy, Hairy #2, and the rest of the Greenwood Wolves shot out from a cave in the mountain. Their expressions were listless, but they flew through the air toward Yi Chenzi.

There was also a red, winged crocodile and an enormous lizard, joined by a flock of black crows and a cloud of green mosquitos. All of them looked downcast, and their auras were weak. Under the continuous onslaught of the violet rain, with its life force of extermination and weakening of spiritual energy, they had been quite seriously injured.

Even still, it was without hesitation that they shot out, filling the sky. The sight was shocking, even to Yi Chenzi, whose pupils constricted.

However, it only took a moment for him to sense the aura of the neo-demons. Then, his expression filled with scorn and cruelty.

“Shrimp soldiers and crab generals,” he said. “Useless troops!” Filled with haughtiness and cruelty, Yi Chenzi waved his left hand to pull the

vine trunk up into the air. Then he shot forward, flashing an incantation with his right hand. Multiple black moons magically appeared and shot forward.

Roaring filled the air, echoing out. Blood sprayed out of Big Hairy's mouth, and his body was sent tumbling backward. Hairy #2 and the other Greenwood Wolves let out miserable cries as they shot backward like kites with their strings cut.

The black crows and the mosquitos were instantly sealed by a misty wind. Were they at their peak it might have been a different story. Now, however, no matter how they struggled, they weren't able to free themselves from the mist wind.

The winged crocodile and the lizard also let out mournful cries. The power of this black moon divine ability sent them tumbling backward, their bodies on the verge of falling apart.

Yi Chenzi's laughter filled the air. None of the neo-demons, none of the Cultivators, were capable of resisting him even the slightest bit. They couldn't even get close to him. The vine trunk, which was floating there in mid-air, was snatched up by Yi Chenzi. It was now only a hair's breadth away from death.

All of the members of the Crow Divinity Tribes up on the mountaintop had looks of despair and misery on their faces. The Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather wiped the blood off of his mouth and give long, bitter sigh.

His expression filled with arrogance, Yi Chenzi said, "When Yi Chenzi wants to exterminate a Tribe, no one can escape being part of the blood sacrifice!" Looking scornfully at the neo-demons and the Tribe members, his mouth twisted into a cruel smile. He lifted his left hand up and slowly clenched it into a fist.

The vine trunk struggled, but as Yi Chenzi clenched his fist, all it could do was writhe. It was clearly moments away from exploding.

"Die!" cried Yi Chenzi, laughing heartily. However, it was at this moment that a piercing sound suddenly could be heard from off in the distance.

“You die, bitch! You little rat! You think you can kill Lord Fifth, bitch!! Dammit, Lord Fifth just went out to get some lunch! You think that means you can wipe this place out?” As the shrill cry echoed in the air, a multicolored streak whistled through the air toward Yi Chenzi’s rear end. As it neared, the sound of a ringing bell also could be heard.

Yi Chenzi at first stared in shock. Then his face fell. Having no time to continue to crush the vine, he dropped it, allowing it to fly away.

An incredible sense of deadly crisis appeared once again. Yi Chenzi’s body flickered as he fell back. As he did, a multicolored blur shot through the air in the position he had occupied moments before.

Cold sweat broke out on Yi Chenzi’s forehead and his heart filled with doubt and dread. He could clearly see that if he hadn’t dodged away, the multicolored streak would have charged directly into where his rear end had just been.

Thinking about what the horrific result would have been caused even ruthless Yi Chenzi to gasp.

“Dammit, what is that thing?”

The multicolored glow materialized into the parrot, who glared threateningly at Yi Chenzi.

“Bitch, you dare to hurt me?! I’ll screw you! Screw you to death!” A bizarre glow appeared in the parrot’s eyes as it squawked at Yi Chenzi. Its expression and its voice, coupled with its actions moments before, caused Yi Chenzi’s scalp to grow numb.

Shouting, the parrot charged forward at incredible speed toward Yi Chenzi. Yi Chenzi gasped and fell back in retreat, flashing an incantation gesture with both hands. Immediately, a black moon magically appeared in front of him as he attempted to defend himself.

A boom filled the air as the parrot slammed through the black moon. In the blink of an eye, it appeared in front of Yi Chenzi. As it neared, Yi Chenzi could see that it was actually turning through the air... to shoot directly toward his rear end!

“What is it trying to do!?!?” Yi Chenzi was scared witless. At this critical juncture, his body suddenly transformed into a mist that shot off to reappear three thousand meters away in the distance. Once again, the parrot’s attack met with no results. Immediately, it grew furious.

“Haiyaaa! You dare to dodge me!? Lord Fifth is definitely going to screw you!!”

The parrot’s appearance, and its actions, caused all of the members of the Crow Divinity Tribes to stare up in shock.

Yi Chenzi wiped the sweat from his brow. As of this point, he realized that there was more to this Tribe than met the eye. It seemed weak, but it had vines and neo-demons and then this fearsome thing that apparently liked to attack rear ends.

Even as Yi Chenzi was filled with shock, the Parrot, enraged by its two fruitless attacks, suddenly let out a mighty, squawking howl. “Beloved concubine!!”

As soon as the two words rang out, a cloud mass shot toward them from the sky off in the distance. It moved with incredible speed as it neared. Within this cloud mass was none other than the enormous Outlander Beast.

“Outlander!!”

The roar of the Outlander Beast shook Heaven and Earth. Yi Chenzi’s eyes went wide, filling with astonishment and fear. He was instantly sent tumbling backward, his eyes shining with disbelief.

“Dammit, there’s an Outlander Beast here. Just... just what Tribe is this? They even raise Outlander Beasts! I can’t stay here. Dammit! If I had known about all of this I would never have come here. They don’t have many people, but they’re incredibly difficult to exterminate.” Yi Chenzi’s scalp was numb as he unhesitatingly fell back. He immediately transformed into a wisp of green smoke as he utilized his escape art to shot thousands of meters away in the blink of an eye.

The instant his body reappeared, a cold snort could be heard off to the

side. It was at this point that Meng Hao suddenly appeared, having just employed minor teleportation.

When Yi Chenzi saw Meng Hao, his face immediately filled with shock and then, he screamed. Since returning from the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, he had never screamed like this. It was filled with terror and dread, fuelled by the massive trembling of his own soul.

“You.... How could you be here!?!?”

Chapter 477: Moon....

The instant Meng Hao appeared, everyone on the mountain saw him. Immediately, the Crow Soldier Greatfather began to tremble, and a look of excitement shone in his eyes.

The other powerful experts next to him were the same. To them, Meng Hao's appearance finally gave them some bit of hope.

If these men acted in such a way, there is no need to even describe how the despair in the hearts of the other Tribe members was suddenly swept away by excitement.

"Sacred Ancient!"

"The exalted Sacred Ancient has returned!!"

"Exalted Sacred Ancient, we offer you respect upon your safe return!!"

The voices of more than a thousand people called out, seemingly unburdening themselves of the great pressure that had been weighing down on them. It turned into a huge roar like that which you might hear coming from a crowd of ten thousand. They were joined by Big Hairy and all the other neo-demons, who after seeing Meng Hao lifted their heads up to the sky and howled with excitement. The sound of it all shook Heaven and Earth.

Yi Chenzi's face was instantly devoid of color. He stared blankly at Meng Hao, his mind buzzing. Then he screamed as he backed up. He didn't even notice the parrot approaching with a look of disdain.

When the parrot slammed into his rear end, a blood-curdling shriek filled the air. He felt pain... intense pain that he had never experienced before in his life, unspeakable, unforgettable.... In addition to the pain was a feeling of humiliation that caused Yi Chenzi to lift his head up and shriek.

Even as his voice echoed out, the parrot excitedly shot back for another round. Scared out of his mind, Yi Chenzi immediately transformed into a green smoke as he prepared to flee at top speed.

It was impossible to describe how much he regretted having come to this place. It was a deep, utter regret. How could he have ever imagined that a tiny Tribe like this, would actually... be full of crouching tigers and hidden dragons!?

“Dammit, dammit.... this place has a wicked vine, tons of neo-demons, a perverted parrot, that shocking Outlander Beast, and most ridiculous of all, that Patriarch Bloodface!” His heart was filled with sorrow to the point that he was about to cry. He had already decided that he would flee this place and never again in his life ever step even half a pace into the Western Desert North region.

However, even as his body turned into the green smoke, just when he was about to flee, Meng Hao lifted his right hand. Instantly, a freezing wind blew out which contained the power of Frigid soil. In that instant, Yi Chenzi in his green smoke was instantly frozen in place in mid-air.

His body was then forced out of the smoke. The astonishment and disbelief on his face was apparent as he wondered how his opponent could have become so much more powerful in such a short time. He could even nullify the effects of his escape art.

As his body was forced out of the smoke, Meng Hao’s cold face radiated icy killing intent. He shot forward, clenched his hand into a fist and punched Yi Chenzi directly in the chest.

Yi Chenzi had no way to avoid the blow. Blood sprayed from his mouth, and the sound of cracking bones could be heard coming from his chest. With a miserable shriek, he was sent tumbling backward.

“How could he be so powerful?!?!” Yi Chenzi was scared out of his mind. A droning sound filled his body as Meng Hao’s cold voice suddenly rang out.

“Before, you dared to steal things that belong to me. I let you get away once, how could I possibly let you do so again today?” He immediately charged Yi Chenzi again and punched him a second time.

A boom could be heard. Yi Chenzi coughed up more blood, and his face went pale. Before he could even say anything, Meng Hao’s fist once again

slammed into him, injuring not just his physical body, but also his Nascent Soul. Even his totem tattoos seemed on the verge of collapse.

At this critical moment, Yi Chenzi let out a piercing howl. His Spiritual Sense suddenly emanated out, and the evil magic in his body began to circulate. Suddenly, a black moon appeared on his forehead. As soon as this happened, all of his Spiritual Sense converged onto the black moon, causing it to begin to rotate. Shockingly, a reflection of the black moon appeared on Meng Hao's forehead as well.

Yi Chenzi coughed some blood out of his mouth then shouted, "Sense Slaying!"

The moment the words left his mouth, the inverted image of the moon on Meng Hao's forehead shattered, and an intense power surged into Meng Hao's mind. In response, Meng Hao let out a cold snort. The power was fierce, and was obviously Yi Chenzi's trump card. If Meng Hao hadn't already formed his Earth-type totem tattoo, then his mind would be reeling right now.

Instead, he quickly recovered. His own Spiritual Sense was far more powerful than Yi Chenzi's. Backed by the power of four of the five elements, the effect of Yi Chenzi's attack was easy to dispel.

Another fist descended, and Yi Chenzi's body exploded with blood and gore. His shocked Nascent Soul flew out, surrounded by the protection of the black moon.

"How could he be so powerful! Why? Why?! Dammit, he must have seized some blessing in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins." Even as his terrified Nascent soul tried to retreat at top speed, Meng Hao snatched Yi Chenzi's corpse and put it into his bag of holding.

As Yi Chenzi's Nascent Soul tried to flee, suddenly, the Outlander Beast arrived. A boom filled the air as it struck out. Yi Chenzi's Nascent Soul screamed and then spit out a mouthful of Nascent Soul life Qi. The Nascent Soul itself grew fuzzy and extremely weak. The black moon shield collapsed, and the other protective treasures that he had pulled out moments ago also were destroyed.

“Despicable!” shrieked Yi Chenzi. “You people are despicable! I demand a one-on-one duel!!” His face twisted with fear as he was surrounded on three sides by the Outlander Beast, the parrot and Meng Hao.

“One-on-one duel? Yeah right, bitch! Lord Fifth always wins by outnumbering the enemy. Who’s gonna duel you, bitch! How could you be so naive?” The parrot squawked as it charged once again in attack. The Outlander Beast roared and struck out. As for Meng Hao, he did nothing except for seal off Yi Chenzi’s escape route with freezing wind every time he tried to flee.

It was at this point that the meat jelly suddenly let out an excited shout. “Don’t kill him! I have to convert him! I’ve been looking for someone as evil as this for years! I’ve always wanted a challenge like this!” The meat jelly’s eyes glowed and filled with excitement.

“What’s your name? Fear not! Come come. Tell Lord Third your name.”

A boom filled the air as the Outlander Beast struck out again. Yi Chenzi’s Nascent Soul was injured again. More life Qi sprayed from his mouth. The Nascent Soul was incredibly weak at this point, and his eyes were filled with desperation. With an angry cry, he tried to perform a minor teleportation, but even as he did, the air around him froze like ice, blocking the minor teleportation. Next, the parrot charged toward him.

A miserable scream rose up into the sky. The scene was tragic beyond compare. Even the members of the Crow Divinity Tribes were shocked.

“Let me go, I was in the wrong! Let me go....”

Boom! The Outlander slapped out playfully.

“Give me a chance, I will... aaiiiii....”

The parrot, manly and vigorous, pierced him through.

“I....”

“What’s your name? Eee? You’re not answering me! So, you look down on me, eh? Despise me? You, you, you, you are simply too evil! You are too immoral! I must convert you! I will convert you. Why won’t you say

anything...?” The meat jelly continued to blabber on continuously.

Within the space of about ten breaths, Yi Chenzi’s Nascent Soul continuously let out miserable shrieks of despair. The parrot and its concubine, and the meat jelly, were tormenting him until he was about to collapse.

In the end, Yi Chenzi let out a furious roar and chose to self-detonate. However, in the moment before he did, the Outlander Beast opened its mouth and swallowed him down. A faint explosion could be heard, after which the Outlander Beast opened its mouth and burped out some mist.

This was the way in which Yi Chenzi was ultimately killed. He was not cut down by Meng Hao, but rather toyed to death by the parrot, Outlander Beast, and meat jelly.

“Ahh? He died?” The parrot seemed to think that it was a pity.

“Ai. I can’t believe he died before I was able to convert him.” The meat jelly had a pained expression on its face as it sighed.

The Outlander Beast wore a strange expression as it looked back and forth between the meat jelly and the parrot. It said nothing.

Meng Hao turned and headed back toward the mountain, surrounded by his neo-demon horde. He waved his hand and instantly, totemic life force flowed out in all directions, fusing into the neo-beasts as well as the vine trunk.

They immediately began to recover. As they did, Meng Hao produced a large collection of medicinal pills to treat not only the wounds of the neo-demons, but also strengthen the weakened Crow Divinity Tribe members, who instantly looked much more energetic.

“Greetings exalted Sacred Ancient!” The more than one thousand Tribe members all began to kneel and kowtow to Meng Hao. Even the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather got to his knees to kowtow. When they lifted their heads back up, their faces were filled with anticipation. They were aware of Meng Hao’s goal in going to the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, and now, they all looked at him with anxiety.

“I’ve brought back hope,” he said, looking around at them. “We will migrate... to the Black Lands!” The surrounding Tribe members gasped and began to tremble. Tears streamed down their faces and they cried out in joy from the bottoms of their hearts.

A few days later, the Crow Divinity Tribe’s life-saving migration began.

With the fall of the violet rain, life force was exterminated and teleportation portals stopped working. Spiritual energy was scant, which made it so that the Crow Divinity Tribes had to travel on foot. There was no way for them to fly through the air.

Furthermore, there were still ordinary Tribe members with no Cultivation bases. That made it impossible to travel at any high rate of speed.

For a Cultivator to fly from the Western Desert North region to the Black Lands in the South region would take many years. To walk... would take a thousand. There was no time for that. The only way migrate successfully.... would be to acquire a flying machine that could carry one thousand people.

They needed a flying machine that could be powered by Spirit Stones, not the spiritual power of Heaven and Earth. Only a large flying machine like that could facilitate their migration and make it a reality.

Before departing, Meng Hao looked back at the mountains. After having returned, he hadn’t seen the Black Bat. From what Gu La had told him, it had disappeared only a few days after he left for the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. As to where it went, nobody knew.

“You fled without my permission. Well, I can find you if I wish.” Meng Hao look at the mountains, his eyes glittering. Then he turned and walked off into the distance with the Crow Divinity Tribes.

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Note: Based on Er Gen’s note at the end of the chapter, it seems that it was around this time that ISSTH hit #1 on qidian.com’s monthly charts.

Chapter 478: Soul Search

Most Rogue Cultivators would not have a large reserve of Spirit Stones. But to the five Tribes that once made up the great Crow Divinity Tribe, a Tribe which had passed down legacies for many years, well, Spirit Stones...

Were something they had a lot of!

They might not have enough to keep a large flying machine going for many years, but it would at least get them half way. After the arrival of the violet rain, the spiritual energy grew scarce to the point where it virtually didn't exist. Therefore, Spirit Stones, which were in fact an expendable resources, became the only way to replenish spiritual energy. Therefore, some were wasted in this way.

Thankfully, the fact that there were not many Cultivators in the Crow Divinity Tribes meant that the consumption was reduced by quite a bit. At the moment, there were plenty remaining. Currently, the main problem was how to acquire a large flying machine that wasn't powered by the spiritual energy of Cultivators.

Meng Hao looked around thoughtfully at members of the Crow Divinity Tribes as they trudged along. "Right now, many Tribes are migrating through the Western Desert North region. A treasure like that... would certainly be incredibly expensive if it were to be purchased!"

It was already the tenth day of the Crow Divinity Tribes' migration. These mountains were where the Tribes had lived from generation to generation. Other than occasional Tribe members who went out to travel in the great lands of the Western Desert and never came back, or a few random other members, most members of the Crow Divinity Tribes never left the mountains.

The rain continued to fall heavily. Everyone, both Cultivator and ordinary Tribe member alike, had to do everything possible to prevent the rainwater from touching them. Otherwise, their life force would slowly be burned away.

Even the neo-demons were the same, although they were able to hold

out much longer. Anything that was alive, though, would slowly die if exposed to the rain.

When the thorns were broken off of the vines, they became something like bark, which were then used to make articles of clothing that resembled woven, rush raincoats. These coats became an essential item to the Tribe members.

The migration included not just the thousand members of the Crow Divinity Tribes, but also Meng Hao's neo-demon horde. Thankfully, the neo-demons could survive inside Meng Hao's bag of holding, which made things much easier.

That was a special trait of neo-demons. Unfortunately, Cultivators could not survive inside of a bag of holding. Therefore, the road they had to travel along during the migration was difficult and packed with frustrations.

The sky above was dark and filled with the sound of falling rain. They moved in silence along a road that seemed to have no end.

A month later, they entered the borders of the mountains. Meng Hao led the way, wearing a woven rush raincoat like everyone else. It draped about him like a cloak, covering his entire body. He also wore a wide, conical hat, which made his appearance very bleak.

The Wild Giant panted as it walked along behind Meng Hao. It's massive frame was too big to fit inside a bag of holding, so it was forced to walk along in the outside world. Gu La walked next to the Wild Giant, coughing, his face pale. His life force was dimming, but luckily, it showed no signs that it would sputter out.

However, in this violet rain, he, like the other Cultivators, were gradually becoming like mortals.

One could imagine, that before too long, they would be Cultivators who could not perform any magic whatsoever. At that time, they... truly would be mortals.

A black crow suddenly appeared. It flew through the air, shrinking in

size until it was small enough to land on Gu La's shoulder.

Gu La looked at the bird for a moment, and then said, "There's a Tribe that's been following us for three days...."

The Crow Scout Tribe Greatfather turned to look behind them. Frowning, he said, "It's most likely a local Tribe called the Grand Fusion Tribe. They are a mid-sized Tribe...."

The Outlander beast, the parrot, and the meat jelly had once again fused into one body. At the moment, it was the voice of the parrot which said, "Do you want Lord Fifth to go screw them?"

Meng Hao didn't reply. He continued to walk, pulling out a jade slip. The jade slip was simple and unsophisticated; it was something he had acquired from Yi Chenzi's bag of holding, a description of the blood sacrifice magic that Yi Chenzi had cultivated.

It also described the method to cultivate the black moon totem, as well as his escape art. In addition, it detailed a vicious magic known as the Blood Sacrifice Soul Search, a brutal and ruthless technique that left the victim alive but crippled.

Meng Hao had been studying it thoughtfully during the traveling, and now understood it quite well.

When the others saw Meng Hao acting like this, they didn't say anything more. The group of a thousand continued to walk for seven or eight days until they reached what looked like a sea.

More precisely, it was an enormous lake. This was the very edge of the mountains, and before the rain had come, was actually an enormous basin that led out of the mountains. Before, it had been filled with neo-demons as well as lush vegetation. Now, it was nothing more than waters stretching out as far as the eye could see.

Meng Hao looked out at the lake for a moment, then turned. "They're here," he said coolly. The other turned with vigilant eyes to stare back in the direction they had just come from.

The members of the Crow Divinity Tribes scattered out, creating a wide,

open space. Their eyes flickered with displeasure, especially the members of the Crow Fighter Tribe. After Meng Hao's return, he had branded them with his Frost soil totem, causing their Cultivation bases to advance, returning them to where they had been before.

Not too much time passed before footsteps could be heard, mixed with the sound of grunts and growls.

A tribe of roughly three thousand people appeared, many of whom were mounted on fierce beasts that looked somewhat like lions. They charged across the ground as they approached.

Among their numbers were five Nascent Soul Cultivators, one of whom was in the mid Nascent Soul stage. All five of them were covered with totem tattoos, although their faces were somewhat wan and thin. Nonetheless, they radiated fierceness as they approached. The thousands of Cultivators all came to a stop about three hundred meters away to stare darkly at the Crow Divinity Tribes.

The Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather stepped forward, his eyes gleaming coldly. He had been nearing death before, but after returning, Meng Hao had give him some medicinal pills to restore his life force. His voice was cold as he said, "You must be the Grand Fusion Tribe. We are the Crow Divinity Tribe. You've been following us for some time. If you just happen to be traveling in the same direction, then please be on your way."

Given that his Cultivation base was at the mid Nascent Soul stage, the sound of it echoed out completely clearly.

No one responded to the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather's words. Of their five Nascent Soul Cultivators, the one with the mid Nascent Soul stage Cultivation base was an old man wearing a black robe, who carried a Feng Shui compass in his hand. After glancing at the compass, he suddenly looked up at the crowd of people in front of him. Eventually, his gaze came to rest on Meng Hao, whose Cultivation base was obscured. In this man's estimation, the person who was the greatest threat to him personally was the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather. After a moment's thought, he clenched his jaw. Killing intent and greed instantly shone in

his eyes.

“That guy has it! As for everyone else, do not leave a single one alive!”

In conjunction with his words, the Tribe members at his side roared as they pulled out Spirit Stones from which they quickly absorbed spiritual energy. The neo-demons they rode also roared, and then the entire group of three thousand people charged toward Meng Hao. The five Nascent Soul Cultivators flew forward, using power from their Cultivation bases that they were normally reluctant to part with.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he gave a cold snort. He waved his right hand, instantly causing the power of Frost soil to magically appear. A frigid wind blasted out along with Frost soil. He instantly moved forward with a minor teleportation, reappearing directly next to one of the early Nascent Soul Stage Cultivators. He waved a hand, causing the power of his Fire-type totem tattoo to boil out. Attacked with both freezing cold and burning hot, the early Nascent Soul stage Cultivator's body instantly exploded.

The sight immediately shocked the entire Grand Fusion Tribe, causing their expressions to fill with astonishment. This was something that they couldn't possibly have predicted would happen. Meng Hao's attack had exterminated one of their Priests!

The black-robed old man gasped, and his heart started to pound. However, he had little time for consideration. He burst into action, heading directly toward Meng Hao.

The Cultivators of the Crow Divinity Tribes chose this moment to launch their assault.

Meng Hao attacked swiftly and violently. He teleported, reappearing directly in front of the black-robed old man. His right hand lifted up, and a flame sea roared up. Then he lowered his hand, and the golden rain of this Metal-type tattoo appeared. As it shot forward, the black-robed old man performed an incantation with two hands. Shockingly, a nine-headed liger suddenly appeared in front of him, roaring as it shot toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao gave another cold snort and punched out with his right hand.

A boom echoed through the air as the nine-headed liger exploded into pieces. A cold wind gusted out as Meng Hao appeared again in front of the black-robed old man. The old man's face immediately fell. He pulled out a Spirit Stone to replenish his spiritual energy, shooting backward at the same time. Meng Hao's eyes flickered and he pointed out with his finger. The black-robed man's face filled with astonishment as he realized that his body and even his Cultivation base had been sealed. Meng Hao approached calmly and took the Feng Shui compass out of the man's hand. He looked it over, whereupon his face grew dark.

On the Feng Shui compass was a bright dot, indicating Meng Hao's location.

"Where did you get this thing?" asked Meng Hao coolly.

The black-robed old man had recovered control of his body. Panting, but not speaking a word, he backed up.

"Not going to tell me? Well, I'll just keep it." With that, he slapped his bag of holding. Instantly, his neo-demon horde emerged. "Other than the neo-demons, leave none of them alive."

Thousands of neo-demons blotted out the sky and shot forward, whereupon miserable shrieks began to fill the air.

During this great migration in the Western Desert, it was a situation of "if you don't die, then I don't live." There was no room for benevolence. If they showed mercy, the Crow Divinity Tribes would be destroyed.

In the moment when Meng Hao had decided to protect the Crow Divinity Tribes, his heart had grown cold regarding any enemy who attacked them. Since they had chosen to attack, they would die.

As he strode forward, his body suddenly turned into a green smoke as he used Yi Chenzi's escape art. He immediately appeared in front of the black-robed old man. He lifted his hand and the Lotus Sword Formation appeared.

After returning from the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, the power of Time had returned to its normal level. However, the world was now one in

which the power of extermination and the lack of spiritual energy were constantly making almost undetectable attacks on the life force of Cultivators. The power of the Lotus Sword Formation spread out, instantly causing a sixty-year cycle worth of time to fade away from the black-robed old man.

“This is....” his face immediately fell, and his mind reeled. His life force was already weak enough as it was. For a sixty-year cycle worth of time to vanish made him even older than he had been before. He was also shocked to find that the spiritual energy he needed to employ his divine abilities was not able to be sustained by replenishing his power with Spirit Stones. However, this young man against whom he was matched hadn’t produced even a single Spirit Stone. It was as if... the lack of spiritual energy in the area didn’t affect him at all.

It was with incredible speed that Meng Hao neared him. His right hand lifted up and suddenly a strange, mysterious glow appeared that resembled a black moon. Even as the old man’s life force was vanishing, the moon came to rest on the top of his head.

“Soul Search!”

A bloodcurdling scream could be heard coming from the old man’s mouth. His body shook violently, and just as he was trying to struggle, the Lotus Sword Formation once again spun, sucking away yet another sixty-year cycle of life. The old man’s eyes went wide as he felt his memories slipping away like flowing water as Meng Hao looked them over.

Meng Hao’s face suddenly grew dark and icy.

Chapter 479: Seeking to Perish

Within the memories of the black-robed old man, Meng Hao saw many complicated things. They were his recollections of his life. Even as the man screamed and trembled, Death Qi slowly spreading out from him, Meng Hao found what he was looking for.

The Feng Shui compass was one of many distributed throughout the Western Desert by the Heavenly Court Alliance. Because the Crow Divinity Tribes had not left their mountains during the Apocalypse, they were not up to date on everything that was happening in the outside world, and were unaware of this aspect.

Actually, more than half of the Tribes in the Western Desert had such a Feng Shui compass.

It served only one purpose; it would reveal the location of any Demon Spirits within the area.

Because Meng Hao had two Demon Spirits in his bag of holding, his position was visible on the compass.

Having detected a Demon Spirit, the Grand Fusion Tribe came with killing intent, hoping to slaughter them and take the Demon Spirit.

Meng Hao's face was grim. He flicked his sleeve, and the Lotus Sword Formation rotated. A shrill scream could be heard as the old man's body grew ancient. He wanted to evade, but after the Soul Searching, his mind had been severely damaged. Even his Nascent Soul was weak and on the verge of collapse.

As Meng Hao turned to walk off, a banging sound could be heard as the man's body turned directly into ash. Body and spirit were destroyed underneath the Time power of the Lotus Sword Formation.

The battle didn't last for very long. With Meng Hao's powerful Cultivation base, it didn't matter that the Grand Fusion Tribe had Spirit Stones to counter the effects of the waning spiritual energy. Their three thousand Tribe members quickly turned the ground into a river of blood.

Meng Hao felt no sympathy for them whatsoever. He knew that if his own Cultivation base were not strong enough, then the members of the Crow Divinity Tribes, including himself, would be the ones to form a river of blood.

The bags of holding and other resources of the Grand Fusion Tribe became fuel to keep the Crow Divinity Tribes going for longer. As for the thousands of neo-demons, thanks to Meng Hao's Demonic Qi, they capitulated and became part of his neo-demon horde.

After assigning more than a thousand of the neo-demons to be mounts for the Tribe members, they crossed the huge lake and once again continued with their migration.

However, dark clouds filled Meng Hao's heart. Because of the matter of the Feng Shui compasses, he knew that their migration would now be even more difficult. No matter how he tried to hide or seal the Demon Spirits, he was incapable of preventing the compass from detecting them.

Thankfully, the memories of the black-robed old man had revealed to Meng Hao the various announcements made by the Black Lands Heavenly Court Alliance during the time that he was in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins.

For example, he knew that as for the great Tribes with Spirit Severing experts, they were welcomed into the Black Lands with no stipulations whatsoever.

Because of that, most great Tribes naturally didn't care too much about Demon Spirits. Even those that did care somewhat, did not care so much that they would spare no price to get one.

"The Tribes that need the Demon Spirits the most are the mid-sized Tribes. Or Tribes like the Five Poisons Tribe, who don't have a Spirit Severing expert." Meng Hao was lost in thought regarding these matters as they crossed the lake and then continued onward.

Time flowed by. Three months later, the Crow Divinity Tribes were now far from the mountains that had been their home. Meng Hao's neo-demon horde once again numbered 20,000.

In Meng Hao's estimation, the neo-demon horde was one of the biggest factors in his ability to protect the Crow Divinity Tribes. Right now, the Crow Divinity Tribes were not capable of engaging in battle with the powerful mid-sized Tribes on their own. When it came to dealing with the great Tribes, their biggest advantage was that Meng Hao was a Demon Sealer, a status which placed him above even a Grand Dragoner.

Demonic Qi allowed him to attract and control more neo-demons; this often made his ability to change the course of a battle even stronger.

The three months of travel were anything but peaceful. After the Grand Fusion Tribe, they encountered three more mid-sized Tribes. Without exception, all of those tribes came after them with bloodshot eyes and killing intent, determined to seize a Demon Spirit.

After three battles, three Tribes were exterminated.

Meng Hao's neo-demon horde reached 20,000 in number, and the Crow Divinity Tribes did not lose a single member. In each of the three battles, it was Meng Hao and the neo-demons who did the fighting.

"Grow strong through battle," said Meng Hao, looking back at the mountains far behind.

They were now in a wide plain.

"By continuous battle, we acquire more resources and more neo-demons. If one day I can build my horde up to 100,000 neo-demons, then we would be able to shake even great Tribes." His eyes glittered with determination.

The Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather, the Crow Gloom Grand Elder, Gu La, and the others all saw Meng Hao's decisiveness, and it caused them to sigh with deference.

To them, Meng Hao was not just a Sacred Ancient, but also, the sole hope of the Crow Divinity Tribes.

"Esteemed Sacred Ancient," said the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather with an anxious frown, "if we continue on this path, it will only be a few months before we reach the lands of the mid-sized Eternal Universe Tribe. Their totem is a blue-faced Ghoul, and their Tribe members are cruel and

savage. There is no way to know if they are still there. If we want to avoid them, we can make a detour, but that will take us into the lands of the Five Poisons Tribe.”

“There’s no need for detours,” said Meng Hao coolly. His eyes shone with killing intent. “If the Eternal Universe Tribe is still there and has malicious intentions, well, I still need more neo-demons, and can use them to bolster my horde.”

On this road of migration, Meng Hao had long since grown used to killing.

“So....” said the Crow Gloom Grand Elder, his eyes shining with a fierce glow.

“Proceed onward!” replied Meng Hao calmly. His decisions were the decisions of the Tribe. Originally, there had been more than a thousand members of the five Crow Divinity Tribes. However, during recent battles, hundreds of enemies had surrendered, opting to become slaves in order to save their own lives. The Tribe, which now numbered nearly two thousand members, continued onward in formation.

Time passed. Two months later, they faced a river of violet rainwater. Further off in what had once been a flat plain was a crudely constructed city.

The city wasn’t extremely large, but seemed capable of housing over 10,000 people. It was made from rocks and dirt which were covered with fading magical symbols. In the very middle of the city were nine enormous statues. The statues, all clustered together, had vicious-looking faces, like Ghouls.

This was none other than the Eternal Universe Tribe. They were a mid-sized Tribe, but this was the Western Desert North region. The Tribe had experienced quite a few internal conflicts as they tried to decide whether or not to migrate. In the end, they had chosen to send a vanguard up ahead, leaving some members of the Tribe behind to decide later whether or not to migrate.

At the moment, the Eternal Universe Tribe’s Greatfather, High Priest,

Grand Elder, and other important members were standing on the city wall, staring excitedly off into the distance.

“Are you sure?” growled the Greatfather.

“Absolutely sure,” replied the High Priest, who held a Feng Shui compass in his hand. A bright dot could be seen on its surface. “They’re very close. This migrating Tribe is most likely the Crow Divinity Tribe, and they have a Demon Spirit!”

“According to the scouts, they are about two thousand strong. Some of that number includes ordinary Tribe members. They also have about one thousand neo-demons.

“They have one mid Nascent Soul Cultivator and two of the early Nascent Soul stage. The rest are Core Formation or lower. According to the intelligence we gathered regarding their war with the Five Poisons Tribe, they lost all of their totemic Sacred Ancients, which is why they are in such a state of deep decline.

“Considering that the spiritual energy has become so scarce, their road will end here in death!”

The Greatfather’s eyes shone with a bright light. “Heaven will not exterminate our Eternal Universe Tribe! Such a fine gift has been delivered right up to us. Notify the rest of the Tribe. We attack in full force. After we get that Demon Spirit, we will leave this place no matter the cost. We will meet up with the vanguard force and go to the Black Lands!” The Priest and the others around him all looked very excited.

The nearly 10,000 members of the Eternal Universe Tribe emerged out onto the plain, filled with the desire to slay Meng Hao and the Crow Divinity Tribes and take their Demon Spirit.

Meanwhile, across the plain was a bleak area which at one time had been filled with poison. These were the lands of the Five Poisons Tribe, a place where outsiders never entered.

The Five Poisons Tribe had long since chosen to migrate. However, it was not the entire Tribe that did so. Only four of the branches of the Tribe

had left; the Scorpion Branch had chosen to stay behind.

At this moment, the Scorpion Branch's High Priest held a Feng Shui compass in his hand. For a long moment, he silently looked at the dot representing a Demon Spirit.

"We need to think of a way to notify the migrating branches that a Demon Spirit has appeared. If they can come up with a way to rob it, excellent. Unfortunately, our Scorpion Branch...." He shook his head. "So, the Crow Divinity Tribes left their mountains after the war, and even managed to get a Demon Spirit.... It doesn't matter who chooses to tangle with them. Our Scorpion Branch has already decided to die here with our Sacred Ancient. There's no need to step into turbid waters."

Meng Hao and the Crow Divinity Tribes traveled on for seven days. Suddenly, Meng Hao's eyes glittered. His expression was calm as he slapped his bag of holding. Immediately, the vine trunk appeared and burrowed down into the ground. Moments later, thorns shot up from the soil, completely encircling the two thousand members of the Crow Divinity Tribes. They spread out to connect up above, forming a dome.

It was like an upside down bowl, completely protecting the Tribe inside.

All of it took only a moment to accomplish as, up ahead, a black cloud mass could be seen. Within the cloud were tens of thousands of neo-demons. Bright beams of light were thousands of Cultivators. The ground shook as thousands of Cultivators rode neo-demons to follow.

Everything trembled and the sky grew dark. The whole time, the violet rain continued to fall!

No words were exchanged. The incoming eight thousand Cultivators whistled through the air. The tens of thousands of neo-demons let out roars that spread out in all directions.

"He thinks he alone can hinder our army of tens of thousands? He overestimates his power! Eternal Universe Tribe Cultivators, hear my command. Slaughter all of these people! Do not leave a single one alive!"

Roaring filled the sky as the army charged into battle. Four Nascent Soul

Cultivators shot toward Meng Hao at top speed, filled with killing intent.

Chapter 480: Title at the end!

Meng Hao's expression was as calm as ever as he faced up against nearly ten thousand Cultivators and tens of thousands of neo-demons. Behind him, the Thorn Rampart covered the two thousand members of the Crow Divinity Tribes like a dome. He took a deep breath and then pointed his hand toward the ground.

"I've been waiting for you for a while now," he said coolly. "Righteous Bestowal!" Instantly, this land which was cut off from spiritual energy, suddenly seethed with Demonic Qi. As Meng Hao waved his hand, the Demonic Qi exploded out.

The Demonic Qi instantly caused the approaching neo-demons to begin to tremble. Their expressions were that of fear as they suddenly stopped moving and began to emit plaintive shrieks.

The sudden change caused the expressions of the aggressive, violent members of the Eternal Universe Tribe to immediately change.

This was the first time that Meng Hao had unhesitatingly unleashed all the power of the Demonic Qi he had at his disposal. This was a power that did not belong to Grand Dragoners, but to Demon Sealers. This was a truly momentous Heavenly power!

Cultivators could not sense this Qi, but to the neo-demons, it couldn't be clearer.

What they saw was Meng Hao, seething with shocking Demonic Qi. The Qi soared up into the sky; even the violet rain seemed to be distorted by it. Meng Hao was the center of a storm of Demonic Qi that burst out in all directions.

In the world that only the neo-demons could see, Demonic Qi roared up from Meng Hao, transforming into a massive figure. This was a figure composed completely of Demonic Qi, and it looked like... Meng Hao.

As of this moment, Meng Hao did not appear to them to be a Cultivator, but rather a Greater Demon of Heaven and Earth!

This Demon could shake the world, and had monstrous Demonic Qi. It was like a king that had arrived to inspect his land.

The neo-demons in the horde were shaking so badly that even their souls trembled. Suddenly, memories within their blood were awakened. The neo-demons suddenly began to cry out. The sounds of their cries were filled with reverence and allegiance.

This was allegiance shown to a king of neo-demons. They sensed a Qi that resembled that of their ancient Greater Demon ancestors!

The tens of thousands of neo-demons of the Eternal Universe Tribe, regardless of their level, were all roaring continuously, their expressions filled with veneration and respect. They were no longer charging across the ground, but rather prostrating themselves on it! The neo-demons who had been flying in the sky also fell to the ground.

Regardless of how their Masters tried to control them, they all acknowledged their allegiance to Meng Hao, without exception.

This scene caused the members of the Eternal Universe Tribe to pant with shock. Before they even had time to react, Meng Hao waved his hand, causing the shocking Demonic Qi to surge toward each and every one of the neo-demons.

As the Demonic Qi entered their bodies, their roars grew frenzied and their bodies grew larger and fiercer. Their auras were now many times more powerful than before. All of them even began to show signs of Ancestral Awakening!

One of the neo-demons in the horde was a blue-faced Ghoul neo-demon. It lifted its head to the sky to roar; as of this moment, it no longer walked along on all fours, but rather stood up on two legs. Its blue, hairless body emanated shocking ripples. Its eyes became bright red, and it grew nearly ten meters taller. Even more shocking, a horn suddenly grew out of its forehead.

The spiraling horn crackled with arcing sparks of lightning, and it emanated an astonishing aura. The appearance of this neo-demon very closely resembled the nine statues back in the Eternal Universe Tribe's

city.

Its appearance immediately caused the members of the Eternal Universe Tribe to be filled with shock. Their hearts trembled and cries of astonishment filled the air.

“Sacred Ancient! It... it looks exactly like the Sacred Ancient!!”

“Who is this person? He causes our neo-demons to mutate and go out of control....”

Amidst the commotion, Meng Hao’s calm, bizarre voice echoed out: “From now on, you follow me. To battle!” In response, the tens of thousands of neo-demons roared, shaking themselves loose from their masters and turning on them with vicious expressions. It seemed... they really were switching sides.

At the same time, Meng Hao waved his arm, causing his own 20,000 neo-demons to suddenly appear, howling to the sky. They instantly shot toward the Eternal Universe Tribe members.

Nearly 60,000 neo-demons all absorbed Demonic Qi, which caused a variety of mutations. They quickly surrounded the eight thousand trembling Cultivators, all of whom had completely lost their will to fight. One can well imagine the end result of the battle.

Meng Hao’s face was calm as he watched the savage slaughter erupt. Booms and screams filled the air. At the same time, the five Nascent Soul Cultivators shot toward him, emanating killing intent.

These people were all of the early Nascent Soul stage; to deal with people like that, Meng Hao didn’t even need to don the Blood Immortal mask any more. His hand flashed with an incantation gesture and he pointed forward. Instantly, the power of Frost soil shot out, followed by a raging sea of flames, a gigantic tree and a golden rain. Totems of four of the five elements exploded out as he pointed.

Before the five approaching Nascent Soul Cultivators could even get near to Meng Hao, their bodies trembled under the attack of his four great totems.

Blood sprayed from their mouths and their faces filled with astonishment. It was at this point that two roaring figures suddenly shot through the air toward Meng Hao, sending out ripples in all directions. Any neo-demon that got in their way was transformed into a cloud of blood; none were capable of even causing pause for these two figures.

It was two old men, filled with intense killing intent as they closed in on Meng Hao.

“He’s a Grand Dragoner! Kill him and the neo-demon horde will disperse!”

As they neared, Meng Hao slipped on the Blood Immortal mask. Instantly, Blood Qi exploded up, completely changing his aura. Radiating killing intent, his body flickered as he turned into a black moon. A wisp of smoke could be seen as he suddenly appeared directly in front of the two old men.

For him to appear in this way was bizarre and shocking. They almost couldn’t believe what they were seeing with their own eyes, and their hearts filled with foreboding.

As the faces of the old men fell, Meng Hao casually clenched his right hand into a fist and then launched a blow!

Boom!

One of the old men was sent tumbling backward. He quickly summoned seven or eight magical treasures to try to defend himself, but they were crushed, the fragments of which slammed into his chest. Blood sprayed from his mouth and the totem tattoos on his body flickered.

At the same time, Meng Hao turned. Black moons flashed within his eyes and suddenly, a black moon like an eye magically appeared on his forehead as he looked at the other old man. This old man urgently employed divine abilities, and was instantly surrounded by Ghouls. This was actually the Greatfather of the Eternal Universe Tribe; the man Meng Hao had struck moments ago was the High Priest.

When the Greathfather’s eyes met Meng Hao’s, his expression flickered

and his mind filled with roaring as suddenly, the reflection of a black moon appeared on his own face. He felt stabbing pain in his Sea of Perception, as if a great invisible blade were stabbing into it.

He let out a miserable scream. Unable to attack, mind filled with buzzing as he shot backward in retreat.

This black moon eye was none other than Yi Chenzi's life saving treasure. However, in Meng Hao's hands its might far exceeded what it had in the hands of Yi Chenzi. Although Meng Hao did not cultivate the blood sacrifice magic, after putting on the Blood Immortal mask, the power of his Blood Qi far exceeded that of Yi Chenzi's.

He needed no blood sacrifices. Everytime he killed a person, the redness of the mask would grow deeper.

Bloodcurdling screams could be heard continuously as 60,000 neo-demons ruthlessly attacked and killed the besieged Eternal Universe Tribe.

What shocked the Eternal Universe Tribe most was that within the neo-demon horde was a flock of extremely bizarre black crows. They didn't attack anyone, but rather flew around, seemingly absorbing something. However, it didn't take long before the corpses on the ground began to twitch and rise to their feet.

The dead came back to life and stood up. Within the eyes of each corpse could be seen the image of a crow. Immediately, the corpses charged toward their former Tribe members in attack.

Most astonishing of all was that these corpses... still had Cultivation bases!

Although they could only use their Cultivation bases instinctively, these corpses did not fear death. Even if all they had left was a head, they would still try to bite their opponent. The battlefield instantly grew even more brutal.

The situation quickly grew hopeless, causing some of the Eternal Universe Tribe members to bite their tongues and spit out blood. After performing quick incantations, they pointed up to the sky.

“Exalted Sacred Ancient, help us!”

The High Priest, the five nascent Soul Cultivators, and the rest of the Tribe members all bit their tongues and spit out blood. One by one they roared up into the sky: “Exalted Sacred Ancient, help us!”

The voices of thousands of Tribe members joined together, transforming into a thunderous sound that rolled out in waves, shaking Heaven and Earth. Suddenly, a roar could be heard from the sky off in the distance.

It was a black cloud, within which was a living Ghoul!

Its skin was blue, and it was fully three hundred meters in length. It had a spiraling horn, and its body was covered with scales. This neo-demon Sacred Ancient’s aura shot out explosively, and when it appeared, it stared toward Meng Hao with its red eyes.

“You have a similar type of Qi....” The creature roared, and then shot its claw-like hand directly toward Meng Hao.

At the same time that the Ghoul roared, another roar could be heard. “Outlander!”

It was none other than the Outlander Beast. It suddenly shot through the air to slam into the Ghoul.

Amidst the resulting boom, the parrot flapped its wings and let out a shriek. Its eyes glowed with a look of disgust and detestation.

“Dammit! No fur or feathers! You, you, you.... Why don’t you have any fur or feathers!?!? Beloved concubine, put it to death! This damned bastard has no fur or feathers, that’s the most heinous of crimes! Show no mercy! AAHHHHH! You dare to not have fur or feathers!”

In response to being slammed into by the Outlander Beast, the Ghoul roared and fell back. The Outlander Beast whistled through the air to slam into it again. The parrot was off to the side, continuing to call out excitedly.

On the ground, Meng Hao chuckled. He had been waiting for quite some time for the Eternal Universe Tribe to come. How could he not have made

certain preparations? He lifted his right hand to perform an incantation gesture and suddenly, a blood-colored face magically appeared around him. It spread out and then shot forward in attack.

The attack instantly slammed into the several Nascent Soul Cultivators, causing blood to spray from their mouths. They retreated, faces filled with astonishment. It was at this point that the thorns suddenly began to spread apart. From within, the members of the Crow Divinity Tribes as well as the several hundred slaves, all emerged, shouting battle cries.

At this point, Meng Hao knew that the Eternal Universe Tribe was completely defeated.

Chapter 480: A Massive Defeat for the Eternal Universe Tribe!

Chapter 481: An Old Enemy

The battle lasted for several long hours. The Eternal Universe Tribe Greatfather perished and the High Priest was destroyed. Of the remaining five Nascent Soul Cultivators, three died and two attempted to flee.

They didn't get very far before Meng Hao caught up with them and exterminated them.

He had no other choice. The only chance they had to live was to surrender, change totems, and exercise faith in Meng Hao by becoming a slave member of the Crow Divinity Tribes. Meng Hao could well imagine that if he didn't kill those who chose instead to flee, news of the matter of the Demon Spirit would quickly travel far and wide.

They were in a bad enough situation as it was, if news spread even farther, then it would be even more difficult to successfully migrate.

Only about two thousand members of the Eternal Universe Tribe remained from the original force of seven or eight thousand. These members chose to surrender and pay allegiance to Meng Hao, becoming slave members of the Crow Divinity Tribes.

Of the 60,000 neo-demons, 50,000 survived the battle. They blotted out the sky as they surrounded Meng Hao, who stood there, hair whipping about, his face filled with killing intent. He truly looked bizarre in these circumstances.

Several days later, the Crow Divinity Tribes, now four thousand members strong, arrived at the city formerly controlled by the Eternal Universe Tribe. They stripped the city of anything useful and then proceeded on their way.

They headed south, following a path that would eventually lead them out of the Western Desert North region.

The violet rain only continued to fall harder and harder.... The corrosive properties of the rain, its ability to exterminate life force, also increased. More and more lakes could be seen covering the land. From the look of it,

it wouldn't be long before the lakes joined together to become a sea.

Time flashed by. Two years passed. During the two years, the Crow Divinity Tribes continued on relentlessly toward the south. They crossed huge lakes and made their way through mountain ranges. During the journey, they faced battle seven times.

These seven battles caused the Crow Divinity Tribes to completely rise to prominence. Their numbers grew from four thousand to over 10,000. Only a thousand of those were original members of the five Crow Divinity Tribes. The other Cultivators were captured in battle and then chose to pledge allegiance to the Crow Divinity, to exercise faith in Meng Hao, and to become slaves.

Their totems were forcibly changed. Prostrating in worship to Meng Hao, they received either a Metal, Wood, Fire or Earth totem, and called Meng Hao Sacred Ancient.

Through the successive battles, Meng Hao's neo-demon horde gradually increased in size. It now numbered 80,000.

As far as Nascent Soul Cultivators went, before they had only three. Now, there were seven, an increase of four. They were Cultivators from other Tribes who had chosen to surrender. To these Cultivators who chose to join the Crow Divinity Tribes, it was actually a chance to survive through the Apocalypse.

If the Crow Divinity Tribes managed to make it to the Black Lands, then they too would be able to enter and survive.

The shocking sight of the neo-demon horde soaring through the sky made it so that the glory of the Crow Divinity Tribes had now been restored to the level it had been back in the days of the Five Tribes. Now that more people were joining, and resources were more plentiful, Meng Hao began to concoct medicinal pills. Because his medicinal pills could restore spiritual energy, they became an essential part of life in the Crow Divinity Tribes.

It was also the reason that the more than 10,000 Cultivators could continue to endure the violet rain. After all... despite their abundance of

resources, they still had not been able to acquire a flying machine.

Large-scale flying magical items were considerably expensive, and not something that mid-sized Tribes would possess. Only great Tribes would have such magical items.

Meng Hao was hopeful of being able to acquire a flying machine. However, during the two years, his face only continued to grow grimmer and grimmer. He was well aware that because of the Apocalypse, many Tribes in the Western Desert North were in the process of migrating. That was why they had run into the seven other Tribes that they battled with.

However, as they continued to travel, they would eventually leave the North region. When that happened, they would be facing up against even more Tribes, many of whom would have Feng Shui compasses. Once the Demon Spirit showed up on a Feng Shui compass, it would give rise to shocking violence.

The only way to resolve situations like that was by killing!

Meng Hao's eyes shone with a cold light. During the two years, he had become completely accustomed to carrying out massacres.

"If the Crow Divinity Tribes cannot make it all the way to the Black Lands, I will still do everything in my power not to let down the Golden Crow. I will prove myself worthy of the blessings I have received from the Crow Divinity Tribes." Meng Hao was already doing everything he could to fulfil his moral obligations. Regardless of whether or not he was able to achieve the pinnacle of his goal, there was now little more that he could do.

During the two years in which Meng Hao observed the violet rain falling, he was slowly beginning to attain bits of enlightenment. He was able to use the Everburning Flame to give birth to his Fire-type totem, and the framework of the Frost soil to create his Earth-type totem. As for his Water-type totem... perhaps he really could use the violet rain to acquire it!

After all, the violet rain contained the power of an Apocalypse. Such Water-type power could exterminate life and cut off spiritual energy. It

was extraordinary to the extreme. If he could control that power and use it to create a Water-type totem tattoo, then Meng Hao would not only have completed the great circle of the five elements, but would have done so with five elements that could shake Heaven and Earth!

Metal came from the Golden Crow, a medicinal pill from ancient times that became a Demon, something exceedingly rare in Heaven and Earth!

Wood came from a powerful expert from the Ninth Sea, who collapsed upon reaching South Heaven. Its consciousness was reborn in the form of a tree, the Greenwood Tree!

Fire came from the East Pill Everburning Flame. It was a fire that could never be extinguished, that would exist eternally. Its origin was a mystery, such that even Meng Hao wasn't sure where it came from!

Earth came from the power of the Frost soil and the Frost Soil Demon Emperor, a legendary soil which, according to the legends in the Ninth Mountain, was magically birthed from a patch of dirt, and eventually became unique and unmatched.

“Water.... The violet rain Apocalypse exterminates life and cuts off spiritual energy, leaving everything desolate!” Meng Hao's eyes shone with a strange light.

10,000 Cultivators of the Tribe followed him in this Apocalyptic migration. The speed with which they traveled was significantly faster than two years before. After all, all of the people who surrendered and offered allegiance were Cultivators, not ordinary Tribe members. As for the original group of one thousand Crow Divinity Tribe members, the few hundred ordinary Tribe members were assisted by others, and didn't influence the general speed of the migration.

Not many people noticed the rise of the Crow Divinity Tribes. After all, everyone was anxious to carry out their own migrations, and didn't pay too much attention to what was happening elsewhere. Furthermore, because of the chaos of the Apocalypse, all Tribes were very vigilant when it came to dealing with outsiders.

However, there was one Tribe that did notice the five Crow Divinity

Tribes. That Tribe was none other than the old enemy of the Crow Divinity Tribes, the Five Poisons Tribe!

On the border of the Western Desert North region, the Five Poisons Tribe had set up temporary shelters. In the central pavilion sat the Tribe's Priests, who numbered thirteen in total. In the center position were two old men.

The first was the Greatfather of the Five Poisons Tribe. The other... was the man who had led the great army in an attempt to exterminate the five Crow Divinity Tribes. The High Priest.

He broke the silence in the tent with his raspy voice: "We are certain that the Crow Divinity Tribes have a Demon Spirit."

Conversations immediately broke out within the central pavilion.

"We have already contacted the great Cloud Sky Tribe. They have a Spirit Severing Patriarch, which qualifies them to enter the Black Lands. If we choose to join them, then... from now on, we will lose the right to govern ourselves, and will become an auxiliary branch of their Tribe. The exalted Sacred Ancients are reluctant to agree to such an arrangement."

"If we choose not to join the great Cloud Sky Tribe, then the only hope we have to survive is to exterminate the Crow Divinity Tribes and seize their Demon Spirit. Furthermore, our only chance is to do so... before news of this Demon Spirit spreads to other areas outside the Western Desert North region!"

"That's right. Once the words spreads out, it will reach the Central region, where large quantities of Tribes are congregating. The further south one goes, the more Tribes there are to be found. Once the Crow Divinity Tribes enter the Central region, the fact that they have a Demon Spirit will be impossible to hide."

"If we acquire the Demon Spirit, we could use it to make a deal with the great Cloud Sky Tribe. We could offer it to them in exchange for the chance of autonomy if we join them."

As the conversations continued, the Greatfather sat there taciturnly.

“In accord with our previous agreement, the emissary from the Cloud Sky Tribe will be here in two months.”

“However, according to our secret inquiries, the Crow Divinity Tribes are now over 10,000 in number. They also have tens of thousands of neo-demons. Furthermore, their Grand Dragoner Meng Hao is worth a thousand regular Cultivators! Such a war will be no simple thing.”

“They’re nothing but a disorderly mob. If we attack with all our might, we can definitely wipe out the Crow Divinity Tribes within three days, and seize the Demon Spirit before anyone else can!”

Finally, the Greatfather cleared his throat, instantly causing the pavilion to grow quiet. All gazes shifted to fall upon him.

“The Sacred Ancients are not willing to join another great Tribe. Neither are we.... Therefore, prepare for war! We will fight the Crow Divinity Tribes and seize their Demon Spirit. That Demon Spirit is the key to our future survival!” His eyes filled with determination as he spoke. Afterwards, all of the Priests kowtowed deeply to him.

“As for that Grand Dragoner Meng Hao... the Tribe still has a drop of Heavenly Blood. Use the blood to fuse the spirits of the tens of thousands of Tribe members, and slay Meng Hao!”

The High Priest stared in shock and said, “Heavenly Blood. That’s....”

“I’ve already made up my mind. The Crow Divinity Tribes’ Grand Dragoner Meng Hao will die as soon as we make our assault!” The Greatfather’s voice was resolute. The others sat there silently for a moment, then began to nod.

Soon thereafter, the Five Poisons Tribe’s temporary residence area buzzed as 50,000 Tribe members prostrated themselves around five statues. If you could look at the scene from up above, the Five Poisons Tribe looked like a giant petal with five flowers. In the very center were the Greatfather and the others. Suddenly, a drop of blood appeared in the hand of the Greatfather, which he flung up into the sky.

At the same time, the tens of thousands of prostrating Tribe Members

began to chant an incantation. The sound of it was extremely bizarre as it floated up into the air. The sky dimmed, and the violet rain in the area seemed to begin to undulate.

“Spirit Fusion!” cried the Greatfather. Immediately, 50,000 Cultivators bit their tongues and spat out a mouthful of blood. The blood immediately shot up into the air to fuse together with the violet drop of blood which had been thrown up earlier. The mass of blood grew larger and larger; in the blink of an eye it was a few dozen meters wide. Then it began to shrink down until it was barely two meters tall, and bore the semblance of a human.

Soon a face appeared. Its eyes opened, and a bloody glow rose up into the sky. It looked around and, seemingly sensing the will of the surrounding 50,000 Cultivators, turned its head and then shot off into the distance.

Chapter 482: Blood of the Ji Clan!

After the figure of blood shot off into the distance, the members of the great Five Poisons Tribe rose to their feet. The Tribe happened to have a gigantic magical item capable of flight. It was a colossal, extremely life-like viper.

It was roughly three thousand meters long and emanated pressure in all directions. This flying magical item was actually the transmogrified corpse of a Sacred Ancient which had perished many years in the past. The Five Poisons Tribe paid an exorbitant price to the great Heaven's Work Tribe to use their skill to transform the corpse into the flying magical item.

Normally speaking, its capacity was several thousand people. However, in their fervor to slaughter the Crow Divinity Tribes, the Five Poisons Tribe spared no amount of Spirit Stones, and even ignored any possible damage it might cause, to overload it with more than 30,000 Cultivators. They, along with the Greatfather and nine Priests, immediately headed in the direction they knew Meng Hao to be.

Among their number was Zhixiang. After returning from the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, she had maintained a low profile and concealed her Cultivation base. No one had picked up on anything out of the ordinary. At the moment, she stood there, eyes glittering, her brow slightly furrowed.

"I never imagined that this Five Poisons Tribe would have a drop of blood of the Ji Clan. The Blood Qi is thick; it seems to be from a powerful expert of the Ji Clan from ancient times. It has grown weak over the years, to the point where the power of the bloodline won't even spread out. That must be why the Ji Clan is unaware that some of their ancestral blood is on the loose.

"Even still, it is still Immortal blood.... Well, it still won't be sufficient to kill Meng Hao." Eyes flickering, she maintained her silence.

The giant viper flew through the air for a few days. Eventually, it reached a lake, which it quickly crossed.

The Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather sat there cross-legged atop the giant viper. "I can sense that the Heavenly Blood is already nearing its target," he said. "It will go in for the kill tonight! Since the Crow Divinity Tribes' Grand Dragoner will die, we must make top speed and arrive in less than a day!" With that, he closed his eyes.

That night, the sky was dark and there was no moon. Everything was pitch black. The Crow Divinity Tribes were resting, having erected simple tents which were organized in concentric rings.

Regarding the miscellaneous affairs of the Tribe, the Greatfather of the Crow Soldier Tribe had recently been elected to serve as the Crow Divinity Tribe Greatfather. Various rituals were performed which the other Nascent Soul Cultivators also attended. During the past two years, the Crow Divinity Tribe had become a well-oiled machine.

At the moment, Meng Hao sat cross-legged in his own tent, which was located in the very center of the encampment, an indication of the venerated position he occupied. Outside of the tent, Crow Divinity Tribe Cultivators stood guard day and night.

Currently, his eyes were closed, and he held an alcohol flagon in his right hand. Throughout the two years, he had kept Han Shan's flagon close at hand. Inside was an unending supply of alcohol. Although drinking it did not give him any Dancing Sword Qi, it left him with a warm feeling inside that kept him quite comfortable despite the violet rain.

He couldn't drink too much, though. At the most, he would drink three small mouthfuls per day.

He sat there cross-legged, his eyes closed. His attention was currently focused inside the blood-colored mask, on Ji Nineteen, who was still bound by the flag of three streamers. Whenever he had time these past years, Meng Hao would take the time to study him. The four deadly wooden swords were kept stabbed into him the entire time. Despite Ji Nineteen's raving and cursing, his Cultivation base was incapable of restoring itself. It was completely restricted by Meng Hao's wooden swords.

Next to Ji Nineteen was the Li Clan Patriarch, who sat there rubbing his hands together excitedly. His body was covered with crackling lightning that danced back and forth. After experiencing the Heavenly Tribulation those years ago, he was almost completely transformed into a Soul of Lightning.

In compliance with Meng Hao's requirements, he had turned into a sort of jailer, responsible for keeping an eye on Ji Nineteen. Every time Meng Hao came to torment Ji Nineteen, the Li Clan Patriarch would get extremely excited. He would even offer bits of advice to Meng Hao to help him transform Ji Nineteen into a Soul of Lightning.

As far as Ji Nineteen was concerned, all of that was not the worst of the situation. The worst was that during the two years, the meat jelly had taken a strong interest in him. Every few days it would come in and try to convert him. Ji Nineteen was on the verge of collapse. Every time the meat jelly came to try to convert him, the Li Clan Patriarch would get even more excited, and his face would be covered with a sinister smile.

"Tell me, how does one use the Karma of the Ji Clan? If you tell me, I'll keep the meat jelly away for an entire month. What do you say?" Meng Hao spoke slowly and methodically, but all he got in return from Ji Nineteen was raving and cursing.

Meng Hao's face began to grow colder. His Cultivation base was not weak like it had been all those years ago. He had already reached the point that he was strong enough to kill this weakened Ji Nineteen. Right now, his eyes flickered with coldness for a moment before turning calm again. He was just about to go call for the meat jelly when suddenly, his body completely disappeared. Simultaneously, back in the tent, a fissure suddenly opened up in the air in front of seated Meng Hao.

As soon as the fissure opened, a blood-colored hand stretched out from within, completely silent and undetectable by anyone. This hand was very strange looking; it had no prints on the fingers or palm, and in the very center of the palm, tens of thousands of magical faces could be seen. This bizarre hand immediately shot toward Meng Hao, extending its finger to in an attempt to tap him on the forehead.

When the blood-colored hand was only about seven inches away from Meng Hao's forehead, his eyes snapped open. A profound sense of deadly crisis filled him, wrapping up his mind. He instantly moved backward, but the blood-colored finger followed at the same speed. As it did, a blood-colored arm and then a body emerged from the fissure.

As Meng Hao retreated, he hit the wall of the tent. His eyes flickered as Metal-, Wood-, Water-, and Earth-type totems magically appeared in front of him, slamming into the blood-colored finger.

A boom rang out, shaking everything and echoing out into the silent night. The tent instantly exploded into bits as Meng Hao shot out from within. The more than 10,000 shocked members of the Crow Divinity Tribe all began to emerge from their tents. When they looked over, they saw their Sacred Ancient, Meng Hao, shooting through the air in retreat.

Pursuing him was a blood-colored figure which emanated a bloody glow. Its finger was only seven inches away from Meng Hao, blocked by four great totems, which prevented it from moving any closer.

Meng Hao's face flickered as he retreated. The blood-colored mask instantly appeared; when he donned the mask, a bloody glow shot out of Meng Hao to rise up into the air. A gigantic face appeared which shot toward the blood-colored figure.

A rumbling boom could be heard as the blood-colored figure pierced directly through the face. Now, it was not seven inches away from Meng Hao, but five.

"What is this thing!?" thought Meng Hao, his pupils constricting. At this crucial moment, an azure glow suddenly appeared in his eyes. He opened his mouth, causing an azure Immortal's Sword to fly out. It shot like lightning to slam into the blood-colored figure.

A boom could be heard as the speeding sword slashed into the figure. Suddenly a sound could be heard that resembled tens of thousands voices all screaming at the same time. The blood-colored figure instantly exploded into countless fragments. Meng Hao saw tens of thousands of magical faces twisting and shattering.

As the boom echoed out, the Crow Divinity Tribe members down below looked up with anxious expressions. When they saw the blood-colored figure finally collapse, they heaved sighs of relief.

Meng Hao floated there, his expression grim.

“That thing showed up far too unexpectedly. So strange. It wanted to kill me, which would then cause the Cultivation bases of the entire Crow Divinity Tribe to fall...

“Ah?! Wait, something else must be going on. No matter what Tribe it is that wanted me dead, they would not pass up an opportunity to attack after my death. They would definitely follow up in attack! That means the Crow Divinity Tribe is still in danger!” Having reached this conclusion, Meng Hao’s face flickered. He looked off into the night sky and was just about to summon his neo-demon horde when the grave danger he had predicted appeared. His eyes narrowed as his body transformed into a black moon, which then shot forward in a wisp of green smoke.

Right behind him in mid-air, countless dots of blood suddenly began to form back together into a blood-colored figure. The bloody glow was a bit weaker this time, but the feeling Meng Hao got was that it was purer. The sense of deadly crisis he felt was even stronger now!

The blood-colored flickered as it suddenly shrank down into a single, dark drop of blood. The drop of blood instantly caused Meng Hao to begin to breathe heavily.

“Soul Blood! That’s a drop of Soul Blood!!”

The Soul Blood turned into a streaking line as it shot toward Meng Hao with indescribable speed. As it did, an incredible, overwhelming aura emanated out. At the same time, the feeling of Karma could also be sensed within the blood.

It was in this instant that inside the blood-colored mask, the flag of three streamers suddenly began to tremble. It emanated a feeling of hope, and an aura that suggested it had suddenly encountered its archenemy!

As for Ji Nineteen, a roaring filled his body, and his face filled with

disbelief.

“Ancestral aura? It’s ancient, extremely ancient, maybe even more ancient than the Ji Clan itself.... This is impossible. What generation does this patriarchal blood come from? Whose blood is it?!?!”

“Ji Clan blood!” thought Meng Hao. His eyes went wide as he realized that all his divine abilities, all his magical techniques, and all his totems were useless against this blood. Even using the green smoke escape art, he wasn’t fast enough to evade it. In the blink of an eye, it was upon him.

Meng Hao didn’t even have time to use the Dancing Sword Qi.

The only thing he had time to do, in the moment just before the blood reached him, was wave his hand. Immediately 80,000 neo-demons emerged. Upon Meng Hao’s order, they shot down to protect the Crow Divinity Tribe.

He just had time to accomplish this. Then, the blood hit his forehead, filling him with roaring pain.

It was at this time that Meng Hao roared: “Agarwood!”

Instantly the power of the Agarwood exploded out from within Meng Hao, fighting back against the power of the blood drop. It was unclear exactly what was happening, but the blood was incapable of killing Meng Hao. After hitting him, the boundless might of the Agarwood expanded out, enveloping Meng Hao.

It was in this exact moment that the Five Poison Tribe’s gigantic viper could be seen up in the sky, whistling through the air. Tens of thousands of Five Poisons Tribe Cultivators transformed into beams of colorful light that shot down toward the ground.

They were joined by tens of thousands of neo-demons which were under the control of a handful of Five Poisons Tribe Dragoneers. In addition, powerful Nascent Soul Cultivators teleported down, filled with determination to eradicate the Crow Divinity Tribe.

Off in the distance, the air rippled as the Five Poisons Tribes totemic Sacred Ancients, with the exception of the spider and scorpion, appeared.

In the blink of an eye, the one thousand Crow Divinity Conclave Tribe members recognized who these people were. The Five Poisons Tribe. Instantly, their eyes turned red.

When you face up against your archenemy, you won't rest until they are dead!

Chapter 483: I Shall Seal Death!

“Kill them!”

The more than one thousand Crow Divinity Conclave Tribe members' eyes were red. The former Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather, who was now the Greatfather of the entire Crow Divinity Tribe, as well as Wu Chen, Wu Ling, and all the other Tribe members who had participated in the bloody war, all let out unbridled roars of fury.

Killing intent sprang out from their eyes as all the enmity from the past exploded out within them. They shot forward, totems magically materializing. Immediately, booms filled the air.

Behind them, the rest of the more than ten thousand members of the Crow Divinity Tribe all joined them as they charged into battle.

The Crow Divinity Tribe members had experienced many battles in their two years of migration. In the beginning, they had been small and weak. Over time, they had grown stronger and more powerful in their rise to prominence. It wasn't just the physical strength of the Crow Divinity Tribe which had grown, but also the strength of their hearts!

As for the Tribe members who had surrendered to the Crow Divinity Tribe and exercised faith in Meng Hao, his totems not only caused their Cultivation bases to soar up, they also benefited from his medicinal pills. This caused their faith in the Crow Divinity Tribe as a whole to grow strong.

Most importantly, after joining the Crow Divinity Tribe, they had hope. This was especially so considering that their former Tribes did not exist any more. As of now, the Crow Divinity Tribe was their only hope.

They looked forward to the day when the Crow Divinity Tribe would enter the Black Lands. After two years of constant victories in battle, their hope was incredibly strong.

In the blink of an eye, the battle began.... The Crow Divinity Tribe did not shrink back in the slightest. Even as the Five Poisons Tribe was still

nearing, the more than ten thousand Crow Divinity Tribe Cultivators, joined by 80,000 neo-demons, instantly charged into battle. That was when the slaughter began!

No words were exchanged. The Five Poisons Tribe and the Crow Divinity Tribe were long-standing enemies. The enmity which existed between the two had been interrupted by the arrival of the violet rain Apocalypse.

Were it not for that war, the Crow Divinity Tribe would never have sunken into such decline and would already have been able to migrate out of the Western Desert North region. As far as the Five Poisons Tribe went, it was because of the war that the Scorpion Branch split off, and their Sacred Ancients now lacked a spider and a scorpion!

Of the Five Poisons, two were gone. To the Five Poisons Tribe, this was a catastrophic blow. At any other time, it wouldn't have been too much of a problem. With time, they could have recovered. But at that critical juncture, the violet rain arrived, forcing the Five Poisons Tribe to migrate. Their overall level of power was reduced, causing further complications for their migration.

This was why the desire to destroy the Crow Divinity Tribe was so strong in the hearts of the Five Poisons Tribe.

Shocking booms filled the air. Heavy casualties were immediately inflicted in the initial fighting. There were even members of Crow Divinity Tribe who chose to self-detonate, causing the Five Poisons Tribe to recall the frenzied fighting from years ago.

However, the Five Poisons Tribe also fought with madness. The war years ago had been one of invasion; this battle, however, was one in which they were fighting for their own survival as a Tribe. Even some Five Poisons Tribe Cultivators began to self-detonate.

The Crow Divinity Tribe only had seven Nascent Soul Cultivators, whereas the Five Poisons Tribe had more than ten Priests. However, the Crow Divinity Tribe's advantage was not in the number of Cultivators they possessed, but rather, their neo-demons.

They had powerful neo-demons. 80,000 of them. There were even high-

level neo-demons in the horde who could compare to Nascent Soul Cultivators. As of this moment, the two Tribes were relatively evenly matched.

The Crow Divinity Tribe Greatfather faced off against the Five Poisons Tribe High Priest. Their battling shook Heaven and Earth. The Greatfather was actually not a match in terms of his Cultivation base. However, he had long since chosen to burn his Cultivation base and life force, all of himself, to temporarily increase his level of power. Only by doing so could he hold his own against the High Priest.

In truth, what he was trying to do was hold up the High Priest and prevent him from attacking anyone else.

As for the Five Poisons Tribe's totemic Sacred Ancients, they were missing a spider and a scorpion. However, their viper, toad, and centipede still emanated explosive pressure.

Before the Apocalypse, their presence would have been astonishing. However... because of the years of violet rain, as well as the totemic sealing of the Crow Divinity Tribe years ago, they were much weaker than before.

Right now, their level of power only exceeded that of the Nascent Soul stage. The ones to match up against them were the Outlander Beast, the parrot, and the meat jelly. As the battle began, it became apparent that, whether it be it in terms of their top fighters, or even the ordinary Tribe members, the Crow Divinity Tribe was slightly at a disadvantage. They were not being crushed, and thankfully Meng Hao's 80,000 neo-demons were there. Therefore, they were able to fight back.

However, it was clear that they would only be able to hold on for a short period of time!

In the middle of the battlefield was a bizarre area that no one could enter. It was an empty area roughly three hundred meters across.

In the very middle of the three hundred meter area was an enormous, rippling sphere of blood. Roaring sounds could be heard emanating out from it, as if someone inside were struggling, trying to break out.

This blood sphere was formed by none other than the Ji Clan blood. Because of the power of the Agarwood, it had changed forms in this way. Instead of recklessly trying to kill Meng Hao, it was now acting like a seal, trapping him inside.

“Kill them!” roared the Crow Divinity Tribe members.

“Press on! The Sacred Ancient will definitely break out!” To the Crow Divinity Tribe members, Meng Hao was their Sacred Ancient, almost like a god.

With Meng Hao there, all dangers and all catastrophes could be overcome!

They had staunch faith in Meng Hao. They truly believed that all they had to do was endure; their Sacred Ancient would break free from the blood sphere. Once he appeared, he would lead them into victory over the Five Poisons Tribe!

The Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather’s eyes glittered. His Cultivation base was at the late Nascent Soul stage. With a cold snort, he charged into the battle. Wherever he went, death followed. Any Crow Divinity Tribe member who tried to block his way exploded into death.

His body turned into a beam of light as he shot directly toward the three hundred meter wide area. No one could stop him. As he neared, he flashed an incantation with both hands, sending an attack to roar toward the blood sphere.

This was a special technique, a divine ability which could actually pass inside of the blood sphere. He wanted to kill Meng Hao and acquire the Demon Spirit!

Moments ago....

Roaring echoed out. Within the blood-colored sphere, Meng Hao’s face was grim. He looked around him at the rippling, bloody light that surrounded him like a wall. It was like a gigantic seal, with him locked in the middle, unable to emerge.

Meng Hao’s hands flickered as one magical technique and divine ability

after another slammed into the blood-colored wall. The sound of it all was deafening, but the blood-colored wall wasn't harmed in the slightest.

He also had no way to know what was happening outside. Just before being sealed inside, he saw the Five Poisons Tribe approaching. It was in that moment that he knew that this battle... was a disaster for the Crow Divinity Tribe!

Meng Hao was worried and anxious. It wouldn't matter if he was stuck inside this place for a short period of time. But if too much time passed, he knew that the Crow Divinity Tribe would not be able to hold out against the Five Poisons Tribe.

The Five Poisons Tribe had obviously planned things out well. Their goal was obvious; eradicate the Crow Divinity Tribe and snatch their Demon Spirit. You could say that in the past two years of battle, they had never faced a situation as dangerous as this.

Even as Meng Hao was frowning in thought, the blood-colored wall suddenly contracted, and then moments later, expanded outward. During this period of contraction and then expansion, three strands suddenly bored through the wall. As soon as they entered, they transformed into a gigantic viper, centipede and toad. Three of the five poisons magically appeared. Instantly, they let out piercing cries and shot toward Meng Hao.

On the bodies of each of these three creatures, Meng Hao could see the image of an old man.

That old man was none other than the Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather, who was outside of the blood-colored seal.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he waved his hand. Instantly, his Cultivation base exploded out with the power of four of the five elements. A ferocious, gale-force wind swept across the three poisons. The viper instantly broke apart and disappeared.

Meng Hao let out a cold snort. Cracking sounds could be heard from within his body as he moved forward like a fiend. A fist descended, and the toad let out a miserable shriek as it exploded into pieces.

At the same time, the centipede's body twisted as it shot like lightning toward Meng Hao. Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he spit out a mouthful of Alcohol Qi.

The Alcohol Qi was like a mist that instantly enveloped the centipede. Its body began to wither, and it let out a shriek. It was at this point that a mark like a black moon appeared on Meng Hao's forehead.

Employing the evil magic, the moon flickered as it branded down onto the body of the centipede, using it as a conduit with which to attack the Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather to whom it was currently connected. The black moon Spiritual Sense attack bubbled forth rapidly.

Moments ago, the Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather was outside of the blood-colored seal, flashing an incantation with both hands, his expression vicious and filled with killing intent. However, his face suddenly flickered as the viper was killed!

Without thinking about it, he backed up a bit. Before he could barely move a single pace, his expression suddenly filled with shock. That was the moment that Meng Hao's fist slammed into the toad, causing it to explode.

Then, his eyes suddenly widened.

"Not good!" Without hesitating, he made to retreat. His hand moved as he prepared to sever his magical connection to the centipede. Before he could complete his action, the image of a black moon suddenly appeared on his forehead.

The instant the seal appeared on his forehead, violent, explosive pain like lightning filled the Five Poison Tribe Greatfather. It felt like an invisible blade were stabbing into his Sea of Perception. Blood sprayed from his mouth, and he tumbled backward, face filled with astonishment. He instantly severed the connection between himself and the centipede.

After the connection was severed, the Greatfather coughed up another mouthful of blood. His face was pale and filled with intense shock.

"His Cultivation base is so powerful!" he thought, panting. It was at this

point that intense ferocity emanated from within his eyes.

“It’s a good thing that in my planning I told the Heavenly Blood to seal him if it couldn’t kill him. If he weren’t sealed right now, then we would have to pay a heavy price to win this battle!

“He must absolutely not be allowed out of that seal! The Demon Spirit is most likely on his person; therefore, we must keep him sealed while we slaughter the Crow Divinity Tribe. Afterward, we will use all of the power of the Tribe to destroy him, body and soul!” A vicious smile twisted the lips of the Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather. He no longer made any attempts to attack through the blood-colored seal. Instead, he began to add further seals on top of the original seal, determined to keep Meng Hao thoroughly trapped inside.

Chapter 484: Fuse the Blood of Ji!

As the battle between the Crow Divinity Tribe and the Five Poisons Tribe continued, it slowly became more evident who was in the losing position. The casualties amongst the Crow Divinity Tribe increased, including the neo-demons.

Of course, the Five Poisons Tribe paid a heavy price, but not as much as the Crow Divinity Tribe. Because of the fierce pressure of the battle, the Crow Divinity Tribe forces were now showing signs that they might fall apart.

Meanwhile, Meng Hao was still stuck within the blood-colored seal. Unfortunately, no matter what ideas he came up with for how to escape, nothing worked. Minor teleportation and magical items, even the flag of three streamers could not even temporarily put a dent into the seal.

He tried everything, the Lotus Time Formation, the three strange wooden swords. He even tried Han Shan's Immortal's Sword, but based on his observations, it would take three days for it to break through the seal.

There seemed to be only one option left; that was the Dancing Sword Qi. Meng Hao's eyes turned red as he began to condense Alcohol Qi outside of his body.

"This blood contains the power of Karma. It must be the some blood from a Ji Clan Patriarch of an ancient generation. If this drop contains such power after all these years, just how strong was this person when he was alive?" Meng Hao's mind trembled as the Alcohol Qi swept out and the Dancing Sword Qi began to congeal inside of him.

He could think of no other method other than using the Dancing Sword Qi, which was somewhat of a pity. He actually didn't know if even the Dancing Sword Qi would enable him to break out; however, he did know that the Crow Divinity Tribe could not hold out for much longer.

He took a deep breath and was just about to cause the power of the Dancing Sword Qi to explode out, when suddenly he looked at the wall created by the blood-colored seal. He looked at the rippling blood and then

suddenly felt a tremor run through his body.

“Blood... blood....” In this moment it felt as if lightning were coursing through his head. An audacious and perhaps even insane idea had suddenly risen up in his mind.

The idea caused him to suddenly begin to pant, and hesitate regarding using the Dancing Sword Qi.

“Soul Blood. This is Ji Clan Soul Blood. I already have Soul Blood from that Ji Clan Quasi-Array Cultivator 1. If I add this blood, that’s two drops!

“I have Ji Nineteen sealed up inside the blood-colored mask. If I extract some Soul Blood from him, that means I have three generations of Ji Clan blood. Using the Blood Immortal magic, I can form a Blood Clone!

“Three generations of blood can form a Blood Clone. Nine Generations can make a Blood Divinity. A Blood Divinity... should possess the power of Ancestral Awakening. The manifestation of powerful Ji Clan experts could once again appear! I would be able to wield some of the strength of one of their Immortals!”

Meng Hao began to pant. The idea continued to develop in his head, quickly filling his entire brain. All of a sudden, he realized that his current situation was a golden opportunity!

If he missed this chance, it would most likely be very difficult to acquire more Ji blood. Furthermore, this particular drop of Ji blood was not ordinary; it clearly had an incredible background.

“I don’t necessarily need to break open the blood seal; instead I can choose... to use it to make myself a Ji Clan Blood Clone!” Panting, a bright light began to shine in Meng Hao’s eyes.

“What I need right now, then, is some blood from Ji Nineteen!” After a moment of deliberation, decisiveness filled his eyes.

He lifted his hand and pushed it down onto blood-coloured mask. He sent his Spiritual Sense inside, causing himself to instantly appearing directly in front of Ji Nineteen.

Ji Nineteen looked incredibly weak, but his eyes shone with a strange glow. He could sense the aura on the outside world and knew that the will of a Ji Clan ancestor was there.

“Who is it...?” he wondered to himself. “It’s impossible. It’s so ancient! How could the blood of such an ancient ancestor exist.... It exceeds the history of the Clan itself. Just who could it be?”

Ji Nineteen was so shaken that he didn’t even notice that Meng Hao had arrived. Meng Hao materialized in the world of the mask, a vicious expression on his face. He reached out his right hand and unhesitatingly pushed down onto Ji Nineteen’s forehead.

A ferocious expression suddenly appeared on Ji Nineteen’s face. Before he could even begin to struggle, the aura of the Lotus Sword Formation emanated out from Meng Hao, entering the blood-colored mask and approaching Ji Nineteen.

“You can struggle and fight back if you want,” said Meng Hao grimly. “Right now, I don’t care if I can’t get any more information about the Ji Clan from you. I want a drop of Soul Blood. Struggle, refuse, fight back... all such actions will be futile.

“If you cooperate, then I’ll take the blood and leave. Resist me, then I will exterminate your soul and take a drop of Soul Blood by force!” With that, he closed his eyes and rotated his Cultivation base. Four great totems magically appeared. He focused all the power of the great Blood Immortal magic. Everything was focused on extracting Soul Blood from Ji Nineteen.

The aura of the Lotus Sword Formation neared, and the power of Time suddenly began to rotate. To ensure his success in the matter, Meng Hao even called out to the sleeping Blood Mastiff!

The mastiff was sleeping, but as the years had passed, Meng Hao could sense that... it would soon awaken!

Ji Nineteen’s face fell. He could hear the killing intent and coldness in Meng Hao’s voice, and could tell that Meng Hao without a doubt was speaking the truth to him.

His mind trembled. Maybe he wouldn't struggle, but how could he be willing to comply? However, the power of Time neared, causing his face to flicker. The flag of three streamers tightened around him, causing him to pant. Finally, the aura of the mastiff neared, filled with the power of Spirit Severing. Ji Nineteen could sense Meng Hao's decisiveness, and suddenly was filled with an intense sense of grave crisis.

He suddenly realized that Meng Hao wasn't necessarily incapable of killing him. He just didn't want to at the moment. Ji Nineteen knew that going against Meng Hao in this moment meant that he would most likely die in the blink of an eye.

Sensing Meng Hao's determination, he suddenly began to waver.

Even as Meng Hao forced the Soul Blood out of Ji Nineteen, the battle between the Crow Divinity Tribe and the Five Poisons Tribe was reaching a climax.

The Outlander Beast was not a match for the all three of the totemic Sacred Ancients. Even with the parrot and the meat jelly, it was still injured. Its body trembled and its aura was growing weak. However, it still roared as it fought back against the Sacred Ancients, preventing them from passing it.

In mid-air, the Nascent Soul Elders of the Crow Divinity Tribe were pale-faced. They coughed up blood as they sustained serious injuries. They were like lamps that were running out of oil.

The rest of the Tribe members were locked in bitter combat. Casualties were heavy as both sides killed back and forth. The booming of self-detonation could be heard everywhere. Even the neo-demons were in sore straits. Big Hairy was severely injured and the Wild Giant was coughing up blood. Gu La's face was pale, and his Qi was nothing more than a slender strand.

As for the Greatfather, he had burned his life force almost to the limit. His body emanated thick Death Qi. However, he still went all out to restrain the High Priest.

"Exalted Sacred Ancient.... We can't hold on for very much longer...."

“Exalted Sacred Ancient, please, break through that seal!”

“Exalted Sacred Ancient....”

These words were not spoken out loud. Instead, they were the prayers of the Tribe members, words spoken in their hearts, containing their will. They merged together, to form a power of will.

As the power of their will reverberated out, Meng Hao, inside the blood-colored seal, suddenly opened his eyes. A drop of Soul Blood flew out from inside the blood-colored mask to land in his palm.

Meng Hao’s face was pale. It had not been easy extracting the Soul Blood from Ji Nineteen. Had he not become so much stronger than when he first captured Ji Nineteen, it would have been virtually impossible. Even still, he was as exhausted as if he had been battling for days against a powerful opponent.

Now was not the time for rest, though. He waved his right hand, and immediately, another drop of Soul Blood appeared next to Ji Nineteen’s. This was the blood he had acquired that year from the Ji Clan Quasi-Array Chosen outside of the Rebirth Cave.

In addition to the blood in the blood-colored seal, he now had three drops in total!

Meng Hao took a deep breath and then began to perform an incantation gesture with both hands as he employed the great Blood Immortal magic to form a Blood Clone!

“Merge!” he growled. Instantly, the two blood drops fused together and then shot into the blood-colored wall in front of him.

All of these drops of blood had a common origin. The instant they fused together, Meng Hao crossed his legs and closed his eyes. As he performed continuous incantation gestures, drops of sweat as large as beans began to pour down his face. His hands moved faster and faster, causing streams of sealing marks to float out. At the same, the blood-colored seal around him began to shrink.

As the bizarre shrinking process began, shocking, indistinct screams of

rage began to emanate out from the blood-colored seal. Instantly, the battlefield was shaken. The faces of the Five Poisons Tribe Cultivators instantly fell. Even the three totemic Sacred Ancients looked astonished.

When the Crow Divinity Tribe members heard the sound of it, they were instantly invigorated.

Tens of thousands of people watched as the surface of the blood-colored sphere was covered with bizarre ripples. As the Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather watched on, his heart filled with inexplicable fear and trembling. He suddenly had a very, very bad feeling.

With a roar, he performed a two-handed incantation gesture as he continued to reinforce the seal.

Despite that, a roaring sound filled the air as the blood sphere rapidly shrank from thirty meters wide to only fifteen. As it did, 20,000 distorted faces suddenly appeared on the surface of the sphere. These faces were the spirits that the Five Poisons Tribe members had merged with their drop of Heavenly Blood, as a means to control the its will.

Rumbling filled the air as 10,000 of the faces were expelled. The blood sphere shrank again. Now it was only about ten meters wide. A sense of shocking purity suddenly appeared within it.

At the same time, a horrifying aura blasted out from inside. This aura vastly exceeded that which had resulted from Meng Hao's previous Blood Clones. This aura shook Heaven and Earth, and caused the entire sky to turn red, as if something completely inhuman were about to come into existence!

The intensity of the aura exceeded that of the Spirit Severing stage, reaching an indescribable level that caused the faces of everyone present to fill with astonishment. The powerful experts of the Five Poisons Tribe gasped in stupefaction.

They knew now exactly what was happening. The spirits of the Five Poisons Tribe Cultivators were being expelled from the blood sphere. That meant that the blood was no longer under the control of the Five Poisons Clan!

A roaring sound like thunder rolled out in all directions, shaking all of the Cultivators on the battlefield, as well as the neo-demons and the Five Poison Clan's totemic Sacred Ancients.

Even as faces flickered in astonishment, another roar sounded out as another 10,000 of the Five Poisons Tribe spirits were expelled from the blood.

A fearsome aura rose up into the sky!! Everything grew dim, and the clouds were swept away. The entire world became a blood-colored hell!

"He must not be allowed to emerge!" roared the Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather. He shot forward, going all out to prevent Meng Hao from breaking free. Blood sprayed from the mouth of the High Priest as he managed to extricate himself from the Crow Divinity Greatfather. Face filled with fear, he too shot forward to assist.

*

1. Meng Hao killed Ji Hongdong way back in chapter 306.

Chapter 485: Blood Clone is Born!

An aura which shocked even the three totemic Sacred Ancients of the Five Poisons Clan danced out madly from the blood sphere. Astonished, they went all out, using all the faith power they could muster, sparing no effort as they broke past the seal that was the Outlander Beast. They too began to strengthen the blood sphere seal.

“We must not allow him to come out! Do not let him out!”

The rest of the Five Poisons Tribe’s Priests also sustained injuries as they shot toward the shrinking blood sphere. Five of them broke through and, filled with astonishment and fear, began to bolster the sealing.

The combined force of seven Nascent Soul Cultivators and three totemic Sacred Ancients all poured into the sealing power of the blood sphere.

The surrounding Crow Divinity Tribe members were in a frenzy as they also tried to break through. The Five Poisons Tribe members desperately fought back. The intensity of the battle instantly increased.

However, despite the fact that peak of the Five Poisons Tribe’s power was focused on the blood sphere seal, it continued to shrink. Soon, it was only three meters wide. By this time, virtually all of the Five Poisons Tribe spirits had been forced out. The magical faces had expressions of torment as they dissipated into the area.

Even more shocking, a horrifying aura exploded out from the blood sphere, the strength of which instantly started to suffocate the seven Nascent Soul Cultivators. Their faces were pale as the aura slammed into them, causing a roaring sound to fill their minds as they coughed up blood.

The faces of the three totemic Sacred Ancients filled with an unprecedented level of fear and shock, to the extent that... their bodies even began to tremble!

There were now absolutely no spirits of the Five Poisons Tribe on the blood sphere; in the blink of an eye, all consciousness within it

disappeared, replaced by the magic of the Blood Immortal. At the same time, it shrank down into the form of a person!

That person bore the semblance of Meng Hao!

“Kill him!” roared the Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather at the top of his lungs, seemingly on the verge of going mad. He had now abandoned any attempts at sealing, and instead unleashed deadly divine abilities against the blood-colored figure.

The others did the same. Booms echoed out as the three totemic Sacred Ancients attacked. However, the blood-colored figure didn’t even react. That in itself caused the face of the Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather to fill with astonishment.

“This Meng Hao refined the Heavenly Blood! He... he’s actually refining it into a creature of blood!!”

“That’s impossible! That Heavenly Blood was acquired by one of the ancestors by a fluke. The power it contains is fearsome to the extreme. How could a Cultivator possibly fuse it...? Throughout the years, all those in the Tribe who tried to fuse it died! The best we could do was come up with magic to control it!”

The Greatfather and the others felt their minds reeling, and their expressions were that of shock.

Even more bitterly painful was that their Tribe’s prized treasure, their secret weapon to destroy the enemy, had been refined successfully. It was almost as if they had handed over their precious treasure as a gift. This thought caused them to feel incredible vexation.

This was a critical moment for Meng Hao in the refinement process of the Blood Clone. He suddenly had an intense feeling that this Blood Clone was completely different from the other Blood Clones he had created in the past. They were like fireflies and this was like the bright moon!

“So, this Ji Clan Blood Clone turns out to be THIS powerful....” Such an incredible level of power far exceeded Meng Hao’s imagination. Right now, he could detect faint signs that as he continued with the refinement,

the will of the blood was slowly awakening.

This was one of the functions of the Blood Immortal magic. Based on some factors which Meng Hao didn't fully comprehend, it was able to force out the bloodline power concealed within the blood!

The more ancient the blood, and the purer the bloodline power, then the more powerful the Blood Clone would be!

Meng Hao took a deep breath. He knew that what he needed to do now was find something to act as the core of the clone. If that core was indestructible, then the clone was indestructible!

The Blood Clones Meng Hao had created in the past looked crude, and had been refined using the meat jelly skin. However, their usefulness to Meng Hao had been significant.

The successful refinement of this particular Blood Clone, and its fearsome level of power, was something that even the information about the Blood Immortal magic did not discuss. Even the Blood Immortal had never anticipated that something like this could happen. Even the Blood immortal had never created a clone like this particular... Ji Clan Blood Clone.

After all, the Blood Immortal completely looked down on ordinary Ji Clan members. The main goal was to refine the blood of direct descendants of the Ji Clan. Even Blood Clones created from the blood of direct descendants, however, would pale in comparison to the Ji Clan Clone which was about to appear!

That was because one of the drops of blood that made this clone was from a Chosen of the Ji Clan. Another was from the ancient Ji Nineteen. The final drop, the drop that determined exactly how fearsomely powerful the Blood Clone would be... had an origin that even Ji Nineteen couldn't ascertain. The only thing he could tell was that this drop of blood came from primordial times, and was as powerful as the blood of an original ancestor!

It was that final drop of blood that made this Blood Clone completely different. In fact, if Meng Hao was able to get six more drops of blood in

the future, and fuse them into this blood Clone, then he could form a complete Blood Divinity. In that case, the power of Ancestral Awakening would be unleashed, and that mysterious Ji Clan ancestor would appear!

When that time came, it might be possible to recognize this person... and determine his true identity!

Echoes filled the air as the peak of the Five Poisons Tribe's power was unleashed in attack. The blood-colored figure which surrounded Meng Hao was writhing in a bizarre fashion. However, it didn't matter what divine ability was leveled against it, nothing could stop the figure from fully forming.

The blood figure slowly became more refined; Meng Hao's features slowly became clearer. In the blink of an eye, a bloody glow suddenly began to extend like water out from the figure.

The face of the Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather fell. He could sense a shocking aura that was currently being held back by the blood-colored figure that surrounded Meng Hao.

"Don't hold anything back. Exterminate him!" bellowed the Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather. He flashed an incantation with both hands and then spit out a mouthful of blood. His body instantly withered a bit, but in exchange, a five-colored mist suddenly appeared that roiled toward Meng Hao.

The High Priest's face flickered as he flashed an incantation with his right hand. The totems on his body magically manifested into a creature that was the amalgamation of all of the five poison creatures. It instantly charged toward Meng Hao.

The rest of the other five Nascent Soul Cultivators all unleashed their most powerful divine abilities.

As for the three totemic Sacred Ancients, their bodies suddenly began to shrink until they were each no more than a meter or two long. This meant that their bodies were now refined and pure. They charged toward Meng Hao, fully able to sense that the bloody glow coming off of him was something so shockingly powerful that it could constrain and crush even

them. Such constraining force was shocking to them, and they instinctively knew that they needed to destroy it before it fully appeared. It was a premonition that arose from within their souls and their blood. Once the bloody glow fully took shape, it wouldn't matter that the three of them were totemic Sacred Ancients. In front of such attacking power, they would be crushed like dried reeds or rotten wood.

It was an instinctive premonition, a fearsome intuition!

However, even as their divine abilities and magical techniques descended, the bloody glow which surrounded Meng Hao suddenly shrank down to form a red dot on his forehead. Meng Hao's eyes suddenly snapped open.

The instant his eyes opened, the glowing bloody dot on his forehead flew out. It emitted a shocking, high-pitched howl that sent sound waves roaring out. Banging sounds could be heard in all directions as all the seals which had been in place were shattered.

The glowing, bloody dot instantly transformed into a bloody beam of light that shot toward the viper totemic Sacred Ancient. The viper Sacred Ancient immediately recoiled, a look of astonishment and despair written on its face. A trembling shook it which arose from its very soul, washing over it like floodwaters. Faced up against this bloody beam of light, it was as if it had lost all its power to fight back, as if in its awe, it lost all confidence!

The bloody beam of light moved with indescribable speed as it slammed into and then passed directly through the viper Sacred Ancient.

The viper Sacred Ancient's entire body turned pale white as its essence, its life force, its blood, everything was instantly sucked away by the bloody figure.

This level of potency was like Heavenly might. If it wanted you dead, then you had no choice but to die. This Blood Clone was a Ji Clan Blood Clone, and the Ji Clan was the Heavens of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

If it wanted to take everything away from you, then any resistance you offered would be futile. To the Ji Clan, any person who was not of Ji, was a

heretic!

For example, this totemic Sacred Ancient, which originated from the ancient Immortal Demon Sect, a Sect that... the Ji Clan had long since exterminated!

The death of the totemic Sacred Ancient instantly turned into a clap of thunder that shook the hearts of the Five Poisons Clan Cultivators! The faces of the Greatfather and the High Priest and the others all fell!

“Impossible!!”

“Sacred Ancient.... The exalted Sacred Ancient was absorbed....”

“This is... this is....” Even as the corpse of the viper Sacred Ancient began to fall to the ground, there were around ten thousand of the Five Poisons Tribe members who coughed up blood and began to wail. The totems on their bodies began to fade and their Cultivation bases began to drop.

There were even several among the more than ten Priests who coughed up blood and began to tremble, their faces filled with disbelief.

“The Sacred Ancient... perished!!”

As the bloody beam of light swept through the air, a strange, shocking sound rang out that sounded like something was being swallowed. The echoing sound caused everyone, even the other two Sacred Ancients, to instantly cease any attack and immediately fall into retreat. A blood-coloured face suddenly appeared around Meng Hao. Rumbling could be heard. He fell back a few paces, then used minor teleportation to suddenly appear off in the distance, where he charged into the besieging Five Poisons Tribe.

“Blood Clone...” he said coolly. “You may continue to feed.” Killing intent flickered in Meng Hao’s eyes. The bloody beam of light emitted a shout, then suddenly materialized into a figure.

It looked exactly like Meng Hao, except that it emanated a bloody glow and had bright red eyes. Its body flickered as it shot at incredible speed toward the other two totemic Sacred Ancients.

The two Sacred Ancients fell back almost instinctively, moving as fast as possible. Unfortunately, even if they moved faster than that, they would be unable to go faster than the Ji Clan Blood Clone.

“Neo-demons...” cried Meng Hao, his voice echoing out. “I am your Demon Patriarch. Today, you may slaughter to your heart’s content!” 40,000 neo-demons remained in his horde. Nearly half had been killed. At this moment, however, those remaining 40,000 neo-demons lifted their heads up and roared a roar that shook the Heavens. Boundless Demonic Qi suddenly rushed toward Meng Hao and then spread out to be absorbed by the neo-demons. In addition, the neo-demons of the Five Poisons Tribe suddenly began to tremble and emit subservient whines.

Under this sudden counterattack, the Five Poisons Tribe Cultivators were thrown into complete chaos!

“Exercise faith in me! Tribe members who offer worship to me, I am your totemic Sacred Ancient. Those who show faith in me, have my totems.... The Five Poisons Tribe is our archenemy. It is time to settle our differences once and for all!” He waved his sleeve causing a Greenwood Tree to magically appear. A sea of flames roared up into the sky. A golden rain spread out. Frigid soil began to freeze everything!

The thousands of Tribe members who remained of the Crow Divinity Tribe had bright red eyes. It was with complete madness that they charged the terrified Five Poisons Tribe members!

Meng Hao’s eyes glinted with harshness, and his voice echoed out like thunder, causing Heaven and Earth to split: “Kill them!”

Chapter 486: Leave None Alive!

The Ji Clan Blood Clone shot in pursuit of the two great totemic Sacred Ancients. The Sacred Ancients cut sorry figures as they frantically fled. The morale of the Five Poisons Tribe had been severely damaged.

At the same time, Meng Hao's 40,000 neo-demons roared as they absorbed the thick Demonic Qi coming from Meng Hao. All of them began to mutate, growing fiercer as they screamed through the air toward the Five Poisons Tribe Cultivators.

Suddenly, more than a thousand corpses on the ground suddenly rose to their feet. Upon the head of each of these corpses, an illusory crow could be seen. These crow automatons' eyes glowed with gray light as they suddenly flew up into the battle.

Booms echoed out as a deadly battle ensued between the two groups of neo-demons. The battle was once again being fought at a fever pitch.

The vast majority of the thousands of Crow Divinity Tribe members were wounded, but it didn't matter. Eyes red, they charged forward with madness. Regardless of whether they were original members of the five Crow Divinity Tribes, or new members who had pledged allegiance in the past two years, each and every one exerted all the Cultivation base power they could muster. They knew... whichever side lost this battle would have no survivors!

There would be no opportunity for surrender in this fight. Regardless of Five Poisons Tribe or Crow Divinity Tribe, both were destined to be arch enemies. Whichever of these two Tribes lost the battle... would be completely wiped out!

This was an extermination!

Complete and utter extermination!

As the slaughter continued, Meng Hao went into action. The killing intent in his heart ran deep. The seal that had been placed in just now would have been incredibly difficult to break out of unless he just so

happened to have the Blood Immortal magic and the two drops of Ji Clan Soul Blood. The Five Poisons Tribe had planned to wipe out the Crow Divinity Tribe, and as such, the desire to kill that Meng Hao felt right now had reached a pinnacle.

Leave none alive!

Accept no surrender!

His eyes glinted with a cold glow as he shot forward toward the peak level fighters of the Five Poisons Tribe, the Nascent Soul Priests. His speed was incredible as he transformed into a black moon and then a green smoke.

The Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather's face was pale white. The fact that Meng Hao had extricated himself had slammed into his heart and mind like an iron hammer. Then, there was the terrifying appearance of the blood-colored figure, which had in a scant moment sucked dry one of the Five Poisons Tribe's totemic Sacred Ancients. All of these things were stupefying, and transformed into an intense figurative attack that caused all of the Five Poisons Tribe Cultivators to grow pale in the face.

"Today... will decide if the Tribe survives or perishes...." The Greatfather gave a bitter laugh. Then, his eyes filled with reckless abandon. He glared at Meng Hao and then ignited his Cultivation base. The intrepid aura of a late Nascent Soul Cultivation base exploded out as he charged toward Meng Hao.

The High Priest's eyes flickered with coldness as he joined the Greatfather to attack Meng Hao.

A massive roaring could be heard as the three people prepared to slam into each other. Meng Hao, in the shape of a black moon, shot forward in a green smoke, passing directly between the Greatfather and the High Priest. He moved so fast that the two other Cultivators' faces filled with shock.

"So fast!!" Their eyes went wide as they suddenly looked over their shoulders. Bloodcurdling screams could be heard from not too far away. It was one of the Five Poisons Tribe's ordinary Priests. With his Cultivation

base at the early Nascent Soul stage, he would normally be able to lord it over others. However, Meng Hao only needed to use the first form of the Blood Immortal divine abilities to cause the man to explode, killing him instantly.

“That was the first!” Meng Hao said coolly. He waved his arm, causing the fragments of blood and gore in front of him to fly away. He gave a cold look toward the Greatfather and High Priest, who glared back. They instantly pointed out toward Meng Hao, causing a five-colored mist to fly toward Meng Hao and surround him.

A mocking smile appeared on Meng Hao’s mouth as the mist enveloped him. Suddenly, a miserable scream could be heard. Meng Hao had suddenly disappeared and then reappeared in front of another of the Priests. His hand currently gripped the man’s neck. He lifted him up and then crushed his throat.

A boom could be heard as flesh and blood flew out in all directions. Meng Hao disappeared, but just before he did, his cold voice echoed out.

“That was the second!”

The Five Poisons Tribe High Priest lifted his head and howled. His face distorted as he performed a double-handed incantation and then gestured forward. A five-colored glow to spread out in all directions. Suddenly, ripples began to emanate out from Meng Hao, who was just about to disappear into the air.

“There won’t be a third!” cried the High Priest, intense killing intent emanating out from him as he shot forward toward Meng Hao.

It was at this point that suddenly, a shocking roar of despair filled the sky. The voice belonged to none other than one of the Five Poisons Tribe’s Sacred Ancients.

The sound of the cry was miserable; it contained the fear and astonishment felt by the totemic Sacred ancient in the moments before death. Onlookers could just barely make out the figure of an enormous toad in the midst of a red light. Its body withered as all of its life force was sucked away.

Simultaneously, a large number of Five Poisons Tribe members suddenly began to tremble and cough up blood. Hopelessness shone in their eyes.

Despairing cries rose up from the Five Poisons Tribe Cultivators.

“The toad Sacred Ancient... perished....”

“Of the five Sacred Ancients of the Five Poisons Tribe, two were sealed and two have perished. Only the centipede Sacred Ancient is left.... But it is currently being pursued....”

“Could it be that the Heavens wish for the Five Poisons Tribe to be destroyed...?”

The fighting did not stop. However, the weakened position of the Five Poisons Tribe grew even more severe.

The Priests near Meng Hao were all coughing up blood, and were unable to continue to prevent their Cultivation bases from falling. As for the High Priest who was charging Meng Hao, his body trembled, and he too coughed up blood.

Even as he was coughing up blood, Meng Hao suddenly appeared directly behind him, eyes glittering with killing intent. He formed a fist and punched.

A boom rattled out as at this critical moment, the High Priest's body twisted, and a black mist shot out to cover him. Meng Hao's fist slammed into the black mist, not shattering it, but causing cracks to appear on its surface. It quickly reformed, condensing down into the image of the High Priest, his face pale. He coughed up another mouthful of blood, and his eyes filled with fury.

“Meng Hao!!” he roared. Even as he did, the eyes of the Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather went completely bloodshot. Filled with madness, he exploded toward Meng Hao with all the power he could muster.

Meng Hao gave a cold snort. He ceased pursuing the High Priest, transforming into a black moon and a green smoke as he suddenly shot off into the distance.

His speed was such that neither the Greatfather nor the High Priest could possibly match up. Hearts boiling with rage, they followed after him. However, it was at this point that a third bloodcurdling scream filled the air. Then a fourth, a fifth, and a sixth.

The surrounding early Nascent Soul stage Priests were simply not a match for Meng Hao. They didn't even qualify to try to fight back against him as he slaughtered them. In a moment, he had destroyed them as easily as crushing dried weeds or rotten branches.

"The third!"

"The fourth!"

"The fifth and the sixth!" Every time he killed a Priest, Meng Hao's cold voice could be heard echoing across the battlefield. The Cultivators of the Five Poisons Tribe had faces completely drained of blood and filled with increasingly intense despair. Many of them were even beginning to flee. On the other hand, every time Meng Hao called out, the Crow Divinity Tribe Cultivators grew more inspired. The slaughter was monstrous.

"Meng Hao!!" roared the High Priest. "You're a Grand Dragoneer, how can your Cultivation base be so profound!?" In his anxiousness, the High Priest didn't even take the time to think about what he was saying. "As the Sacred Ancient of the Crow Divinity Tribe, you have a high status. Don't you think that killing early Nascent Soul stage Priests is a huge loss of face for you!?"

"Nope," replied Meng Hao. His body flickered and he suddenly appeared next to another Nascent Soul Priest. The shocked man actually decided to self-detonate, but before he could, the first two fingers of Meng Hao's right hand pointed out as he used the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex. Its power instantly sealed the man's Cultivation base and preventing him from self-detonating. Meng Hao's fingers stabbed into the man's forehead, instantly smashing the man's Cultivation base.

"Meng Hao!" shouted the Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather. "Do you dare to fight one-on-one with me!?!?" The man's heart was filled with anxiety, but Meng Hao's speed was such that he was completely incapable of

catching up.

The rest of the Nascent Soul Priests were currently fleeing, but their speed couldn't possibly match up to Meng Hao's. He was already fast to begin with, but now that he possessed Yi Chenzi's escape art, his speed was increased to a terrifying level.

It was at this moment that, off in the distance, another bloodcurdling scream could be heard echoing out, shaking everything. Suddenly, an enormous centipede could be seen writhing up above in the midst of a red glow. A red light passed through the creature's body, sucking away all of its life force. The centipede's body went stiff and its scream was suddenly cut off.

The Five Poisons Tribe's centipede Sacred Ancient, the last of the totems, had been destroyed!

All of the Five Poisons Tribe's totems disappeared as if they had been directly erased. There... was not even one left!

"Sacred Ancient!!"

"My Cultivation base.... The exalted Sacred Ancients are all dead. The Five Poisons Tribe is dying...."

All of the Five Poisons Tribe Cultivators coughed up blood. Their bodies sagged as all of their Cultivation bases sank downward. Core Formation became Foundation Establishment! Foundation Establishment became Qi Condensation!

They let out howls of despair. What they felt now was a feeling that the original Crow Divinity Tribe members were deeply familiar with. However, back when that happened, Meng Hao was there, and became their new totemic Sacred Ancient. Right now, the Five Poisons Tribe... had nothing like that to rely on.

The remaining five or six Nascent Soul Priests were locked in combat with the Crow Divinity Nascent Soul Elders. Their faces were pale; they could do nothing to prevent their Cultivation bases from wasting away. In the blink of an eye, they were no longer of the Nascent Soul stage, but

rather, had become Core Formation Cultivators.

The instant their Cultivation bases dropped to Core Formation... in the blink of an eye, their bodies shook. If it wasn't a head lopped off, it was a body exploded. All of them were slaughtered in an instant by the Crow Divinity Tribe Nascent Soul Elders.

The massacre continued as the Five Poisons Tribe Cultivators' Cultivation bases shot downward.

As of now, the only Nascent Soul Cultivators that remained in the Five Poisons Tribe were the High Priest and the Greatfather. However, even they were forced to pay a steep price because of the death of the totemic Sacred Ancients.

Their Cultivation bases declined; they were no longer in the late Nascent Soul stage, but rather the mid stage. From the look of the situation, they wouldn't be able to stay there long. The decline would continue until they reached the early Nascent Soul stage.

The green smoke suddenly congealed into Meng Hao. He put on the blood-colored mask and then turned around to face the Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather and High Priest.

"Did you just say you wanted to fight me?" he asked coolly.

Chapter 487: Title at the end!

“Despicable!!” said the Five Poisons Tribe High Priest, his face flickering as he stared at Meng Hao. He ground his teeth as he subconsciously edged backward. He was now no longer of the late Nascent Soul stage, so facing up against Meng Hao caused his heart to be half filled with fear.

Even as the words left his mouth, a whistling sound could be heard from off in the distance. It was none other than the Blood Clone. Having slaughtered the two great totemic Sacred Ancients, it was returning, its lust for blood unsated.

All of a sudden, Meng Hao realized that he couldn't sense a connection to the Clone. In the blink of an eye, the bloody figure was pouncing on the Five Poisons Tribe High Priest.

This was the same man who had stood lofty and proud outside of the Crow Divinity Tribes those years ago. Now his face filled with shock and he cried out in alarm. Power exploded from his Cultivation base as divine abilities and magical items appeared. He held back nothing in an attempt to block the Blood Clone. However, the Blood Clone charged directly through all the divine abilities and magical items to pounce onto the man. In that instant, time seemed to slow down for a moment.

When the Blood Clone left the High Priest, the man's body was withered. His life force had been sucked away; even his Nascent Soul was dried up and dead. His body was now nothing more than a desiccated corpse, completely drained of every drop of blood.

The dried up corpse fell to the ground; the expression on its face was the same expression it had worn before dying, one of dread, shock, and deep regret.

The Blood Clone shot through mid-air toward the battling Tribe members, slamming into the Five Poisons Tribe Cultivators. It passed through the battleground like a sea of blood, leaving behind only desiccated corpses.

The Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather watched what was happening, and

his aged figure seemed to emanate even more Death Qi. He seemed so old that he might fall into a grave at any moment.

“The Five Poisons Tribe has lost this battle,” he said, as the miserable screams continued to echo out. Pain filled his heart as he turned to Meng Hao, clasped hands, and bowed deeply. “I would like to earnestly request that the Crow Divinity Tribe totemic Sacred Ancient leave a bit of hope for the Five Poisons Tribe....”

Meng Hao looked back at him silently. More and more bloodcurdling screams filled the air. After a long moment, Meng Hao calmly replied, “If the Crow Divinity Tribe were the loser, and I made such a request, would you comply?”

The Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather was filled with bitterness. He knew that such a thing would never happen. If the victor in the battle had been the Five Poisons Tribe, then the Crow Divinity Tribe would have been completely wiped out, including the old, the young and the ordinary Tribe members. The entire Tribe would have been completely eradicated, wiped clean off the face of the earth.

This was not a personal vendetta; it was a war between Tribes. There would be no mercy, no pity. There was only life... and death!

“I understand. In that case.... You and I shall fight!” He took a deep breath as he lifted his head up. His eyes filled with the will to go to battle. However, deep within that will to fight was actually a desire for death.

“To be killed by the hand of the Crow Divinity Tribe totemic Sacred Ancient is a worthy death,” the Greatfather continued lightly. “As the Greatfather of the Five Poison Tribe, I curse you and the Crow Divinity Tribe.... On the other hand, despite having met death on this path to the Black Lands, we are both Cultivators of the Western Desert.... I hope that in the coming days, the Crow Divinity Tribe... will shine forth with some of its former glory. After all, we are all Western Desert Cultivators!” With that, his body flickered as he shot toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao saw the Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather’s desire to die, and inwardly, he sighed with regret. However, this caused no sloppiness in his

actions. His eyes glittered coldly as he strode forward.

The two met in mid-air, causing booms to echo across the battlefield. The Greatfather unleashed one divine ability after another, like a flower who had reached the point of death and wanted to shine with as much life as possible.

Amidst the booming, magical techniques slammed into each other and divine abilities exploded. Five Poisons Tribe Cultivators were dying everywhere on the battlefield. However, the miserable screams were now growing more faint, weaker, and fewer.

After the space of ten breaths passed, the Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather coughed up a mouthful of blood. Laughing uproariously, he once again charged toward Meng Hao.

After twenty breaths, he had lost one of his arms. Still laughing toward the Heavens, he stubbornly charged Meng Hao again.

Thirty breaths later, a deafening roar filled the air as a gigantic mist rose up into the air. Meng Hao slowly slipped off the blood-colored mask, turned, and walked off. Behind him, the Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather exploded into countless chunks. In the moment before his death, confusion filled his eyes. Within that confusion, was a release from worldly cares.

He was dead, body and spirit!

It was impossible to say whether it was by some previous plan, but the instant that the Five Poisons Tribe Greatfather died was the same moment in which the Blood Clone sucked the life and blood out of the very last Five Poisons Tribe Cultivator on the battlefield.

The battle with the Five Poisons Tribe was now completely over.

However, even as Meng Hao heaved a sigh of relief, his pupils suddenly constricted. His body suddenly flickered to reappear in front of one of the members of the Crow Divinity Tribe. He lifted his hand up and pushed it out in front of him.

“Screw off!” he said, his expression vicious. The sound of his voice was

like thunder, shaking everything and echoing out in all directions. His gesture just now seemed to cause the air to rip; ripples spread out to reveal something shooting through the air that Meng Hao had just blocked... the Blood Clone!

This was a Ji Clan Blood Clone which looked like Meng Hao in all aspects except for the bloody glow which emanated off of it. When it appeared, it stood there in front of Meng Hao, its eyes shining with displeasure and struggle. Its lust for blood after killing the final member of the Five Poisons Tribe had caused it to instinctually seek to consume the nearest living thing to it.

As of this moment, the Crow Divinity Tribe members began to let out sighs of relief. As the frenzy of battle wore off, they quickly fell back, taking the neo-demons with them.

It took only a short moment for all of the Tribe members and neo-demons to be behind Meng Hao. Even the Outlander Beast retreated, panting, instinctively fearful of the Blood Clone.

Only the meat jelly and the parrot dared to stand, one on each of Meng Hao's shoulders, arrogantly looking at the Ji Clan Blood Clone who stood up ahead.

"This bastard is too ugly," said the parrot appraisingly. "No hair at all, not even one! How could something like this even exist? Although, why does his aura seem so familiar? I just can't seem to place it...."

The meat jelly gave the Blood Clone strange, measuring look, and then greeted it in a very amicable fashion. "Heyyy. Hi there! Hello! I'm Lord Third. Let me tell you something, do you know how high I can count? I can count to three...."

The Blood Clone stared at Meng Hao, completely ignoring the parrot and the meat jelly. There was an innate haughtiness within the thing that seemed to be at odds with the seal connecting it to Meng Hao. That conflict caused its face to twist and the suddenly let out a howl toward Meng Hao.

Its Cultivation base was special. It was impossible to sense anything like

Core Formation, Nascent Soul or Spirit Severing. It was as if it didn't even have a Cultivation base. All it had was an aura, a fearsome aura that exceeded a Cultivation base. This aura made it seem as if it were a horrible enemy to anything in which life existed.

Furthermore, it seemed that absorbing the blood and life force of powerful experts caused its aura to grow even stronger. Meng Hao had the feeling that even though he had created it, were it not for the legacy magic of the Blood Immortal as well as various other control techniques, it would be taking instinctive, terrifying actions.

Looking at the Ji Clan Blood Clone growling there, his heart sank a bit. From the records of the Blood Immortal legacy, he knew that there was always a chance of a revolt occurring when using blood to refine spirits. Generally speaking, that would happen when a Blood Divinity emerged. It rarely happened with Blood Spirits. The chances of it happening with a Blood Clone were virtually nonexistent.

However, this Ji Clan Blood Clone, which although definitely only in the Blood Clone phase, was suddenly showing signs of revolt. This was no doubt a situation that the Blood Immortal had never anticipated.

This situation instantly caused Meng Hao to think about that mysterious drop of Ji blood.

It was at this moment that the Ji Clan Blood Clone's red eyes flickered. It howled and charged directly toward Meng Hao. However, in that instant, Meng Hao's eyes shone with a red light. His pupils turned bright red and magical symbols appeared within them.

This instantly caused the Blood Clone to scream and back away from Meng Hao.

Meng Hao gave a cold snort. Lifting up his right hand, he performed an incantation, without the slightest hesitation, using a Blood Immortal legacy technique. All of his power poured into a restrictive seal that he had placed inside the body of the clone during its refinement.

The Blood Clone screamed miserably and began to tremble. After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, its body suddenly

collapsed, transforming into a drop of blood. Meng Hao waved his hand to collect the seal, then picked up the drop of blood.

As soon as the blood touched his palm, it transformed into a strand of silk. This was a strand of Eyeless Larva silk, which was what Meng Hao had used to form the core of the Ji Clan Blood Clone.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he took care of the Blood Clone. However, his heart was filled with somberness. This was the first time that the Blood Clone had shown any signs of revolt, causing Meng Hao to unleash the full power of the restrictive seal. If it happened again, Meng Hao feared that using the same restrictive seal as before would be ineffective.

His eyes flickered in his thoughtfulness.

"If I refined the Blood Clone using the conjuring method for Blood Spirits, then the effectiveness of the restrictive seal should increase quite a bit." His mind settled, Meng Hao led the Crow Divinity Tribe and the neo-demon horde off of the battlefield. He collected the corpses of the totemic Sacred Ancients, as well as the Five Poisons Tribe's flying machine, and slowly moved off.

After they left, a ripple appeared in the air atop a mountain not far away from the battlefield, an area that was nearly completely submerged in violet rainwater. Zhixiang magically appeared. She chuckled as looked off in the direction of the departing Crow Divinity Tribe.

"It seems I've underestimated him again.... I assumed that he would have to pay a higher price to achieve victory, perhaps waste some Dancing Sword Qi. I never imagined that all he would have to do was use the power of the Agarwood.

"Just how many times can he summon the Agarwood. And how much of the Sword Qi does he have?" Lost in thought, Zhixiang stood there for a while, her brow furrowed. Finally she smiled.

"It doesn't matter. What's the point of trying to figure those things out? There are still many years to go before the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane opens again. I might as well enjoy myself in South Heaven."

Laughing, her body flickered and she disappeared.

The moment she disappeared, Meng Hao, who was leading the Crow Divinity Tribe groups, suddenly glanced over his shoulder, his eyes shining brightly.

Chapter 487: Five Poisons Tribe Extermination

Chapter 488: Entering the Central Region

Having experienced the battle with their archenemy, it could be said that the Crow Divinity Tribe had won a great victory. They had exterminated the Five Poisons Tribe. Unfortunately, that victory had come at a heavy price.

Of their force of ten thousand Cultivators, they now only had a bit more than three thousand left. However, those who remained had undergone a sort of baptism. Whether in terms of Cultivation base or in just the impression they left on others, they were now as sharp as swords... deadly, unsheathed swords!

All the battles they had fought made it so that even death meant little to them. Amidst the blood and the killing, even what it meant to be a Cultivator changed in their hearts.

The Crow Divinity Tribe had experience tumultuous change. These more three thousand survivors could all be considered to be a match for the most powerful members of the five Crow Divinity Tribes years ago.

War can wipe out a Tribe. At the same time, it can also cause a Tribe to rise to prominence! It can kill people. At the same time, it can give birth to new life!

In the blink of an eye, the Crow Divinity Tribe had been reborn. As of now, it was possible to predict that if they carried on this way, by the time they reached the Black Lands, they would be a great Tribe, risen to prominence within the Western Desert Apocalypse. Based on their battle prowess and decisiveness, they would become a Tribe that even other great Tribes would come to fear.

At the same time, Meng Hao's personal strength continued to grow. Every time he fought through a desperate crisis, it caused wild faith to grow in the hearts of the members of the Crow Divinity Tribes. It turned into a piety, a faith power that constantly circulated around Meng Hao and fused into his body.

Although he could not actually absorb it, its continued existence inside

of him cause his life force to flourish and the power of his divine abilities and magical techniques to increase dramatically.

Meng Hao could tell that the faith of the Crow Divinity Tribe members had the potential to increase his power. At the same time, his own might caused the Crow Divinity Tribe members' Cultivation bases to rise.

"The amalgamation of the five elements will give rise to a mighty leap up for the Crow Divinity Tribes!" thought Meng Hao. Currently, he sat on the head of the flying viper. The wind beat against his face as he looked out at the lands below.

After the battle, Meng Hao had absorbed the remainder of the Five Poisons Tribe's neo-demons. Although many of them had died, his horde now contained a total of around 50,000.

In addition, they had acquired quite a bit of resources from the Five Poison Tribes. Most importantly... was this precious treasure, a flying machine that could hold thousands of people!

This gigantic viper whistled through the air, carrying all of the Crow Divinity Tribe members as they continued on their journey.

The incredible speed with which it moved filled the Crow Divinity Tribe members with hope, and allowed them to put aside about the horrific brutality of the battle they had just fought.

It had taken them two years to walk out from within the depths of the Western Desert North region. They had experienced many battles, and in the end, had fought it out with the Five Poisons Tribe. Now, it was as if a door had opened for them.

After passing through this door, the glory of the Crow Divinity Tribe would once again be known in the Western Lands.

The giant viper shot through the air for many days. They passed over quite a few Tribes who had no flying machines, and soon had gone farther than they could have traveled in ten years on foot.

The further south they flew, the fewer lakes they saw, and the more rivers. The reason for this was because the further south one got, the

higher the elevation. Contrariwise, many areas in the lands in the north were already becoming seas.

Several days later, a mountain range became visible up ahead. It was black, and stretched out seemingly endlessly.

Sitting next to Meng Hao was the Crow Divinity Tribe Greatfather. His face was pale, and his body aged. As he looked off into the distance, he coughed, and then slowly said, "This is the true demarcation between the Western Desert North region and the Central region, the Ink Qilin Mountain Range...."

During the battle, the Greatfather had chosen to burn his own life force in order to delay the enemy High Priest. Despite months of treatment by consuming medicinal pills concocted by Meng Hao, as well as healing power from his Wood-type totem, he had harmed his foundation. He knew that the time of his death drew close. He only had about half of a sixty-year cycle left.

He felt no regrets. Half of a sixty-year cycle was enough that he might be able to watch with his own eyes as the Crow Divinity Tribe entered the Black Lands. He might even be able to spend some time living with the Tribe after they got there.

To him, that was enough. During the few months of travel, he had not practiced Cultivation, but rather, lived like an ordinary person. He would sleep, and sometimes dream, something he hadn't experienced in many years. Within his dreams he saw images of himself and the other Greatfathers with whom he had fought and schemed against for so many years. In his dreams, they were smiling and beckoning to him, inviting him to leave with them.

They had fought for a lifetime, but now, he was the only one left. He would wake up from his dreams feeling lonely and alone.

"After we pass these mountains," he continued, his voice low, "we will be in the Western Desert Central region. Right now, that is probably where the largest groups of Cultivators are gathered." After that, he coughed a few more times.

“Our stockpile of Spirit Stones is sufficient,” he went on. “Unfortunately, this Five Poisons Tribe flying treasure probably won’t be able to keep going for a very long time. Because it was overloaded earlier, it was damaged. I’m afraid it won’t be able to sustain flight for more than half a year. After that, it will stop working.” The Greatfather frowned anxiously.

Meng Hao nodded, but did not respond. As the flying viper treasure shot over the Ink Qilin Mountains, a vast tableau opened up in front of Meng Hao’s eyes. It was an enormous plain that was completely different from the lands in the north.

Although the violet rain fell here, there was still greenery visible, areas where the violet rain had not exterminated all the vegetation.

As they proceeded further south, the previously extinguished spiritual energy suddenly began to sparkle to life. This caused the Crow Divinity Tribe members to instantly be enlivened.

Meng Hao frowned. Because the spiritual energy had not been completely cut off in the Western Desert Central region, and because not all life had been exterminated, it meant that there would be more Tribes here.

“Now that we’re here, we need to be more cautious,” he said. With that, he sent the flying viper forward to search for a place in the plains where the Tribe could rest and reorganize.

At the same time, he waved his hand, causing a large group of black crows to appear and fly toward the west, south and east. They shot off into the air and quickly disappeared.

Time passed by. Half a month later, they still had not run into any local Cultivators. Nonetheless, the Crow Divinity Tribe remained vigilant, constantly keeping watch in all directions.

One afternoon, Meng Hao sat there cross-legged as a black beam of light appeared up in the sky. It shot toward their flying magical treasure, and then appeared in front of Meng Hao in the form of a black crow. It hovered in the air in front of him, emitting a soundless call.

Meng Hao looked at the crow, and then his eyes began to glow. A moment later, he lifted up his hand. The crow landed on his palm and then disappeared.

Another half month went by. Similar events occurred over and over again as the black crows that Meng Hao had sent out returned at high speed with reports from the surrounding areas.

Meng Hao was also able to see the surrounding lands through the eyes of the crows. Using their bodies, he was essentially able to increase the range of his Spiritual Sense.

Several days later, when all the crows had returned, Meng Hao was now as familiar with the area as he was the back of his own hand.

He waved his hand, causing a screen to appear in front of him upon which was sketched a map. "There are seven Tribes in the area, all mid-sized Tribes. The smallest of them number in the thousands, the largest is 20,000 strong...."

The Greatfather and the other Nascent Soul Cultivators of the Crow Divinity Tribe were seated around Meng Hao. They looked with interest at the map.

"Right now, these two Tribes are the closest to us," Meng Hao continued. "They no doubt are already aware that we have a Demon Spirit. However, Tribes who have managed to migrate this far into the Central region will have experienced many hardships. They won't make a move lightly, and will certainly attempt to scout us out.

"In recent days," he said calmly, "I have sensed at least two waves of Divine Sense sweep over us, which are assuredly from the totemic Sacred Ancients of those two Tribes." None of the surrounding Cultivators said anything.

"What interests me most in this area is this place," said Meng Hao, pointing to a spot on the map. It was a relatively large location about two weeks away via flight, which Meng Hao had circled on the map.

"This place seems very strange, and is occupied by seven or eight Tribes.

Based on the observations of my neo-demons, it seems they have constructed something of a trade outpost.” He frowned.

“They must have formed an alliance!” said one of the Nascent Soul Cultivators. He was a middle aged man, not one of the original members of the Crow Divinity Tribe, but a more recent addition.

“Because of the Apocalypse,” he continued, “and the increasing heaviness of the violet rainfall, there will definitely be some Tribes who choose to form alliances instead of fighting with each other. The members of such alliances will be stronger as a whole, and will have a better chance of surviving.

“The group the exalted Sacred Ancient referred to is surely just such an alliance. As for the trade outpost... that seems simple enough to explain. I’ve passed through this part of the Central region before in the past. The Tribes in this area tend to form mobile trade outposts. In fact, some Tribes are nothing more than such trade outposts.”

“Elder Sun is correct,” said the Crow Gloom Tribe Grand Elder. “I’ve also heard of this matter. After these particular Tribes formed their alliance, they constructed a trade outpost to engage in resource trade. They all have their various needs and desires, but together, they are more confident of making it to the Black Lands.” The Crow Gloom Tribe Grand Elder had already switched totem tattoos. He now had Meng Hao’s Wood-type totem. This had caused his Cultivation base to climb back up into the early Nascent Soul stage.

“Logically speaking,” said Elder Sun, “a trade outpost created by an alliance like that won’t stay in place for too long. They’ll continue moving forward, growing stronger and more powerful, continuously engaging in business with people they encounter.

“That is exactly the type of place we need to go to. We might even be able to purchase a long range flying magical treasure. There may be some other items we can acquire that will be useful for our migration.

“I’ve even heard that in the trading outposts of some of the great Tribes, you can purchase Sacred Ancients from Tribes that have been wiped out....

“The main question is, do we engage in trade with this alliance? Or... do we rob them!?” His words caused everyone’s eyes to begin to shine brightly and then look toward Meng Hao to await his decision.

Meng Hao was quiet for a while before coolly saying, “If the alliance chooses to trade with us, then we trade. If they want to go to war with us, then we will bring them war!”

Chapter 489: Eight Branch Alliance

Meng Hao's words caused the surrounding Nascent Soul Cultivators of the Crow Divinity Tribe to sit thoughtfully for a moment before cold glows appeared in their eyes, and then killing intent. This was especially true of Elder Sun, who licked his lips, his eyes glinting viciously.

Meng Hao closed his eyes and then pointed his finger down towards the ground. Instantly, Demonic Qi shot up from the plain, swirling around to form a figure. This was none other than Meng Hao's Demonic Incarnation.

The illusory figure contained Meng Hao's Spiritual Sense. It flickered as a black cloak suddenly wrapped around it, turning it into a black-cloaked man.

The black-cloaked man floated there in the air, his facial features indistinguishable. Meng Hao's voice suddenly spoke out from within the hood: "The Tribe as a whole, as well as my true self, will not move. I'll send this clone ahead to that alliance."

The surrounding Nascent Soul Cultivators nodded. Regarding Meng Hao's bizarre divine abilities, they were already used to them. To them, it was simply how things should be.

The black-cloaked figure turned to Elder Sun. "You've traveled through this area before, Elder Sun. Why don't you accompany me on this little expedition?"

Elder Sun took a deep breath as he rose to his feet and then bowed.

The Greatfather of the Crow Divinity Tribe also rose to his feet. He produced a bag of holding which he handed over to Meng Hao. This bag of holding contained a portion of the Tribe's Spirit Stones and other resources.

Meng Hao's black-cloaked Demonic Incarnation turned and flew off into the sky, followed by Elder Sun. In the blink of an eye, they turned into beams of colorful light that shot off into the distance.

After the Demonic Incarnation left, Meng Hao, who was still seated there cross-legged, opened his eyes.

“We’ll rest and reorganize here for a few days,” said Meng Hao coolly. “Afterwards, whether we engage in business or war will depend on the will of the Tribe.” Considering his position within the Tribe, his words actually counted as the voice of the Tribe.

The surrounding Nascent Soul Cultivators nodded, and the Crow Divinity Tribe began to station themselves in the area. This would be their first period of prolonged rest during the entire migration.

Meanwhile, Meng Hao’s black-cloaked Demonic Incarnation flew through the air of the Western Desert Central region, along with Elder Sun.

They moved at high speed, occasionally employing minor teleportation as they headed directly toward the alliance of Tribes.

A few days later, Meng Hao asked, “Elder Sun, do you have any former acquaintances in this area?” He’d come to find that Elder Sun seemed very familiar with the region. Occasionally the man would look around at the scenery with what appeared to be a wistful expression.

Elder Sun chuckled. “To be honest with you, exalted Sacred Ancient, I actually made a few enemies in this area some years ago. They chased me around, trying to kill me, which is how I came to be more familiar with the area.” Elder Sun was skinny and wizened, and had a mustache shaped like the character 八. On the left side of his face was a scar that stretched all the way down to his neck, making his appearance especially sinister.

Meng Hao nodded, and declined to make further inquiries. The two of them continued to fly through the air in beams of colorful light.

Time flashed by. They were able to move with incredible speed, traveling in ten days what it would take the flying machine one month.

Actually, it took that long because of Elder Sun. Were Meng Hao traveling alone using his Demonic Incarnation, it would only take five days.

One day, an area appeared up ahead on the plain. More than ten thousand tents were arranged in concentric rings around a city. They were densely packed in special patterns that made it look like a spell formation with protective powers.

The more than ten thousand tents were organized into groups that made up eight different patterns like sealing marks, which of course represented the eight different Tribes which formed the alliance.

The city was located in the very center. From his position up in the air, Meng Hao could see quite a few Cultivators coming and going. The whole scene was quite lively.

When Meng Hao and Elder Sun were about three thousand meters away, the voice of an old man suddenly called out from the direction of the allied Tribes.

“Welcome to the Eight Branch Alliance. We are an alliance formed by eight different Tribes, and are camping in this area for five months. During that time, flying is prohibited for three thousand meters in all directions. Fellow Daoists, if you have come to do business, then you are welcome here.”

Even as the words could be heard, an old man suddenly appeared in front of Meng Hao and Elder Sun. On his face could be seen some blotchy, brown marks. He looked over Meng Hao and Elder Sun and then continued, “I am Ou Yunzi. Fellow Daoists, you don’t look familiar. I’m curious as to where you might have come from.” After examining Elder Sun, his eyes came to rest on Meng Hao, whereupon his pupils constricted.

Ou Yunzi was at the early Nascent Soul stage, so the fact that he could not see the Cultivation base of this black-cloaked man caused his heart to fill with vigilance.

Seeing that Meng Hao did not plan to speak, Elder Sun laughingly clasped hands and said, “I am Sun Dahai. Our Tribe is migrating from the Western Desert North region, and are passing through the area. We heard that the Eight Branch Alliance built a city in the area, and thus decided to come trade for a few necessary items.” 1

Ou Yunzi's eyes shifted away from Sun Dahai to look behind him and Meng Hao, where of course there was nothing. His expression ordinary, he suddenly smiled.

"The Eight Branch Alliance welcomes all Fellow Daoists who wish to engage in business. Welcome, both of you!" With a laugh, he turned and gestured welcomingly. The three of them descended to the ground and began to walk toward the Eight Branch Alliance.

"That fact that you managed to migrate from the Western Desert North region all the way to here indicates that your Tribe is definitely extraordinary, Fellow Daoist Sun."

"Ai, there were many twists and turns along the way, and we experienced many things. But, let's not talk about that. Fellow Daoist Ou, from the look of things, your Eight Branch Alliance seems highly likely to be able to enter the Black Lands. I offer you my congratulations."

"Thank you for your auspicious words, Fellow Daoist Sun. May I inquire, what sort of items are you looking to acquire?"

"Oh, nothing special. Just some odds and ends, although if there are any neo-demon hordes for sale, that would be excellent."

Laughing and smiling, Sun Dahai continued to chat vaguely with Ou Yunzi as they walked along.

The entire time, Meng Hao remained silent, allowing Sun Dahai and Ou Yunzi to feel each other out.

When they reached the border of the allied Tribes, Ou Yunzi smiled and clasped hands and watched as Sun Dahai and Meng Hao entered the city. Afterwards, a dour look appeared on his face.

Suddenly, a man's voice could be heard: "Brother Ou, is there something fishy about those two?"

The air rippled next to Ou Yunzi as a man and a woman appeared. Both were middle-aged. The man wore a long scholar's robe and the woman was dressed in a Lady's gown. 2

Ou Yunzi glanced over at the two and then slowly said, “They say that they came from the North region. I didn’t notice anything out of the ordinary about that Cultivator named Sun. As for the black-cloaked man next to him, I couldn’t see the level of his Cultivation base. Furthermore, his aura was cold and dark.

“In order to forestall any mishaps, I suggest we allow them to be on their way of their own accord and...” Before Ou Yunzi could finish, he was interrupted rather impolitely.

“There’s nothing to worry about,” said the woman in the Lady’s gown. “He couldn’t possibly be a Spirit Severing Patriarch. Even if he’s of the late Nascent Soul stage, he’s only one person. The net has already been cast out. When it comes time to draw it in, no mishaps will occur. Fellow Daoist Ou, there’s no need to worry.”

The scholarly looking man laughed, and his eyes flickered coldly. “He’s only one trifling person. Brother Ou, there’s no need to take him to heart. We will let the net remain cast a few more days, and then, according to the agreement reached by the Elders, we will draw it in. If those two really came from the North region, along with their Tribe, then we’ll be able to catch quite a big fish!”

The man laughed, and the woman continued, “When the time comes to draw in the net, their Tribe will be revealed, and will become resources for our Eight Branch Alliance. Then, our months of rest here will not have been in vain.

“All of it will just count as bad luck for them! They won’t be able to blame anyone but themselves!” With that, the man and woman departed.

Ou Yunzi frowned. After a long moment, he shook his head. “Maybe I really am just thinking too much into it.” With that, he turned and disappeared.

After entering the city, Meng Hao and Sun Dahai split up. Sun Dahai had practiced Cultivation for many years, and was experienced and astute. He was adept in making discreet inquiries and collecting news, so Meng Hao decided to stroll about the city alone. When he saw all the people, and the

proliferation of various shops and stores, he was astonished.

This place was quite large, and although you couldn't say that it had everything, there was quite a variety of things to purchase, from neo-demon hordes, to powerful solitary neo-demons, even a quite a bit of rather shoddy medicinal pills. There were even flying magical items.

Unfortunately, there were no prices listed, only indications that these items could be purchased through auction. Even still, Meng Hao was able to get a feel for the majesty of the city. There were many Cultivators; it seemed the city could hold nearly ten thousand people, making the place quite bustling.

As he walked, Meng Hao's pupils suddenly constricted as he noticed what appeared at first to be a simple structure, but was actually a luxurious shop. This shop happened to specialize in totems!

Different Tribes had different totem branding methods, and this place happened to sell a variety of such methods for a variety of prices. This shop instantly caught Meng Hao's attention.

After careful examination, he found that most were relatively cheap, and were only designed for functionality, not for providing Cultivation base breakthrough.

After looking around for a while, he felt that he understood the city a lot better. About two hours later, he had managed to stroll through about half of the city, when suddenly, he stopped in place.

He had just sensed a bit of Demonic Qi coming from a shop nearby. After looking over, he was able to identify which shop; it was a place that sold totemic Sacred Ancients!

Perhaps a better way to say it was that these were incredibly powerful neo-demons that could be turned into totems!

Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and he was just about to enter the shop when suddenly a man appeared in front of him. He was dressed like a scholar; this was none other than the man who had been speaking with Ou Yunzi earlier.

The man laughed and blocked Meng Hao's way.

"Fellow Daoist, the things in this shop will be up for auction in seven days. If you want them, you can purchase them at that time."

Meng Hao looked at the man with cold, glittering eyes. Without a word, he turned and walked away.

The middle-aged scholar's pupils constricted. When Meng Hao had looked at him, the man had used Divine Sense to try to feel Meng Hao out. However, all the Divine Sense could make out regarding the black-cloaked man was rippling nothingness. It couldn't pierce inside, not even the slightest bit.

"That man is very strange..." said the scholar, his eyes narrowing.

Meng Hao's expression didn't change as he walked through the city. However, deep within his cloak, his eyes gleamed with coldness.

"This place is pretty interesting. It seems almost everything is purchasable only at the auction.... Everything seems ordinary, but if you think about it carefully...."

*

1. Sun Dahai's name in Chinese is 孙大海 – sūn dà hǎi. Sun is a surname. Dahai means "ocean."
2. Specifically, she is described as wearing the kind of casual garment that royal concubines or princesses would wear.

Chapter 490: Underground!

As evening fell, the violet rain fell down onto the tents in the area that had been set up specifically for visiting Cultivators.

After spending a few Spirit Stones, Meng Hao and Sun Dahai had been able to acquire a tent, within which they now sat cross-legged.

“Exalted Sacred Ancient,” said Sun Dahai in a low voice, as he reported his findings to Meng Hao, “I made a lot of inquiries earlier today. The Eight Branch Alliance has been in this spot for four months now. During the last few days of each of those months, they have hosted an auction.

“They’ve already held four such auctions. When popular items appear, deaths sometimes occur. However, none of the deaths are connected to the Eight Branch Alliance.

“Such deaths are usually caused because of personal disputes and thefts. Generally speaking, it seems that the Eight Branch Alliance is really just interested in business, and has no malicious intentions.

“The final auction will be held ten days from now. When it concludes, the Eight Branch Alliance will move on. As such, many local Tribes will be attending the final auction, and many valuable treasures will be up for purchase.”

Meng Hao sat there cross-legged, his face concealed within this black cloak. After listening to Sun Dahai’s report, he said, “You think there’s nothing unusual about this place?”

Sun Dahai’s eyes flickered. “There doesn’t seem to be anything particularly unusual. However, we do need to be on guard. It’s possible the Eight Branch Alliance is spreading bait to attract some big fish, which they can then collect together in one fell swoop.

“The surrounding Tribes couldn’t possibly be that off-guard,” he continued. “If the Eight Branch Alliance wanted to swallow them up, it would be difficult to accomplish. Besides, to survive in this Apocalypse, Tribes have to experience war and battles. Such Tribes wouldn’t possibly

fall for something so stupid. Even if they sent people here to trade, they wouldn't send too many Spirit Stones or other resources with them. If I were a local Greatfather, I would send a large group so that there would be safety in numbers. As for Spirit Stones, they would be secondary.

"Furthermore, if the Eight Branch Alliance truly had the power to swallow up an entire Tribe, then what is the point of the city? Why not just sweep over the surrounding tribes and plunder them dry? That would certainly save a lot of effort." Sun Dahai looked puzzled.

"That's why I think that there's a seventy percent likelihood that they are actually focused on doing business, and not on maliciously robbing people." He looked over at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao was silent for a short time before giving a hoarse laugh.

"If you came to this conclusion, then likely other Tribes will too. It is because of that understanding that this city houses over ten thousand outsiders. Most are members of the other seven Tribes that exist in this region, as well as some Cultivators from even more distant regions.

"However, did it ever occur to you that the true goal of the Eight Branch Alliance, is neither business, nor robbing Spirit Stones and other resources?" Cold, glowing eyes looked out at Sun Dahai from within the black cloak.

Sun Dahai was taken aback, and sat there lost in thought.

At the same time, several dozen days of travel away where the Crow Divinity Tribe was resting, Meng Hao's true self sat cross-legged. Suddenly, his eyes opened to reveal a brilliant glow, and he rose to his feet.

"Members of the Crow Divinity Tribe, after enough time passes for a single incense stick to burn, we will mount our flying treasure and move at top speed toward the Eight Branch Alliance!" Immediately, all the Tribe members emerged from their meditative trances. Without asking any questions whatsoever, they rose to their feet. In the short amount of time it takes for an incense stick to burn, the thousands of Tribe members stepped onto the gigantic viper. A piercing cry rose up as the flying viper treasure shot through the air. Spirit Stones were used unhesitatingly,

causing the viper to speed as fast as possible toward the Eight Branch Alliance.

As the Crow Divinity Tribe made their way toward the Eight Branch Alliance, time passed by slowly for Meng Hao and Sun Dahai. Casting aside their previous prudence, they made their way throughout the Eight Branch Alliance city and began to make purchases.

Within the space of a few days, they had spent quite a bit of Spirit Stones to purchase various supplies that would be needed for the migration. The Eight Branch Alliance was constantly announcing the auction to take place in a few days. In fact, each day, various shops and stores would put on display some of the items which were to be auctioned.

Meng Hao saw three flying machines, one of which was a 25,000-meter treasure shaped like an actual ship, that could hold around ten thousand people.

It was protected by a glittering shield, and was capable of astonishing speed. Although a terrifying amount of Spirit Stones was required to operate it, it was essentially the only type of item that the Western Desert Tribes could use at the moment. Anything that normally operated on spell formations that absorbed the spiritual energy of Heaven and Earth, was now inoperable.

There were a few special totem branding techniques that were the topic of heated debate within the city. However, what caught Meng Hao's eyes the most were the neo-demons.

The Eight Branch Alliance had over a hundred thousand neo-demons of all varieties. The mere sight of them was shocking.

In fact... there were three totemic Sacred Ancients that the Eight Branch Alliance had on display. One was a three-headed Xuanwu turtle. Another was a three hundred meter long golden eagle. The final one was a blind crow. This crow was very similar to Meng Hao's other black crows; however, its aura was vastly, vastly more powerful.

Unfortunately, these three totemic Sacred Ancients seemed extremely weak and listless. Clearly, the Tribes and Tribe members who had

exercised faith in them had been slaughtered. Therefore, the faith power they had stored up was thoroughly exhausted, and had not been replenished.

In addition, they were bound by fine, silver chains that pierced through their bodies. Their previous aloofness and haughtiness had changed. Now they were items for sale that anyone could glance upon casually.

Every day, a voice would ring out through the entire city, filled with sincerity. It didn't seem to contain even a scrap of hypocrisy, and sounded completely credible.

"Greetings, Fellow Daoists. The Eight Branch Alliance will be holding our final auction in six days. After the auction, we will be leaving this area. During this final auction, we will be selling all of the items that you have had a chance to look over recently. Some of these items belong to the Eight Branch Alliance, but the majority have been entrusted to us by other parties to sell.

"In some cases, these items will not be sold for Spirit Stones, but rather other special items that we require. After all, it is such items that we will prepare to auction off in the next location we travel to."

Considering the reputation built up by the Eight Branch Alliance, as well as the extremely attractive items up that were to be put up for auction, more and more Cultivators arrived each day.

These people didn't just come from the neighboring seven Tribes, but even Tribes from further south. Of course, for safety's sake, large groups of Cultivators had been dispatched, all well-known figures. The leaders of all of these groups were of the Nascent Soul stage.

Three days before the auction was set to begin, the foreign population of the city had already swelled to twenty thousand. The city was packed, and the atmosphere extremely lively and out of the ordinary. In fact, some Tribes had already begun doing business secretly.

Sun Dahai was as happy as a fish in water; he immediately began to interact with the other Tribes as he attempted to gather together all the supplies they needed. As of the day before the auction, Meng Hao had

already spent all the Spirit Stones he had brought in order to acquire the various items they needed.

The more people arrived, the more Sun Dahai seemed to think the area was safe. As for Meng Hao, he felt exactly the opposite. During the past seven or eight days, he had not actually engaged in any of the purchasing. Instead, he walked around the city, observing and studying it. In the end, he was convinced that under the surface of this entire area was a huge spell formation!

The spell formation was very complex. Even with many people working at it, it would take months to set up. Considering how long the Eight Branch Alliance had been in this area, Meng Hao was certain that the spell formation... had been put together by none other than them!

Most curious of all, this spell formation seemed to be able to stir and congeal Demonic Qi!!

The spell formation was so well hidden that even a Nascent Soul Cultivator would be incapable of detecting it. The only reason Meng Hao could sense it was because of the Demonic Qi that was congealed inside. Obviously, the body Meng Hao was using was illusory, materialized from Demonic Qi; naturally, he was extremely sensitive to Demonic Qi.

Demonic Qi was shapeless, which Meng Hao well knew. No one could see it, nor feel it. Only neo-demons or totemic Sacred Ancients would be able to sense it. However, considering the weakness of the Demonic Qi in the spell formation, it would probably be difficult even for Sacred Ancients.

Unfortunately, it could not escape detection of Meng Hao, Demon Sealer.

“A spell formation that attracts Demonic Qi is not the type of formation that an ordinary Cultivator would set up. The actual skill used in creating the formation is secondary to the mere fact that it contains Demonic Qi. Whoever made it has some level of understanding of Demonic Qi.” Meng Hao thought about it for eight days as he walked about observing the city. It seemed as if he were examining the items which were being sold, but in

truth, he was carefully observing the spell formation.

The more he observed it, the more interested he got.

At the moment, it was now one day before the auction. Meng Hao was standing in the center of the city, where there were no shops, but rather, an altar. The altar appeared ordinary. Placed on top of the altar was a huge statue that depicted a Cultivator with outstretched wings on his backs.

This was the totem statue of one of the eight Tribes that made up the Eight Branch Alliance. Similar statues could be seen throughout the city, each one of which represented one of the eight Tribes.

As soon as he neared the altar, Meng Hao could sense at least ten streams of Divine Sense fall onto his body. It was impossible to tell what type of cultivation was practiced by the owners of these streams of Divine Sense. It was too deeply hidden. The level of the Cultivators was also impossible to determine. There was even a strand of Demonic Qi present, which stuck out to Meng Hao. Inwardly, he gave a cold laugh. He knew that if he did anything out of the ordinary, this place would instantly be filled with at least ten Nascent Soul Cultivators.

He looked up at the statue with glittering eyes as he walked past casually. He didn't stop. However, what he did do was secretly merge his Spiritual Sense in the Demonic Qi down below. It slowly spread out underground, undetectable. Based on his several days of study and observation, Meng Hao was now certain that this altar was the center of the spell formation.

As the Spiritual Sense spread out, Meng Hao could see the majestic spell formation. Furthermore, at the center of the spell formation was a pulsing black mist. Whatever was inside that black mist was impossible to see.

It was at this moment that a tremor ran through his mind, the source of which was inside his bag of holding. It was an archaic voice that he had not heard for a long time during his time in the Western Desert. It echoed out to fill his mind.

“Third Generation Demon Sealer blood refinement, Demon Soldier Lonelytomb!

“The League of Demon Sealers! The First Generation is the Ancestor. The Second Generation is the Inheritor. The Third Generation is the most powerful. After the Fourth Generation, the successive generations grow weaker.... But the Ninth Generation is the ultimate! If the Ninth Generation is not slain, it is the pinnacle!”

Chapter 491: A Familiar Vortex

The voice did not just echo out in the mind of Meng Hao's Demonic Incarnation in the Eight Branch Alliance, but also in the mind of his true self, which was currently speeding through the air in exactly that direction.

Meng Hao's mind in the Demonic Incarnation trembled, but his expression did not change in the slightest. He turned and walked off slowly. His inspection of the spell formation, and his sudden shock, was not noticed by any observers. As he walked off into the distance, the Divine Sense which had latched onto him slowly vanished.

Deep in the night, Meng Hao sat quietly in the tent, eyes closed.

Sun Dahai was already in a meditative trance. Although he was not one hundred percent at ease with this place, he felt it to be fundamentally safe. He was eighty percent sure that the Eight Branch Alliance was only interested in doing business.

Meanwhile, the fact that the Crow Divinity Tribe had a Demon Spirit was not possible to conceal from the other seven Tribes that made their home in this part of the Western Desert Central region. They all became aware of it.

"That's...."

"A Demon Spirit!! It's a Demon Spirit!"

"A Demon Spirit has actually appeared! We have to get it!!"

Two of the Tribes sensed the Demon Spirit first. The other five took longer but were equally shocked. Of the seven, five immediately dispatched people toward the place indicated on the Feng Shui compass.

In a very short period of time, the entire region was sent into a turbulent commotion.

The glowing dots on the Feng Shui compasses held by the High Priests of the various Tribes caused their hearts to fill with astonishment. Even as they dispatched their forces, the Eight Branch Alliance called a parliament

of the Greatfathers and High Priests of the eight Tribes. Instantly, a heated debate discussion.

“Dammit! Why did a Demon Spirit have to appear at this time!?”

“According to our scouts, the surrounding Tribes have already taken action. Furthermore, the Demon Spirit is heading directly toward our Eight Branch Alliance! If nothing unexpected happens, the Demon Spirit will be on top of us in two days, which is exactly when the forces of the other Tribes will arrive! There will definitely be fighting and robbing!”

“Should we delay the bringing in of the net...? After all, our plan is extremely important, but a Demon Spirit... is equally important!”

“The ideal situation would be one in which we successfully bring in the net AND acquire a Demon Spirit....”

As the discussion continued, an old man sat in the seat of honour. He wore a red robe and had his eyes closed. After a while, he suddenly opened his eyes.

“Enough!” he said, his voice ringing out like a clap of thunder. All of the other individuals in the tent instantly went silent.

“Demon Spirits are well and good. However, to the Eight Branch Alliance, what is most important is restoring the power of the Sacred Ancient. In the Western Desert East region, our Eight Branch Alliance’s strength was significantly damaged. All of you received serious injuries. Even more importantly, we must not be rash when it comes to our Cultivation bases. If our totems are damaged, it could put us in danger of Cultivation base loss.

“That’s also the reason why we are resting in this location; exterminating the other tribes in the area is not something easy to do.

“Have you forgotten the main point of the plan? We attract more and more Cultivators to this area, and then use the power of the spell formation to carry out a blood offering. That will restore the glory of our totems! Actually, for the Demon Spirit to come is a good thing!

“In fact, there actually couldn’t be a better way to get more people to

come here!” By the time the man finished speaking, his eyes were glowing with a cold light.

The other Cultivators of the Eight Branch Alliance began to nod silently.

Final preparations were made. Two days later at dawn, the Eight Branch Alliance began the auction.

A huge crowd of people was present, more than twenty thousand. As such, there was no special location for the auction; instead, it took place throughout the entire city.

Early in the morning, all of the buildings and shops in the city disappeared without a trace. What was left behind was a vast, empty square. Eight Branch Alliance Cultivators emerged from the surrounding tents to maintain order.

Everyone who was to participate in the auction held a jade slip in hand. These jade slips had been distributed a few days before, one for each person, including Meng Hao and Sun Daihai.

“It’s going to begin!” said Sun Daihai excitedly. Despite being a Nascent Soul Cultivator, he had never participated in an auction before.

Meng Hao, on the other hand, was quite used to such affairs. The pill auction back in the Violet Fate Sect had been attended by a hundred thousand Cultivators. That auction was above and beyond this one in both terms of scale and grandeur.

A glowing screen appeared up above, from within which appeared a man. His handsome face was as white as jade. Smiling, he clasped hands and bowed to the thousands of Cultivators below.

“We meet again, Fellow Daoists! I am Dong Hanzi, with whom which many of you are already acquainted, since I presided over the previous four auctions.

“Today’s auction is the final auction to be held by the Eight Branch Alliance. The rules are the same as ever. All of you have a jade slip, which you can brand with a value. That value will appear up here.

“There’s no need to prattle on. Our first lot for the day....” As Dong Hanzi’s voice rang out, the auction officially began. The first lot instantly caused quite a commotion. Prices branded onto jade slips immediately began to appear on the illusory screen up in the air. The prices instantly began to climb higher and higher.

Sun Dahai’s eyes went wide as he stared at the prices on the screen. As for Meng Hao, he didn’t pay much attention to the auction. Instead he was looking around the area thoughtfully.

Time went by and the excitement in the auction continued to grow. After four hours had passed, when it was almost high noon, Dong Hanzi offered up a totemic Sacred Ancient for auction. It was at this point that the auction seemed to reach its peak.

Regardless if it was in terms of values being called out verbally or branded on the jade slips, the price continued to rise shockingly. It seemed relatively chaotic, but order was actually being maintained. By this point Sun Dahai was thoroughly wrapped up in his excitement; he held his jade slip in hand as he participated in making bids.

All of the twenty thousand people in the area seemed to be going crazy. Only Meng Hao, his face hidden within the depths of his black cloak, seemed to remain calm.

“This Demonic Qi spell formation really is something!” he thought, his eyes glittering coldly. Earlier in the morning, when the auction had just started, he saw the spell formation beginning to operate. By now, it was rotating rapidly, congealing large amounts of Demonic Qi, then sending it undulating out invisibly to influence the emotions of the Cultivators in the area.

These undulations were causing the twenty thousand participants to slowly act like lunatics.

In complete contrast, the Cultivators of the Eight Branch Alliance, who had recently been the shopkeepers and other shop workers, were circulating in the area, cold, mocking smiles on their faces.

Suddenly, Meng Hao caught sight of a boundless mist approaching from

off in the distance. It impossible to say when it appeared, but it spread out to cover the area. Furthermore, there were sixteen Cultivators floating up in the air, looking down coldly at the crowds.

Of these sixteen people, half were of the early Nascent Soul stage, and four were of the mid-Nascent Soul Stage. Shockingly, two were of the late Nascent Soul stage.

One of them was Ou Yunzi, another was the man dressed like a scholar, and a third was the woman dressed in a Lady's robe.

The power of the Cultivation bases of these sixteen people began to spread out. However, Meng Hao could tell that all of the Cultivation bases were unstable, as if they were being held together with great difficulty. A few of these people actually emanated a faint Demonic Qi.

Meng Hao's expression was cold after glancing over them and then looking back at Sun Dahai. He suddenly spoke out Sun Dahai's name. As soon as the man heard his name being called out, a tremor ran through his body. The crazed look faded from his eyes and turned into confusion, then astonishment. He knew that there was something wrong with his behaviour just now.

Panting, he looked around, his heart filled with caution. When he saw the crazed look on the faces around him, and the prices climbing rapidly, cold sweat broke out on his forehead.

He subconsciously turned to look at Meng Hao and then said, "Sacred An...."

"Come with me," said Meng Hao calmly. Sun Dahai immediately followed Meng Hao as he worked his way through the crowd. They didn't draw much attention, and very quickly reached a certain location where Meng Hao came to a stop.

"This position is safe. If something unexpected happens, don't forget to sit down here and meditate. Don't take a single step away."

Sun Dahai was a shrewd and astute person. Earlier, he had been under the influence of the spell formation, but now that he had come to his

senses, he could sense the strangeness in the area. Having heard Meng Hao's words, he nodded in agreement. He had already decided that no matter what happened, he would not move away from this spot.

At the same time, his admiration for Meng Hao grew to even greater heights. He looked at Meng Hao, and although he couldn't see his face within the blackness of his cloak, he could sense Meng Hao's eyes looking toward the center of the trade outpost city.

Meng Hao merged his Spiritual Sense with Demonic Qi and sent it out into the ground. He watched the spell formation rotating faster and faster; at the same time, the mist in the area continued to grow thicker.

"High noon is when the earth is aligned directly with the sun. At this moment of extremes... Yin is at its hardest and Yang as at its softest!

"Demonic Qi, or whatever kind of Qi it is, regardless of whether it is hard or soft, will appear at noon!" Meng Hao quickly calculated the current time.

"Only three more breaths of time.... Three, two, one...." A bright light shone in Meng Hao's eyes as he watched the wildly rotating spell formation cause the mist in the area to churn. At the same time, the ground below began to change color. Now it was red, like fresh blood.

Strands of Demonic Qi began to float up to fill the air. Shockingly, the Demonic Qi started rotating, transforming into a huge vortex that filled the sky.

Of course, Sun Dahai couldn't see any of this. To him, everything seemed normal. The sky was still the sky and nothing was different.

To Meng Hao, however, what he was seeing was shocking to the extreme.

As for the sixteen Cultivators in mid-air, they were performing incantation gestures. Then, they began to let out growling roars as sixteen streams of magical symbols suddenly began to spread out toward the vortex up in the sky.

No one could see the gigantic vortex, only Meng Hao. The sight of it was

actually somewhat familiar, as if he had seen something similar before in another place.

As the vortex spun rapidly, a black hole suddenly appeared in its middle. Within that black hole... another world suddenly became visible!

As the world became visible, Meng Hao's heart filled with astonishment, and an expression of disbelief appeared on his face. He suddenly realized what that place was!

Chapter 492: I'll Be Back!

The Tower of Tang in the State of Zhao!

The year that Meng Hao left the Reliance Sect, he went to the capital city of the State of Zhao. There, he had stood atop the Tower of Tang, fulfilling his lifelong dream of looking out from its enormous height toward the Great Tang in the Eastern Land.

After that, when he was preparing to leave, the sovereign of the State of Zhao and the others prostrated themselves in worship to the Tower of Tang. As he left, he had inadvertently looked over his shoulder to see an enormous vortex appear in the sky. It was something that no one could see but him!

Within that vortex was another world, a battlefield filled with countless corpses, as well as a gigantic black coffin. The whole scene was incredibly shocking. Sitting next to the coffin, a shrivelled figure sat crosslegged. Meng Hao could never forget how as soon as he looked at the withered corpse, it suddenly opened its eyes.

That one look had caused a burning of his life force which lasted for months. Meng Hao now knew the purpose of that magic. It was a seal, locking onto his position. 1

Later, outside the Rebirth Cave, Meng Hao came to understand everything. He knew that the corpse's name was Choumen Tai. He had acquired Immortal Shows the Way from Choumen Tai, and knew that the world in that vortex was actually an ancient battlefield.

That war had been fought because of the previous Lord of the Ninth Mountain, of the Li Clan, as well as the current Lord of the Ninth Mountain who was of the Ji Clan. It was in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins that Meng Hao put even more pieces together, learning that the war of supremacy regarding the Lordship of the Ninth Mountain also had to do with the Immortal Demon Sect!

As he looked up at the vortex, his mind filled with astonishment as he realized that the world he was looking at was, shockingly... the exact same

world he had seen when in the State of Zhao!

However, this time, the ancient battlefield did not contain a coffin, but rather a sea of corpses....

In the very center of the sea of corpses was a huge altar, which was filled with a black mist. The mist made it impossible to see what was inside, but mournful shrieks could be heard coming from the mist. Soon, faces became faintly visible on its surface. It seemed as if they wanted to fly out from the mist, but were unable to. It seemed as if they had been stuck with the mist for countless years, unable to do anything except mourn and cry out.

Among the faces in the mist were Cultivators as well as neo-demons!

Meng Hao's mind filled with a roaring sound, and something like a powerful call suddenly welled up from his heart. It was actually impossible for him to tell whether this feeling was the black mist calling him, or if it was him calling the black mist!

It didn't matter at the moment. Meng Hao's heart and mind trembled as he thought back to the black mist he had seen in the center of the spell formation earlier, as well as what relationship it had with the vortex.

It was at this moment that looks of fanaticism filled the faces of the surrounding Cultivators of the Eight Branch Alliance. All of them knelt down and began to bow toward the vortex up in the sky.

Even the sixteen Nascent Soul Cultivators up in mid-air also began to prostrate themselves.

At the same time, the redness that filled the ground began to spread out. The mist roiled as it enveloped everyone in the area, including Meng Hao. Vast amounts of Demonic Qi suddenly began to pour out from within the spell formation.

The instant the Demonic Qi appeared, it poured into all of the Cultivators in the area. They continued to act completely crazy, as if they had sunk into some dreamland from which they were unable to emerge. As the Demonic Qi filled them, their faces twisted and distorted.

The Demonic Qi poured into them, causing their bodies to tremble, and their expressions to turn vicious. Meng Hao's eyes glittered; after closer observation, he could see that the Demonic Qi was actually fusing with the life force of the Cultivators.

Next, all of these people lifted their heads up toward the vortex. At the same time, the sixteen Cultivators in mid air used their incantations to cause the life force fused with Demonic Qi, to shoot toward the whirlpool. It was instantly sucked in and headed toward the black mist inside. The faces in the mist suddenly looked excited, and began to consume it rapidly.

Meng Hao could clearly see all of this happening. He turned to look at Sun Dahai, who remained sitting crosslegged in that particular position. His eyes were closed and he was meditating; his position was one of a few in the area that had no Demonic Qi in it. That location was one of the nexus points of the spell formation; Demonic Qi would not enter it, making him temporarily safe.

"Just what exactly is that mist...?" thought Meng Hao. "Why do I have this feeling of calling? I can tell that it's not the mist calling me. But rather... somehow I am inadvertently calling the mist." He looked around as the Demonic Qi continued to pour into the surrounding tens of thousands of Cultivators. It merged with their life force and then shot up into the vortex.

At the same time, the surrounding tens of thousands of Cultivators of the Eight Branch Alliance began to speak in a bizarre language. The sound of it rose into the air, merging together to transform into sound waves that rolled out in all directions.

As their voices sounded out, the mist in the area churned even more violently. More Demonic Qi shot up into the vortex, causing the faces on the black mist to emit excited roars.

The whole scene was incredibly bizarre. That was especially so as the sixteen Nascent Soul Cultivators up in the air shouted out excitedly and performed double-handed incantations to produce sealing marks which flew out.

Even more shocking, totem tattoos suddenly began to appear on the foreheads of the sixteen Cultivators. These totems looked like... faces!

They were the same twisted faces that existed on the black mist in the vortex!

Similar totem tattoos could suddenly be seen appearing on the foreheads of all the tens of thousands of Eight Branch Alliance Cultivators. Each face was different. Some were old, some were young. Some were Cultivators, some were neo-demons.

“Those faces are their totems!” thought Meng Hao, his heart filling with shock. He would never have imagined that the faces filling the black mist in the vortex could be totems.

“This Eight Branch Alliance is incredibly bizarre. Not only do they have a spell formation that can absorb Demonic Qi, as well as Cultivators who actually have Demonic Qi in their bodies, but their totems are connected to things inside the world of that vortex.

“Even stranger... that black mist has something to do with Demon Sealers!” His eyes filled with a strange light.

It was at this moment that the Demonic Qi in the area suddenly began to cover the spell formation nexuses, and Sun Dahai suddenly began to tremble. Demonic Qi was already beginning to bore into his body.

Meng Hao frowned. He lifted his hand, and immediately the Demonic Qi spread away from Sun Dahai. Although it only caused a slight change to the dense Demonic Qi in the area, there were suddenly seven streams of Divine Sense that shot over.

“What?”

“That guy is still conscious!”

“It’s him....”

Almost at the same time that the seven streams of Divine Sense flew over, three of the sixteen Nascent Soul Cultivators up above flickered and began to fly down. It took only a brief moment for them to near Meng

Hao.

Of the three, one was the man dressed as a scholar. Killing intent flickered in his eyes.

Meng Hao gave a cold snort. Waving his hand, he caused the Demonic Qi in the area to shoot toward himself. It transformed into an invisible attack which swept toward the incoming three Cultivators.

Amidst echoing booms, the three Nascent Soul Cultivators' faces filled with shock, and they were forced to stop moving.

"Demonic Qi! That guy can manipulate Demonic Qi!!" Immediately, the astonished Nascent Soul Cultivators began to perform incantations. Illusory faces suddenly appeared in front of them. They pushed out with their hands, causing the three faces to twist with fury. Savage laughter erupted from the mouths of the faces as they shot toward Meng Hao.

The Demonic Qi wielded by Meng Hao had little effect on these three bizarre faces. They even consumed the Demonic Qi as they approached. Even by increasing the power of the Demonic Qi attack, Meng Hao was only able to make one of the three faces grow a bit blurry and fade away. The other two continued to shoot toward him.

A bang could be heard, and ripples spread out in all directions as Meng Hao's Demonic Incarnation suddenly shot backward. He snatched up Sun Dahai and then continued to fly back.

The faces of the three Nascent Soul Cultivators were grim as they flew in pursuit of Meng Hao.

"Your Cultivation base is definitely extraordinary, but do you really think you can escape from the Eight Branch Alliance!?"

"It might be strange that you can manipulate Demonic Qi. But we'll catch you and sacrifice you to the Sacred Ancient! The Sacred Ancient will definitely be very happy!"

It was with vigilance that the three Cultivators shot after Meng Hao. At the same time, another from the group up above shot down toward Meng Hao. It was Ou Yunzi, turning the group that was pursuing Meng Hao into

a group of four.

Using minor teleportation, the four worked together to employ Divine Abilities. Ferocious, magical faces appeared, shooting toward Meng Hao and devouring Demonic Qi at the same time.

Meng Hao said nothing, nor did he even pay attention to his four pursuers. He held Sun Dahai in one hand and performed an incantation with the other, causing a host of sealing marks to appear on Sun Dahai's body.

At the same time, he flew away like a specter, completely avoiding the four Nascent Soul Cultivators.

After about ten breaths worth of time passed, Meng Hao placed his hand onto the top of Sun Dahai's head. Suddenly, a shield appeared around him, whereupon Meng Hao loosened his grip, allowing Sun Dahai to fall into the mist below.

With the shield in place, Sun Dahai would not be affected by the attacks of the Demonic Qi. Next, Meng Hao turned and waves his hand toward his four pursuers. Instantly, Demonic Qi appeared to attack them.

The five of them flitted back and forth with minor teleportations, unleashing endless magical techniques, divine abilities, magical faces, and Demonic Qi. Ou Yunzi and the others were quickly filled with shock. Meng Hao danced back and forth, his attacks bizarre, causing them to feel more and more frustrated.

"Where did this guy come from? How could he be so weird?"

Even as the four of them were beginning to feel more and more frustrated, two more Nascent Soul Cultivators frowned and teleported down from the remaining group of twelve up above. Now, a combined force of six people was attacking Meng Hao. Six enormous faces appeared and then began to merge together. This killing move, combining the power of all six of them, caused a massive rumbling to fill Heaven and Earth. The sky dimmed and the clouds up above seethed. Meng Hao stopped moving as his black cloak was shredded into pieces. For the first time, his body beneath was revealed to the outside world.

It... was not actually a body! It was a mass of Demonic Qi, congealed into the shape of a body. It was a human-shaped body of Demonic Qi that looked like mist!

When the onlookers saw the body of mist, their minds trembled. The eyes of the six attackers, as well as the ten people up in air, went wide. Their expressions filled with astonishment.

“A Mist Clone!!”

“Impossible! What we’ve been working so hard to kill is actually a Mist Clone!!”

“If a mere Mist Clone is so powerful, then what about his true self... He must be completely fearsome!!”

Sixteen Nascent Soul Cultivators’ faces completely fell. This was especially true of Ou Yunzi, whose face went pale when he thought back to his earlier premonition.

Meng Hao’s misty body began to fade away, but his face was filled with derision and coldness.

“I’ll be back!”

“I’m already here!”

The first sentence was uttered by the disappearing misty figure. The second echoed out from far off in the distance, causing a rumbling that shook everything.

To the people who heard it, it sounded like thunder exploding up into the Heavens.

*

1. The events back in the State of Zhao happened in Chapter 59.

Chapter 493: I Will Give You War!

The sound echoed out like thunder throughout Heaven and Earth. As it did, a three thousand meter long gigantic viper appeared flying through the air!

Standing on top of the viper were several thousand Cultivators. Their eyes flickered with cold glows. This was the Crow Divinity Tribe who, after years of warfare, had been forged into cold-blooded warriors.

None of them spoke a single word. From the elderly to the children, all of them wore grim expressions, ruthless and bloodthirsty. They stared out coldly at the Cultivators of the Eight Branch Alliance....

It was obvious that there were only a few thousand of them. But when the Cultivators of the Eight Branch Alliance looked at them, they seemed like an army of tens of thousands. The closer they came, the more obvious it was that the Crow Divinity Tribe was surrounded by a killing intent that could rock Heaven and Earth!

This intense killing intent was an invisible aura that could manifest after countless enemies had been killed. The fire and blood that had been experienced by the Crow Divinity Tribe had lit a burning madness in them that seemed on the verge of shaking the entire Western Desert.

“Who are they? What Tribe is that?!”

“For a whole Tribe to look like that is something that will never last long in the Western Desert, not even in the Central region. Such character is difficult to forge!”

“They... could it be... don’t tell me it’s caused by the Demon Spirit!?!?”

The sixteen Nascent Soul Cultivators looked over, faces filled with shock. The Crow Divinity Tribe obviously only had a few thousand Cultivators, but their aura was incredibly intense. The killing intent they emanated was too strong, making the Eight Branch Alliance Cultivators feel as if they were being suffocated.

This... was the Crow Divinity Tribe!

They had experienced the fires of war, had been bathed by the flames into a rebirth! A new Crow Divinity Tribe!

The viper flew through the air at top speed. Originally, they should have taken one day longer before arriving. However, the Crow Divinity Tribe had pushed with full force to increase their speed and arrive a day earlier. In the blink of an eye, they were suddenly here!

A man stood on the head of the enormous viper, in front of the Crow Divinity Cultivators. When the Eight Branch Alliance Cultivators saw him, in their hearts, they felt as if they were looking at a god of death.

He wore a green robe, and more than a few white hairs could be seen in his black, floating hair. He emanated the air of a scholar, and yet, his eyes were sharp and cold. His face was as cold as ice, making his aura bizarre to the extreme. It almost seemed as if his entire body was filled with the cold of winter.

His mere presence could cause everything to freeze over. This man was the well-spring of the Crow Divinity Tribe's killing intent. If you likened the Crow Divinity tribe to the blood which stains a sharp blade, then this man... would be the sharp tip of that blade!

This... was Meng Hao!

His appearance instantly caused the sixteen Nascent Soul Cultivators to begin to pant. Their eyes went wide, and their hearts filled with an instinctual fear. They felt as if they were being submerged by floodwaters as they realized that they recognized his face! His face looked exactly the same as the Mist Clone that they had just killed!

The scene instantly caused the minds of the sixteen Nascent Soul Cultivators to explode with roaring.

The faces of eight Greatfathers instantly fell. Eight High Priests began to pant. Among their number, Ou Yunzai's pupils constricted. Next to him, the man who looked like a scholar was filled with trepidation. As for the woman in the Lady's garment, her face was filled with disbelief.

"Who are you people?!" These words were uttered by one of the two

most powerful of the sixteen Nascent Soul Cultivators. They echoed out with thunderous power, along with a powerful aura. However, the pressure of this aura could do nothing to suppress the billowing killing intent of the Crow Divinity Tribe.

“We are the Crow Divinity Tribe!” The voices of thousands of members of the Crow Divinity Tribe joined together to roar back in response. The sound of their roar turned into a sound wave even more powerful than thunder and lightning. It shot out from the gigantic viper as they descended upon the Eight Branch Alliance. It echoed out in all directions, shaking the Heavens with such loudness that nothing could compare!

It was as if some shocking giant had let out an enormous shout. A gale force wind sprang up, transforming into an attack which rippled out and sent the mist in the area into chaos.

Even as the roar of the Crow Divinity Tribe rang out, the gigantic viper emitted a cry. The thousands of Crow Divinity Tribe members instantly turned into beams of colourful light that spread out in the air. From down on the ground, the sight of it would make one think of the expression “the Celestial Beauty Scattering Flowers.” Except, these flowers were the color of blood, making it seem as if what was being scattered were spattered drops of blood! 1

Boom!

A massacre started instantly as the thousands of Crow Divinity Tribe members shot down into battle. They had long since grown used to war, to blood, and to slaughter.

In war, there is no speaking. There is no cursing. There are no faceoffs. There is only... fighting!

As the Crow Divinity Tribe members charged into battle, Meng Hao whistled through the air like a meteor as he lead the Crow Divinity Tribe’s six Nascent Soul Cultivators to stab directly into the midst of the sixteen Nascent Soul Cultivators of the Eight Branch Alliance.

One of late Nascent Soul Cultivators among the sixteen, an old man, grimly said, “A trifling few thousand. Even if you have some extraordinary

qualities, the fact that you dare to come here shows that you truly overestimate your...”

Before he could finish speaking, Meng Hao, looking all the bit a shooting star, waved his right hand, causing all of the Nascent Soul Cultivators, as well as their fellow Tribe members below, to gasp.

60,000 roaring neo-demons spread out to blot out the sky. Big Hairy, the lizard, the red crocodile, the black crows, the green mosquitos, as well as a vast collection of Five Poisons neo-demons, shook the Heavens.

Furthermore, the furiously howling Outlander Beast appeared. A shrill, frenzied squawk could be heard which was the parrot, emanating his haughty air. A garrulous chatter could also be heard coming from somewhere within the neo-demon horde, which was the meat jelly.

The shocking neo-demon horde shot through the air like a tide of beasts, sweeping over everything.

The scene was like a sledgehammer that slammed into the hearts of the Eight Branch Alliance.

“Life or death is on the line. Eight Branches, COUNTERATTACK!” These words were uttered by the red-robed late Nascent Soul stage Cultivator who had just spoken. His face flickered, and his heart filled with regret. However, there was nothing else to be done. He could only let out a furious roar as he shot toward Meng Hao.

The sixteen Nascent Soul Cultivators immediately began to perform incantation gestures as they teleported toward Meng Hao. The glow of magical items rose up around them, as well as savage magical faces. The faces howled as they shot toward Meng Hao.

However, even as they neared, Meng Hao waved his hand. A blood-colored mask suddenly appeared, which he quickly slipped onto his face. He waved his hand again, and an enormous face suddenly materialized around him.

The giant face bore the semblance of none other than Meng Hao himself!

The instant the face appeared, Meng Hao took a step forward. That step caused everything to tremble; the giant Blood Immortal face that now looked like Meng Hao rumbled forward, transforming into a massive attack. Everything shook; of the sixteen Nascent Soul Cultivators, ten could only watch as their magical items shattered into pieces and their divine abilities were crushed. Blood sprayed from their mouths as they were tossed back like kites with their strings cut.

“The great circle of the Nascent Soul stage!!” Shock filled the faces of these ten people, and they didn’t even have the wherewithal to wipe the blood from their mouths.

“You are the ones... who killed my clone!” said Meng Hao coolly. He continued forward, taking a second step. As he did, the gigantic face appeared again. Its closed eyes suddenly opened, and it seemed to be speaking a single, soundless word!

As soon as the word appeared, the other six Nascent Soul Cultivators who remained felt blood pouring out of their mouths. Their minds reeled as if a sharp blade were being stabbed into their brains. The soundless sound wave passed through their minds, causing their entire bodies to shake. Life force essence was even squeezed out of their Nascent Souls.

“He’s halfway to Spirit Severing!” Four of them coughed up blood as they were sent tumbling backward, bodies shaking. Dread washed over them, and intense astonishment filled their eyes.

“If you want to do business, Meng Hao will do business with you. If you want war... then I will give you war!” Meng Hao’s voice was cold as he took a third step. This third step caused flames to spring up on the bodies of the ten Nascent Soul Cultivators who had been thrown backward moments ago. Writhing black smoke began to emanate off of their bodies. The flames of war were now burning away at their life forces.

Even the most powerful of the Eight Branch Alliance, the two old men with the late Nascent Soul Cultivation base, felt their ears ringing. Although they were not sent tumbling back, their minds were filled with waves of roaring, and flames of war appeared on their bodies too.

“Flames of war unify!” The instant Meng Hao spoke the words, a sound like thunder exploding into pieces suddenly rose up. The ten people who were farthest away emit bloodcurdling screams as their bodies exploded. Their Nascent Souls emerged, fearfully trying to flee at the highest speed they could muster. However, before they could barely move at all, they fell to pieces as if they had been crushed.

A cold wind swept over them, and they disappeared.

Ou Yunzi, the man dressed like the scholar, and the woman in the Lady’s robe all felt their bodies collapsing in a cloud of blood and gore. Their Nascent Souls managed to flee off into the distance, where they looked back toward Meng Hao, shaking with fear, their eyes filled with despair.

The two old men of the late Nascent Soul stage had the highest Cultivation bases, but even they coughed up blood and fell backward, bodies shaking as they did their best to prevent from exploding.

Their tens of thousands of fellow Tribe members had originally occupied a position of superiority. But facing up against 60,000 neo-demons caused them to immediately begin to suffer defeat after defeat in the fighting. They had their own neo-demons of course. However, like Meng Hao’s Crow Divinity Tribe, his neo-demons had experienced figurative foul winds and rains of blood. Furthermore, they had been bolstered by Meng Hao’s Demonic Qi on multiple occasions. The neo-demons of the Eight Branch Alliance simply couldn’t compare.

Mournful cries filled the air constantly. The land was soaked with blood. Facing up against the Crow Divinity Tribe, the Eight Branch Alliance despairingly found... that they were incapable of fighting back.

Regardless if it was terms of aura or Cultivation base, they were weaker. When it came to the coldness and bloodthirstiness of the Crow Divinity Tribe, that was something that only the elite members of great Tribes would have. And yet, every single member of the Crow Divinity Tribe was like that.

It was something the Cultivators of the Eight Branch Alliance had never seen or even heard of. They couldn’t even imagine that in the great lands

of the Western Desert, a Tribe like this could possibly exist!

“This is... a Battle Tribe!”

It was in this moment that Meng Hao’s words from moments ago once again echoed out within the minds of the Eight Branch Alliance Cultivators.

“If you want war, I’ll give you war!”

*

1. This is a Chinese idiom that comes from a Buddhist story of a Celestial/Immortal woman who throws out flower petals to test the moral character of Buddhists. Later it came to be used to describe things floating in the air. There is some really cool wordplay here because the word for “spattered drops of blood” is literally “blood flowers.”

Chapter 494: I am Lonelytomb

In the very moment that the slaughter began, when ten of the sixteen Nascent Soul Cultivators were killed, two of the remaining six, the retreating late Nascent Soul old men, exchanged a glance. Their eyes were bloodshot, and they could see the frenzy in each other's eyes.

They both performed incantations, spit out blood, and then pointed down toward the ground, their expressions savage.

“Activate the spell formation!”

Instantly, a deafening roar could be heard coming from the ground. The mist roiled, and the twenty thousand auction participants surrounded by the mist began to wither rapidly. Their life force was still being congealed into the Demonic Qi. Suddenly, bands of bright light started to appear on the ground.

The bands bent and twisted and then suddenly connected together to reveal an enormous spell formation!

It was exactly the same spell formation Meng Hao had observed earlier, although previously, it had been formed only of Demonic Qi. As it became visible, a column of black mist suddenly shot up in the exact center.

One of the Eight Branch Alliance's late Nascent Soul Cultivators shouted, “Crow Divinity Tribes, since you're looking to die, then the Eight Branch Alliance will help you achieve your aim! Henceforth, there will be no Crow Divinity Tribe in the Western Desert! All of you... will be destroyed in spirit and body! You will be expunged!”

A roaring sound filled the air as the black column shrank in on itself and transformed into a black figure.

“Sacred Ancient,” said the second late Nascent Soul Cultivator, his face covered with a vicious expression, “please exterminate these people! Expunge this Tribe!” At the same time, totem tattoos depicting faces appeared on the foreheads of all the Eight Branch Alliance Cultivators on the ground. There was one expression that covered each and every one of

those faces.

Awe!

All the totemic faces were filled with intense awe, as well as enmity. Clearly, though, no matter how much hatred they felt, they were incapable of not feeling deep awe for the figure which had coalesced out of the black column of mist.

Tens of thousands of voices suddenly caused Heaven and Earth to shake: "Sacred Ancient, please, let your projection come to exterminate these people! Expunge this Tribe!"

The figure that had congealed out of the mist floated in mid-air. At first it looked blurry, but its features quickly clarified into that of a middle-aged man wearing a black robe. His face was expressionless, and he exuded an archaic aura. After having appeared, he flickered back and forth between being clear and being blurry. Sometimes he would even momentarily disappear before becoming clear again.

This flickering back and forth caused all the Cultivators who looked at him to have a very strange feeling. Their hearts were filled with disorder, and their eyes felt stabbing pain.

Meng Hao took a deep breath. As of this moment, the calling inside of him grew incredibly strong. Furthermore, the Demon Sealing Jade inside of his bag of holding was beginning to shake.

Meng Hao was well aware that this figure was what had been concealed in the center of the spell formation, and was also what had elicited the reaction from the Demon Sealing Jade.

The black-robed man turned his head, and his eyes came to fall upon Meng Hao. Instantly, Meng Hao's mind filled with a roaring sound, and his vision swam. He no longer saw the Western Desert. Instead, he stood in a world with a red sky. He was in the middle of a battlefield, surrounded by wailing and shouting. He saw a black spear, shooting with incredible speed directly toward him.

His mind and heart trembled, and he had the sudden sensation that they

were shattering. Suddenly, his eyes went wide as a finger appeared directly in front of him. The finger belonged to the black-robed man.

Boom!

In the moment of ultimate crisis, Eyeless Larva spun around him rapidly. The incoming finger attack slammed into it, and, in the resulting boom, Meng Hao tumbled backward several hundred meters, blood spraying from his mouth. He came to a stop and then looked up. His eyes narrowed, and a cold glow erupted out from within them.

At the same, up in the invisible vortex, in the world filled with corpses, the black mist on top of the high altar suddenly began to churn. An anxious, indignant howl suddenly echoed out from it.

As the howling echoed out, the expressions on the countless faces of Cultivators and neo-demons in the mist suddenly changed. They distorted and twisted, as if some unknown force was suppressing the howling within the mist.

Simultaneously, the expression on the face of the black-robed man who stood up ahead from Meng Hao also flickered. He looked up toward the vortex, his eyes flashing. Then he looked back toward Meng Hao, and a strange glow could be seen in his eyes.

It appeared to be a look of disbelief. Even more than disbelief, there was apparently an unprecedented excitement and greed.

At the same time, one of the remaining six Nascent Soul Cultivators up in mid-air, an old man of the mid Nascent Soul stage, having seen Meng Hao forced back by the black-robed man's finger attack, excitedly shouted, "Sacred Ancient, please exterminate this vicious, cruel Cultiva...."

Before he could finish speaking, the black-robed man's right hand suddenly shot up to form a claw, which he pointed toward the mid Nascent Soul stage Cultivator. The old man suddenly disappeared. When he reappeared, he was shocked to find that the black-robed man's hand was wrapped around his neck.

"Pipe down," said the Black Robed man, his voice cool. He squeezed his

hand, and a cracking sound could be heard. The mid Nascent Soul stage Cultivator's eyes went wide as his body instantly withered up. His life force was sucked out by the black-robed man, and in the blink of an eye, he was transformed into nothing more than a desiccated corpse. His eyes were wide open the entire time, and filled with confusion. In the end, a poof could be heard as his body transformed into black ash. He was completely dead, in both body and spirit.

"He... is not someone you qualify to dishonor with your words," said the black-robed man, his voice soft as he looked at Meng Hao.

Everything suddenly became quiet. The Crow Divinity Tribe members and neo-demons all began to back up. The Eight Branch Alliance Cultivators were stupefied. Suddenly sapped of their will to fight, they edged backward. All eyes were now upon Meng Hao and the black-robed man, both of whom floated there in mid-air.

The remaining five Nascent Soul Cultivators of the Eight Branch Alliance had pale faces. In their recollection, the Sacred Ancient never seemed to possess consciousness. His incisive attacks were almost like that of a puppet. He also never spoke. But today... not only did he speak, but his expression had changed, and he even seemed to be showing emotion. This was beyond anything they had ever imagined, completely unprecedented. They were scared witless, and couldn't help but back up.

The black-robed man smiled and continued, "Isn't that right, exalted Demon Sealer?"

His smile was filled with savagery, as well as excitement. The excitement apparently made the flickering of his body even more intense, causing him to look even more bizarre.

The black mist on the altar within the vortex once again churned. The howling sound grew more furious, as if something wished to burst out from within the mist. Despite that, the faces still seemed capable of suppressing it.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever, but inside, he was trembling, as if great waves were slamming against his heart. What was

the most shocking of all to him was that he had finally run into someone who instantly recognized that he was a Demon Sealer.

“Who are you?” asked Meng Hao, staring at the man.

“Who am I? You’re asking me who I am?” The black-robed man stared in shock for a moment, and then suddenly laughed. It was an uproarious laughter filled with excitement, as well as a greed that even the Cultivators of the Eight Branch Alliance could also see.

“You’re actually asking who I am?” he asked, continuing to laugh. “You don’t recognize me? Don’t tell me the First Generation Demon Sealer severed the legacy? Don’t tell me....” Suddenly, an arrogant squawk could be heard from behind him.

“Don’t tell me nothin’, bitch!” A multicolored blur suddenly appeared, which headed straight toward the rear end of the black-robed man and... shot directly through.

A pop could be heard as the parrot suddenly appeared on Meng Hao’s shoulder. It glared fiercely at the black-robed man.

“You’re just a Devil Construct, bitch! Dammit! Bitch! Lord Fifth hates Devil Constructs!”

Not willing to be outdone by the parrot, the meat jelly, who was still in the shape of a bell attached to the parrot’s foot, suddenly cried, “Lord Third also hates Devil Constructs! All Devil Constructs should be converted!”

The black-robed man stared in shock. He looked down at his misty body, and then looked back up, his eyes filled with the desire to kill.

It was at this point that another furious cry could be heard from behind the black-robed man: “Outlander!”

The enormous Outlander Beast, in a fair imitation of the parrot, shot directly toward the black-robed man.

Even as it closed in, however, the black-robed man waved his arm behind him and coldly said, “Demonic Shattering.”

He only spoke two words, but in response, massive amounts of invisible Demonic Qi from the surrounding area shot toward him and congealed in front of his right hand. Then, it shattered.

The Outlander Beast let out a miserable shriek as nearly half of its body was shredded into a haze of blood and gore. It appeared to be on the verge of being completely wiped out.

“Beloved concubine!” cried the parrot, its eyes bright red. It suddenly shot forward, its body expanding until it was several dozen meters long. It shot toward the black-robed man, then passed through him, picking up the Outlander Beast flying rapidly off into the distance in retreat.

The black-robed man did not counterattack. Instead, he looked coldly at Meng Hao, smiling as he began to move forward.

“I never imagined that I would meet the current generation of the Demon Sealers.... After I consume you, who else could possibly suppress me!?”

Meng Hao’s heart trembled. His opponent’s aura was monstrous, and emanated shocking ripples. Meng Hao could feel an intense pressure weighing down on him. Panting, he stared at the black-robed man. Just now, everyone else had seen the black-robed man simply lift his hand to cause the Outlander Beast to suddenly shatter into a mass of blood and gore.

Only Meng Hao clearly saw what really happened. This was a new way to use Demonic Qi that he had never seen before!

“So Demonic Qi... can actually be used like that!” It felt like lightning was crashing around inside of his head. It seemed as if the black-robed man’s divine ability had suddenly opened up the door to a new Dao belonging to Demon Sealers.

Meng Hao suddenly began to retreat. At the same time, the black-robed man increased his speed, his expression of viciousness and greed more visible than ever.

“A Demon Sealer separated from his legacy! You would do well to

remember my name.... I am Lonelytomb!" The instant the man spoke out his name, the mist in the vortex suddenly emitted a furious shriek. It seemed that it was struggling to burst out; nonetheless, the faces seemed willing to be destroyed to prevent it from escaping.

Chapter 495: An Ancient Scripture Seals a Devil!

The black-robed man's dark, sinister words rang out, carrying a bizarre, devilish power that seemed capable of causing anyone who heard it to be shaken inwardly. All of the Cultivators in the area had blank looks on their faces. Their minds suddenly seemed to be filled with a whirlwind; their memories were thrown into chaos. It was as if they heard what the black-robed man said, but couldn't remember it.

A feeling of contradiction filled them, as if fantasy and reality were being mixed. All the surrounding Cultivators' faces paled.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he sensed the fearsomeness of his opponent. He knew that this was a power that he could not fight against. He fell back. The power of his opponent's words did not affect him too much, but his mind still shook. The reason for this was that the man's voice was bolstered with Demonic Qi, and transformed into complex magical symbols that spread out in all directions.

"The way I've been using Demonic Qi is far too simplistic...." thought Meng Hao, panting. "I never thought it could be used that way!" His eyes glowing brightly, he shot backward, even as the black-robed man flew like lightning toward him.

Suddenly, the black-robed man lifted his hand and pointed at Meng Hao.

Instantly, surrounding Demonic Qi rushed to congeal around the finger. In the blink of an eye, it turned into a spear which screamed through the air toward Meng Hao.

No one else could see this happening. What they saw was the black-robed man pointing at Meng Hao. However, Meng Hao could very clearly see everything. A sudden, intense feeling of grave danger swept over him. However, even as that happened, Meng Hao looked at the black-robed man and suddenly thought of Patriarch Reliance.

"Demon Soldier Lonelytomb, refined from blood by the Third Generation

Demon Sealer.... Patriarch Reliance, a Demon sealed by past generations for me, to be my Dao Protector.... I am the Ninth Generation....

“Things didn’t work out well with Patriarch Reliance, but he still wouldn’t kill me. All he did was run away. This Demon Soldier refined by the Third Generation Demon Sealer wants to consume me so that he can live forever. This situation seems different than that of Patriarch Reliance, but actually, it’s fundamentally very similar!”

Meng Hao took a deep breath and then began to speak.

“Ancient Dao; Tenacious Desire to Seal the Heavens; Benefaction for All in the Mountains; Inevitable Dao Tribulation of the Nine Mountains and Seas; Perennial Will!” He uttered the words of the scripture with a strange, Demonic cadence that gave birth to bizarre ripples. Every word seemed like a unique magical sealing symbol that connected with the Heavens and the starry sky!

As he spoke the words, a look of astonishment and disbelief appeared on the face of the black-robed man. His body trembled and massive amounts of black mist began to fall away from him. A miserable scream emanated from his mouth.

“Demon Sealing Scripture!?” howled the black-robed man. “Impossible! Haven’t you lost your legacy?! How could you know that damned Demon Sealing Scripture!!” He reached toward the vortex in the sky and made a grasping motion. Suddenly, on the altar in the vortex, the faces began to howl and push down onto the mist. For some reason, the black-robed man’s body was no longer in a state of distortion, but rather, stable.

Despite that, his aura was weaker than before, by more than half.

“You’re dead!!” he said, glaring murderously at Meng Hao, well aware that his time was running out. As of now, he could only temporarily suppress the power of the Demon Sealing Scripture. His right hand suddenly lifted up and he pointed again toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered as his opponent suppressed the power of the scripture. He gave a cold snort. Before, the man was at the peak of his power, and was able to shatter the Outlander Beast with a single blow. At

that time, Meng Hao was no match for him. But now, he was weakened. This Demon Soldier Lonelytomb... was now someone Meng Hao could fight!

“I am a Demon Sealer,” thought Meng Hao, “sensitive to Demonic Qi and able to use it. I should be able to exceed this so-called Demon Soldier Lonelytomb. If he can use the Demonic Qi in that way, then so can I!” He took a deep breath and lifted his hand. He thought back to the scene in which the Outlander Beast had been defeated, and that great door that had suddenly opened in his mind. Instantly, the Demonic Qi in the area rushed toward him and began to congeal. A rumbling sound could be heard as it suddenly slammed into the Demonic Qi spear that was closing in on him.

As the explosion rang out, Meng Hao was sent tumbling backward, blood spraying from his mouth. After he came to a stop, he coughed up three mouthfuls of blood. His face was pale, but he was laughing.

Although his ability to control Demonic Qi was not as refined as that of his opponent, he had now achieved a new understanding.

“Bring it on!” he said, his eyes shining brightly. As he floated there in mid-air, he lifted his right hand, causing more Demonic Qi to rush toward him. It surrounded him, transforming into a gigantic vortex of Demonic Qi.

The black-robed man’s eyes flickered, and inwardly he was shocked. He never imagined that his opponent would be able to learn something new and then make so much progress in such a short period of time. The difference in rudimentary knowledge of Demonic Qi and the ability to use it as it had been just now, was not that of a single step, but more like the huge gap between Heaven and Earth.

“With powers of insight like that, you deserve to be called a Demon Sealer. But if you want to learn how to control Demonic Qi from me.... Too bad! I won’t give you the chance! I don’t have to use Demonic Qi to kill you. I can slay you with only three forms of my divine ability!” The black-robed man made a grasping motion, and a long, black spear magically

appeared in his hand.

“First Form, Butcher the Shocked Immortal!” As the man spoke the words, he suddenly waved the spear. It instantly transformed into a black dragon which roared, baring its fangs and brandishing its claws as it twisted majestically in the air. It emanated Demonic Qi as it shot toward Meng Hao. Even as it flew through the air, it flickered, multiplying into nine separate dragons!

Nine deadly dragons shook Heaven and Earth as they shot toward Meng Hao.

The sky dimmed and the cloud seethed as nine black dragons screamed through the air. Visible in their claws were corpses, all of whom emitted mournful wails and screams of agony.

The sound of it pierced Meng Hao’s mind, causing him to think of the slaughter of a battlefield. His eyes glowed brightly as a feeling of unease swept over him. He waved his right hand, and instantly Wooden Time Swords flew out to form the Lotus Sword Formation. A droning sound could be heard as it rotated, sending out the explosive power of Time.

Meng Hao had been using this Time Sword Formation for a long time, and was very familiar with it. The instant it appeared, the air was distorted and twisted. Time changed. As the nine dragons closed in, Meng Hao performed an incantation with both hands and then pointed forward.

The Lotus Time Formation blossomed into the image of a lotus which shot toward the nine dragons.

A huge boom could be heard!

“Time Termination!” he cried, biting his tongue and spitting out some blood. He waved his hand, causing the blood to transform into a blood mist which shot toward the Lotus Time Formation. This heart blood caused the Time power of the sword formation to instantly explode out. At the same time, Meng Hao slipped on the blood-coloured mask, causing a red glow to flicker into being. Next, four wooden swords flew out.

These were the swords that Ji Nineteen had referred to as Immortal

Murdering Swords!

The four wooden swords shot forward, merging into the Lotus Sword Formation; instantly a powerful killing intent radiated out.... These dragons must die!

A rumbling sound filled the entire sky and Meng Hao's body trembled as he retreated backward. The Lotus Sword Formation fell about and the four wooden words were sent spinning. However, the nine dragons also exploded, shattering into countless pieces.

"Second Form, Reincarnation Extermination!" A mysterious glow appeared in the eyes of the black-robed man. His body shot back as he waved his right hand. The black spear instantly transformed into a black beam of light which shot at incredible speed toward Meng Hao.

As it neared, it seemed as if it were shattering the various layers of air that it was shooting through. The deadly spear neared, seemingly capable of shattering everything.

If that were all there were to it, it wouldn't be a very big deal. However, as the spear got closer, shattering through the successive layers of air, images began to appear. Each of these images seemed to be from a different time. However, in all of the images, Meng Hao could be seen! Different versions of Meng Hao from different times periods, as if these were various reincarnations of him throughout the ages!

His past life, the life before that, all past lives! It was impossible to tell if the images were real or fake, but they certainly looked incredibly realistic!

Meng Hao's mind trembled as he looked at what appeared to be thousands of past lives. At the same time, he had the feeling that he wasn't looking at anything. A profound sense of deadly crisis rose up in him, as if any ability to dodge or flee had been sealed off. It was as if this spear was going to destroy all of his thousands of past lives!

He watched the black spear approach, and an enormous pressure weighed down on him, weakening his Cultivation base.

Suddenly, his forehead began to glow. All of the great totem tattoos on

his body erupted out. Metal, Wood, Fire, Earth. A sea of flames appeared, along with an enormous tree, a rain of gold, and archaic Frost soil.

As the Reincarnation Extermination spear attack neared, Meng Hao opened his mouth; an azure blur shot out which transformed into an Immortal's Sword which smashed through the air, emanating shocking Sword Qi. This was not the Dancing Sword Qi, but rather the sword will which was embodied within the sword itself.

"Instead of you severing my reincarnation," said Meng Hao, "how about I do it myself!" He waved his hand, and a glow of determination appeared in his eyes.

The sword will merged with the power of his four great totems, and then began to emit a shocking azure light. The sword shot forward in the blink of an eye, faster than the black spear, to slice through the reincarnations!

A massive boom lifted up from the Reincarnation Extermination, shaking everything.

The azure Immortal's Sword was sent flying backward. It transformed into an azure glow that returned into Meng Hao's mouth. His body trembled and he fell backward, coughing up a huge mouthful of blood. When he looked back up, his gaze was cold as he stared at the black-robed man.

The black-robed man's heart and mind shook as he glared back at Meng Hao. He also retreated backward, the long, black spear in his hand crumbling into pieces.

"Dammit, first he used that scripture to weaken me. Then, my Demonic Qi attacks, which have fearsome exterminating power on just about anyone, are virtually useless against him because he's a Demon Sealer. If it weren't for that, this fight wouldn't be so troublesome!" The man suddenly reached up to push his hand down on his forehead. His body became blurry, almost illusory. At the same time, another black spear magically appeared in his hand.

The spear was just as black as before, and seemed to be connected to the mist that formed his body, as if they were the same thing.

“Third form....” Before the black-robed man could finish speaking, the killing intent in Meng Hao’s eyes suddenly flared.

“What third form, bitch!?” Meng Hao had already come to notice that in both speech and action, he had been influenced quite profoundly by the parrot.... For example, the words he had just spoken had actually come out quite naturally.

Even as he spoke them, he moved forward, pushing down onto the blood-colored mask. Then he extended his arm, and everything began to turn black. It was as if a massive flag were covering over the sky and the land!

This was Meng Hao’s most powerful magical item, the flag of three streamers!

Chapter 496: Dost Thou Dare!?!?

The flag rumbled out, sweeping over everything, distorting the air, causing the sky to shake, rocking the land. In the blink of an eye, the astonishing flag... shot toward the black-robed man.

His face instantly filled with disbelief as he was sent tumbling backward. He was fast, but not fast enough to avoid the flag of three streamers. Booms filled the air as the flag wrapped around his body and began to strangle him to death!

Popping sounds filled the air as the black spear the man held was shattered into pieces. However, after that happened, the man suddenly coalesced out of the air again off in the distance. This time, he was even more illusory and flickered even more. He was clearly much weaker.

“That flag... that flag....” His eyes were wide as he stared at the flag circulating around Meng Hao.

The man’s body had been exploded by the flag, and weakened greatly. Meng Hao strode forward and once again recited the scripture which he had used against Patriarch Reliance, that tool of the Demon Sealers to make death tremble, the Demon Sealing Scripture:

“Ancient Dao; Tenacious Desire to Seal the Heavens; Benefaction for All in the Mountains; Inevitable Dao Tribulation of the Nine Mountains and Seas; Perennial Will!”

The instant the scripture was uttered, the black-robed man once retreated backward and let out a miserable howl.

“Dammit! Dammit! You’re too despicable!!” he roared. At this point, how could he not understand that Meng Hao’s purpose in using the flag was to distract him from suppressing the scripture? It had been a very, very long time since he had felt frustration such as this. He had originally stood in a position of ultimate superiority, but in the blink of an eye had been severely weakened. His body had been shattered, and before he could even reform himself, he had been suppressed with the scripture as this damned, despicable bastard once again recited the Demon Sealing Scripture.

Almost at the exact same time as the black-robed man began to retreat, Meng Hao's eyes suddenly flickered. Take advantage of weakness; take the opponent's life! That was Meng Hao's doctrine of fighting. Without hesitation, his right hand waved through the air, causing a band of blood-colored light to shoot toward the black-robed man with incredible speed.

Shockingly, within this bloody beam of light was a Blood Clone!

Ji Clan Blood Clone!

As soon as it appeared, everything in the area was stained with a crimson glow. The black-robed man was suppressed by the scripture; his body trembled as the Blood Clone pounced onto him.

His face completely fell; there was a bang, and his body exploded into pieces. Massive amounts of black mist that made up his devilish will and life force, were absorbed by the Blood Clone.

"I won't accept this!!" Off in the distance, the black-robed man once again appeared, this time, even weaker than before. He raised his head up and howled. He really couldn't accept the situation. In his former peak of power, he could easily fight back against even this Blood Clone. But now, he had been weakened even further.

Instantly, a feeling of imminent death flared up in his mind. He could never have possibly imagined that a day would come in which he would actually be slain.

As the Blood Clone closed in on him again, madness filled his eyes. He suddenly raised his hand and pointed toward the vortex up in the sky.

"Lonelytomb!" he howled.

As the words echoed out, his body flashed. At the same time, the mist on the altar up in the vortex began to roil. It seemed to be struggling with the faces that existed on its surface. However, the faces suppressed it with the same insanity as before.

As they suppressed the mist, massive amounts of life force and Demonic Qi began to emanate out from the tens of thousands of people that had been surrounded by the mist of the Eight Branch Alliance. All of these

Cultivators who had come to participate in the auction began to tremble. Their bodies withered and they aged rapidly. Their life force oozed out from their orifices to merge with Demonic Qi, which then shot toward the whirlpool.

The life force of tens of thousands of people transformed into a countless bands of Qi which shot into the whirlpool. After it was madly consumed by the faces; suddenly, nearly half of the faces suddenly shot out from within the mist. They... charged out from within the vortex, shooting through the sky toward the black-robed man.

As they left the vortex, the mist on the altar began to emit intense howls. It was as if there was something inside struggling madly to break out from being sealed.

In the blink of an eye, the faces reached the black-robed man and began to circulate around him. They were filled with cruelty, madness and a thirst for blood as they fused into the black-robed man. As they did, his aura rose up, increasing with shocking intensity.

Billowing black Qi roiled, filled with massive amounts of vicious faces. Each one of these faces was a totem toward which the Eight Branch Alliance Cultivators exercised faith.

“I am Lonelytomb, I am a Devil Construct.... I am Demon Soldier Lonelytomb, formed from the grievances of the lives I have exterminated throughout the countless years, a Devil Construct!

“Lonelytomb destroys, the Devil Construct rises!” A strange light shone in the eyes of the black-robed man. His aura suddenly exploded out, and black Qi filled the area. The Ji Clan Blood Clone suddenly stopped in its tracks, staring at the black-robed man. It seemed to have sensed something threatening.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, and a look of unprecedented concentration appeared on his face.

It was at this moment that suddenly, beam after beam of colourful light appeared off in the distance. Suddenly, tens of thousands of Cultivators suddenly appeared.

These were the Cultivators from the local Tribes that were after the Crow Divinity Tribe to rob its Demon Spirit. After they appeared, their killing intent soared to new heights. However, when they saw the condition of the battlefield, they couldn't help but gasp and suddenly grow silent.

Their eyes were instantly fixed on Meng Hao and the black robed man who was billowing with a massive black aura.

"DIE!" cried the black-robed man, taking a step forward. He lifted his right hand, causing the black Qi to seethe and then transform into an enormous, ferocious face which shot toward Meng Hao.

At the same time, more black Qi swirled out and shot toward the Blood Clone.

Meng Hao slipped the blood-colored mask back on. A glint of determination could be seen as he took a deep breath, flashed an incantation gesture with this right hand, and then pointed out.

"Without a face!"

An equally large face suddenly appeared, which was none other than the Blood Immortal divine ability. It was Meng Hao's own face which shot through the air toward the face of black Qi, which was formed from countless smaller vicious faces.

Shocking rumbling filled the air as Meng Hao spoke again.

"A single word!" Instantly, the lips of the face he had summoned began to move. Sound waves rippled out.

"Flames of war unify!" He lifted both hands up and then pushed them toward the ground. Immediately smoke rose up in all directions, along with something that looked like the flames of war. This was the third form of the Blood Immortal legacy.

Amidst the booming sounds, Meng Hao's eyes shone with a brilliant light.

"I need... your faith power!" he cried out. One by one, the members of

the Crow Divinity Tribe began to kowtow. The totem tattoos on their body, which were part of Meng Hao, began to glow with light.

“Sundered clouds....” Boundless faith power poured into Meng Hao from all directions. It exploded in intensity, allowing Meng Hao to utilize something he had never used before, the fourth form of the Blood Immortal legacy!

The sundered clouds from “sundered clouds, a bloody rain, seas that cover the sky!”

Sundered clouds! Clouds that were once whole but then sundered. The power of these sundered clouds would give rise to a wind of sundered clouds that could crush Heaven and Earth. This power clearly vastly exceeded that of the first three forms of the Blood Immortal legacy. The shocking intensity of the power caused countless layers of clouds to suddenly spring out around Meng Hao. They spread out, causing a thick fog to fill the entire area.

This fog, was actually made of clouds.

The power of sundered clouds came from... the breaking of clouds!

Rumbling echoed out as the cloud fog in the area suddenly looked as if it were being ripped apart by giant, invisible hands. They shattered, and in that instant of shattering, the face that had been magically summoned by the black-robed man’s divine ability, suddenly fell to pieces.

The black-robed man staggered back, still unable to accept the situation. He was now only able to wield thirty percent of the power of his Cultivation base. The rest had been constantly weakened during the course of the battle.

When he saw his magic once again being shattered, he lifted his head up and howled. Both hands performed an incantation gesture, and once again, roughly half of the faces on the mist in the vortex flew out and fused into his body. Yet again, his aura exploded out.

His face suddenly grew incredibly vicious, and he pointed down toward the tens of thousands of auction participants down on the ground.

Desolate shrieks resulted as all of the Cultivators, with the exception of Sun Dahai who was protected by Meng Hao's shield, had their life forces completely sucked out of their bodies and fused into the Demonic Qi. The Demonic Qi, and even the mist that surrounded the Cultivators, all shot toward the black-robed man.

As the mist was sucked away, it revealed tens of thousands of desiccated corpses lying about everywhere!

The black-robed man howled as the mists fused into his body, causing his Cultivation base to begin to recover. He lifted his hand and made a snatching gesture toward Meng Hao.

In response to this snatching gesture, black mist exploded out from his body to transform into an enormous hand three thousand meters wide that shot toward Meng Hao.

"A bloody rain!" said Meng Hao, performing a double-handed incantation gesture. At this critical moment, he employed the fifth form of the Blood Immortal divine ability. Under Meng Hao's control, the Blood Clone exploded, transforming into countless beams of bloody light that shot toward Meng Hao. They fused with the bloody rain that Meng Hao had just summoned, causing the entire area to actually... rain with blood.

Every single drop in this monstrous rain of blood was filled with the power of the Blood Immortal divine ability. It all shot through the air toward the mist hand summoned by the black-robed man.

The sight of it caused everyone in the area to be shocked to the core. A boom rang out that could be heard for tens of thousand of kilometers in every direction. Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth as he was sent tumbling backward. His divine ability collapsed. The bloody rain flew out in all directions. The Blood Clone was now listless. The black-robed man's body trembled as he was yet again weakened to the point that it seemed it might disappear at any moment. Because he had been weakened by the scripture, this battle was turning out to be quite challenging. However, victory was in sight. His face twisted savagely, he went all out, causing another black mist hand to shoot toward Meng Hao.

“Die, Demon Sealer!!”

It was at this exact moment that....

“Devil Construct, dost thou dare!?!?” An enraged voice echoed out like thunder, seemingly containing the might of the Heavens. It came from within the world of the vortex, like a raging torrent emerging from within the black mist on the altar.

As the voice exploded out, the remaining faces that were trying to suppress the black mist suddenly emitted miserable shrieks. They instantly collapsed into pieces, causing the mist to suddenly spread out in all directions to reveal... a pale white spear that was stabbed into the middle of the altar.

This spear was... the true Demon Soldier Lonelytomb!!

Chapter 497: Devil Weapon!

The spear stabbed into the altar was roughly ten meters long!

Its name was Lonelytomb!

Demon Weapon Lonelytomb!

Refined from blood by the Third Generation Demon Sealer, it was impossible to say how many Cultivators and how many ancient Demons had been transformed into a sea of blood by this spear!

The length of ordinary spears could not compare to the length of this spear. It was completely pale white, as if it were constructed from bones. There were no decorative patterns on its surface, no magical symbols. The only thing that could be seen were faint marks that looked like blood vessels, making its appearance very bizarre.

An indescribable aura emanated out from the long spear, shaking Heaven and Earth. It caused the mist in the world of the vortex to tremble. The aura emanated out from the vortex in to the Western Desert.

Amidst the rumbling drone, the spear did not move. It seemed as though it could not leave the world of the vortex. However a beam of pale white light shot out from it, as fast as lightning. In the blink of an eye, it shot out from within the world of the vortex.

In that instant, the black-robed man's face fell. His body trembled violently as countless faces burrowed out from within him. All of these faces wore unprecedented expressions of awe and terror.

Countless screeches could be heard, rising up into the sky.

The pale white light neared with indescribable speed, piercing through the black hand that was shooting toward Meng Hao. In that instant, the shocking, powerful hand of black mist acted as if it had just been slammed into by fire. It dissolved in an instant, causing the countless black faces within to screech, their expressions that of terror and unprecedented hopelessness.

In life, they had been killed by this spear. After death, they had

congealed into a Devil Construct, but were still in complete fear of the spear.

Having been killed by the spear, they would never be reincarnated. All generations were imprisoned inside it. There was not a more fearsome punishment that could be inflicted upon them!

A boom echoed out as the huge mist hand was pierced and destroyed by the beam of pale white light. After, the pale white light shot over toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's mind was filled with roaring. Moments ago, his body had been on the verge of exploding with Alcohol Qi. His last bit of Dancing Sword Qi had been fermenting for some time, a trump card which exceeded the life-saving power of the Agarwood!

However, there was no need for him to do a thing. The pale white light appeared, Demon Weapon Lonelytomb personified. Heaven and Earth shook with rumbling roars!

Meng Hao looked at the beam of white light in front of him and felt a powerful calling. The calling felt familiar as it filled his mind. He was calling this spear, and the spear was calling him!

With this sudden appearance of good fortune, Meng Hao was now thinking clearly. He lifted his hand up and took hold of the pale white light. Instantly, it transformed into an illusory, but extremely realistic... pale white spear!

As he gripped the pale white Lonelytomb, a rumbling suddenly filled his mind.

"Regardless of which generation Demon Sealer you are," said an archaic voice. "I am Demon Weapon Lonelytomb, refined from blood by the Third Generation Demon Sealer, sealed in the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane. My will sleeps, and thus, the Devil Construct was born...."

"The Devil Construct is also me. As for my life, from the moment I was forged, it was determined that I would have a total of nine Masters. From the First Generation Demon Sealer to the Ninth, these were to be my

Masters!

“Whichever generation you are, come to the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane. I’m waiting for you here.... The Third Generation Demon Sealer completed his ancient Dao and broke through the Nine Mountains and Seas. However, in that moment, he was buried in the starry sky. As for his death... there are clues that have been left behind that relate to a shocking secret. His legacy is here with me.... I can’t hold on for very long. You... must come here!

“At the moment, I am only capable of sending out this small bit of my life will. In a moment, I will return to my slumber and conserve my will. I will wait for you or other Demon Sealers to come. Exalted Demon Sealer, grasp my life will, recite the ancient Demon Sealing Scripture, and subdue this Demon Construct.

“It will be... your way of communicating with me in the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane! If you are unable to come to the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane in this life, then pass this spear down as a legacy, all the way to the Ninth Generation Demon Sealer!

“Before the Third Generation Demon Sealer died, he said... that the Ninth Generation Demon Sealer, if he is not killed, will be the pinnacle! He will have the chance to defy the Heavens and change fate, he will be the last ray of hope for the great Nine Mountains and Seas!” The voice sounded weak as it echoed out in his mind. Within his bag of holding, the Demon Sealing Jade began to shudder, as if it could feel the death of the Third Generation Demon Sealer. A sense of grief suddenly emanated out from it.

As the sound faded away from Meng Hao’s mind, he slowly looked up.

“I... am the Ninth Generation.”

As he spoke the words, his eyes shone with a strange light as he looked over at the black-robed man, who was retreating in astonishment.

“Ancient Dao; Tenacious Desire to Seal the Heavens; Benefaction for All in the Mountains; Inevitable Dao Tribulation of the Nine Mountains and Seas....” He spoke the words slowly, and as he did, he raised up the pale

white spear. A white glow surged out of it which stabbed toward the black-robed man.

Meng Hao's voice was filled with strange power. Others could not sense it or hear it, but to the black-robed man, or even Patriarch Reliance, it was like a magical curse!

The black-robed man let out a miserable shriek as his body began to collapse into pieces. Black mist spread out in all directions.

He raised his head and let out a mad howl toward the sky.

"Shut up! Shut up! Stop reciting it!!" he cried. His eyes were bright red as he shot toward Meng Hao in an attempt to kill him. However, before he could even get within three hundred meters of Meng Hao, he let out a horrible shriek, and his body rapidly began to dissipate.

He was struck through and through with fear and astonishment. He suddenly turned to flee off into the distance, no longer harboring any thoughts of killing Meng Hao. The only thought that was in his mind was the same thought that rose up in the mind of Patriarch Reliance that year. He must flee, and never lay eyes on Meng Hao again.

"... Perennial Will!" Meng Hao completed reciting the ancient Demon Sealing Scripture almost in the same moment that the man made to flee. As he spoke the final words, the black-robed man let out a miserable shriek, filled with complete mournfulness. His body continued to collapse. He was so weak that he couldn't evade now. His eyes filled with shock and desperation, and he completely lost control of himself. It was as if an enormous, irresistible gravitational force had sprung into being from the long spear in Meng Hao's hand. The black-robed man could not stop himself from being pulled relentlessly toward Meng Hao.

"You damnable League of Demon Sealers! The Nine Mountains and Seas cannot tolerate you! You all deserve to meet horrible deaths!"

As the man shrieked, Meng Hao looked at him with ice-cold eyes. Then, he slowly began to recite the second verse of the Demon Sealing Scripture.

"Ancient Dao; Study Demons of Myriad Variations; Tread not the Path of

Immortals; Face the Tribulation of the Nine Mountains and Seas....”

Even more black mist poured out from the black-robed man’s body. His miserable shrieks sounded out as he tumbled toward Meng Hao, completely unable to control his movements. There were now 3,000 meters between the two of them.

2,500. 2,000. 1,500....

The black-robed man howled as his body collapsed more. Suddenly, massive amounts of faces could be seen within his body. Each of the faces was filled with savagery and also fear as the emanated out and attempted to pull the man’s body away.

“... My Dao is Eternal; The Masses Have Erred but My Dao is True....”

The words echoed out like words from the Heavens. When they reached the black-robed man, the faces around him shrieked and twisted, as if they were about to be blotted out. The black-robed man was pulled closer.

1,200 meters. 1,000 meters.... 300 meters!!

The black-robed man was thoroughly mad, filled with a sense of deadly crisis. He roared, causing the tens of thousands of Eight Branch Alliance Cultivators in the area to begin to tremble. Suddenly, the totems on the bodies of over a thousand of them suddenly began to suck away at their life force. In the blink of an eye, they were transformed into withered, dried up corpses. Their totems flew out, transforming into blood-colored faces that shot toward the black-robed man.

More and more Eight Branch Alliance Cultivators were affected in this way. Popping sounds filled the air along with bloodcurdling screams. In the blink of an eye, more than ten thousand Cultivators died miserable deaths as they were transformed into desiccated corpses.

Their life forces, their very lives themselves, were sucked dry by the totems, which then flew out toward the black-robed man. They circulated around him, transforming into a power that resisted the force which was pulling him toward Meng Hao.

“Exalted Sacred Ancient....” The remaining five Nascent Soul Cultivators

of the Eight Branch Alliance all wore expressions of grief. They could sense the totems in their bodies sucking away at their life force. They saw their fellow Tribe members dying. In the space of just a few breaths, more than ten thousand Tribe members became dried up corpses.

This feeling of grief, the feeling caused by a Sacred Ancient exterminating its own Tribe, caused the foundation of the entire Eight Branch Alliance to collapse.

What was happening completely exceeded the imaginations of the other Cultivators who were watching on. That was especially true when it came to the black-robed man. His mighty existence caused them to feel as if they were suffocating. However, despite his incredible power, he had been forced down into his current situation. All of a sudden, these tribes felt complete astonishment regarding the owner of the Demon Spirit, Meng Hao.

Rumbling filled the air. By this point, more than ninety percent of the Eight Branch Alliance Cultivators were dead. Massive amounts of their totems circulated around the black-robed man, causing his body to suddenly have the power to resist, and stop moving.

Just as the black-robed man was heaving a sigh of relief, and gathering his power to make a final attempt to flee, Meng Hao's eyes glittered with killing intent and he uttered the final part of the second line of the Demon Sealing Scripture.

“... Perennial Will!”

Something like a thunderclap exploded out within the black-robed man. It transformed into a bloodcurdling scream. The faces surrounding him all began to collapse. His body flew through the air like a shooting star.

300 meters. 150 meters. 30 meters.... In the blink of an eye, the black-robed Devil Construct let out a roar of despair as its body slammed into the pale white spear. He was turned completely into a black mist which was then absorbed into the spear.

The color of the pale white spear began to change. Soon, it was completely black. Furthermore, it was no longer illusory, but real!

As of now, it was no longer Demon Weapon Lonelytomb, but rather, a Devil Weapon!

Sealing marks with the power to obliterate will exploded out within the spear. The black-robed man's will was erased. This Devil Construct was now not a construct. Only a Devil was left behind!

As Meng Hao hefted the spear, a rumbling sound filled the area. A black wind suddenly kicked up, causing his hair to whip about. His green robe now looked completely black because of the black wind.

With the Devil Spear in hand, the black wind transformed into a black mist that spread out in all directions. Within the mist could be seen thousands upon thousands of faces, twisted with pain and roaring out. They were fearsome, but also filled with an unprecedented awe of Meng Hao.

Whoever held the spear would have control of the countless vengeful ghosts of those slain by Lonelytomb!

Chapter 498: Title at the end!

Thousands upon thousands of faces shot out in all directions. They had no choice other than to submit to Meng Hao, which of course caused the remaining thousands of members of the Eight Branch Alliance to begin to tremble as the totems in their bodies forced them to kneel down and bow to Meng Hao.

The five Nascent Soul Cultivators, including the two of the late Nascent Soul Stage, were also shaking, unable to control themselves as they began to kowtow to Meng Hao.

Totems are the source of incredible power to Western Desert Cultivators, and also the reason why there are so many more high level Cultivators there than in the Southern Domain. At the same time, though... they are also a deadly weakness!

When a totem dies, any Cultivators who exercise faith in it will experience a drop in Cultivation base. Furthermore, when a totem surrenders, so will the Tribe members connected to it. This is a condition, perhaps even a restriction.

In some ways, Western Desert Cultivators are actually slaves of their totems!

Were it not for that, the Western Desert, given its vast population, would have long since expanded out of their lands and overrun the Southern Domain.

A perfect example was this situation; now that Meng Hao had the Devil Spear, he was in control of the totemic faces. You could say in some ways that Meng Hao was now the Sacred Ancient of the Eight Branch Alliance!

“Sacred Ancient!” cried the members of the Crow Divinity Tribe. Expressions of excitement could be seen on their faces as they kowtowed to him. The surrounding tens of thousands of neo-demons roared, causing the ground to shake and their aura to shine brightly.

The other Tribes who had come for the Demon Spirit were shaken, and

their faces flickered with various expressions of fear and astonishment. They had personally witnessed Meng Hao's battle right now, and also saw the Eight Branch Alliance capitulate. Considering all of that, they no longer felt themselves to be in any position of superiority.

Meng Hao floated in mid-air, clutching the Devil Spear in hand. He looked at the vortex up in the sky as it slowly shrank down and then disappeared. In the moment that it winked out, an archaic voice filled his mind.

"I am waiting for you in the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane...."

The winds and clouds up above tumbled and turned, and the vortex was gone. Everything was returned to normal. The invisible vortex that no one except for Meng Hao could see, was now thoroughly vanished.

Meng Hao looked around thoughtfully, his eyes shining brightly, the Devil Spear gripped tightly in his hand.

"Ladies and Gentlemen who have come for the Demon Spirits, shall we fight, or not?" His cool voice echoed out, causing the Crow Divinity Tribe members' killing intent to radiate out visibly. The neo-demon horde roared. They were like a crossbow, cocked and ready to fire!

The Greatfathers from the other Tribes felt their hearts pounding. Meng Hao's power seemed sharper than a needle, and they didn't possibly dare to try to fight back against him. They exchanged glances, and then one of their number quickly said, "You misunderstood, we actually came here to exterminate the Eight Branch Alliance.... However, they seem to have been absorbed by you, Fellow Daoist, so we'll take our leave now."

After he finished speaking, the others voiced their agreement. The Tribe members were surreptitiously edging backward. From the look of things, there would be no more fighting, although it was impossible to tell for sure.

Meng Hao looked around at the Tribes, and then slowly said. "Each Tribe will leave behind ten thousand neo-demons, then you may leave." Instantly, a black mist began to spread out from the Devil Spear.

When the Greatfathers heard his words, they frowned and hesitated. Finally, a cold snort could be heard from one of the Greatfathers off in the distance.

“Are you kidding? If my Radiance Sifting Tribe wants to leave, nobody can stop us!” The Greatfather of the Radiance Sifting Tribe was actually an old woman, making her a Greatmother. Having spoken, she flicked her sleeve and began to fly away with her thousands of Tribe members.

She truly was confident that if she left with her Tribe, there was no one that could do anything to stop them. Even though Meng Hao had the Devil Spear, and was clearly mighty, he had just experienced a difficult battle. It was impossible for him not to have sustained injuries; obviously, he was just posturing.

Believing herself to have seen through his ruse, the idea of giving up ten thousand neo-demons seemed like a joke. Not only would she not hand them over, she would leave to spread news about the Demon Spirit to some of the great Tribes, who would no doubt compensate her.

Seeing the reaction of the Radiance Sifting Tribe, Meng Hao began to move forward, his expression completely the same as usual. He hefted the Devil Spear and then tossed it straight out ahead of him. Instantly, a shocking screaming sound could be heard as it shot through the air. Black mist roiled out from inside, which in the blink of an eye, transformed into a black cloud.

Inside the black cloud were countless savage faces, howling as they shot toward the retreating Tribe. The Greatmother’s face flickered, and her eyes went wide. However, she merely let out a cold harrumph as, together with the Tribe’s five Nascent Soul Priests, she shot to meet the black mist.

Power exploded from the Cultivation bases of all six people as they combined forces to attack the black mist.

“Break!” cried the Greatmother.

A massive boom could be heard which shook everything. The black mist spread out and slammed into the six. The five Priests’ faces fell, and blood shot out of their mouths. Their bodies tumbled back like kites with their

strings cut. However, before they could fall back too far, the mist had surrounded them. Vast quantities of savage faces pounced onto their bodies. The sound of biting and chewing mixed with blood-curdling screams, creating a ghastly scene.

Within the space of a few breaths, the five Priests had been completely consumed. The old woman coughed up blood as she retreated back toward her other Tribe members. When she reached them, she lifted her head up to the sky and howled as she slapped her bag of holding to produce a tortoise shell.

She tossed it out and spit a mouthful of blood onto it. Instantly, it began to spin and expand, growing to the size of several thousand meters. An ancient, simplistic aura emanated out from it, along with countless streams of glowing magical symbols, as it spread out to surround her and the members of the Radiance Sifting Tribe.

“Let’s see you break through this!” she said hoarsely, a ferocious expression on her face.

Seeing this tortoise shell caused the surrounding Greatfathers from the other Tribes to look on with serious expressions. They recognized the tortoise shell, and were instantly shocked.

“It has a totemic aura.... That’s the corpse of a totemic Sacred Ancient, refined into a protective treasure. Once it’s activated, nothing can break through it. With that, they should be able to leave this place with ease!”

“No wonder the Radiance Sifting Tribe dared to defy that fearsome Cultivator. It turns out they have a....”

Even as the surrounding experts recognized the tortoise shell, the Devil Spear shot toward it. The black mist arrived first, slamming into the tortoise shell, causing a massive rumbling to fill the sky. The tortoise shell immediately began to radiate bright light, but it didn’t collapse. The black mist began to spread out and cover the tortoise shell.

When the members of the Radiance Sifting Tribe saw this, they were shocked, especially the Greatmother.

“This enemy of the Radiance Sifting Tribe....” Before she could even finish speaking, the Devil Spear within the black mist arrived. In the blink of an eye, it reached the tortoise shell.

A massive boom rose up to the Heavens, causing the wind and clouds to churn and the sky to dim. A shock wave rumbled out from the tortoise shell, and cracking sounds could be heard as fissures spread out from the area the spear had slammed into. This continued for the space of three breaths, after which a huge roar could be heard as the tortoise shell exploded into countless pieces.

The Devil Spear continued on its way, radiating killing intent and black mist. It shot in... stabbing directly through the disbelieving Greatmother and heading toward the other Tribe members behind her. Black mist spread out, enveloping the thousands of Radiance Sifting Tribe members. Countless excited faces appeared, spreading out in all directions, clearly thirsting for blood. Just when they were about to begin feeding, some invisible force seemed to hold them back.

Meng Hao looked at the remaining thousands of Radiance Sifting Tribe members within the shattered tortoise shell. “Surrender?” he said slowly, “Or be buried alive with the rest of the dead?”

After a moment of brief silence, the thousands of Radiance Sifting Tribe members chose to surrender. They wiped out their totem tattoos, exercised faith in Meng Hao, and became an auxiliary branch of the Crow Divinity Tribe.

The Greatfathers of the rest of the Tribes, fearful that Meng Hao would change his mind, immediately began to hand over hordes of ten thousand neo-demons. Then, they left as quickly as possible. Considering they had abided by his demands, Meng Hao did nothing to block their way.

The path to this point had been one of killing. Even though Meng Hao had developed a cruel and cold heart, he was now extremely tired.

As the other Tribes made their way off into the distance, the members of the Eight Branch Alliance stood there quietly as they too became a sub-Tribe of the Crow Divinity Tribe. As of this moment, the Crow Divinity

Tribe was now over 10,000 strong.

At the same time, Meng Hao's neo-demon horde was bolstered up. He now had 150,000 neo-demons!

It was a huge neo-demon horde, but in reality, many of them were low-level neo-demons. Even by absorbing Demonic Qi, there was no way for them to experience incredible growth in a short period of time. 150,000 neo-demons required a terrifying amount of food to sustain. The actual number that could fight in battle was only about 100,000. The rest became food.

Everything that had belonged to the Eight Branch Alliance now belonged to the Crow Divinity Tribe. They had three enormous flying magical items as well as vast quantities of resources. All of this only served to cause the Crow Divinity Tribe to be even more powerful.

Several days later, all members of the Crow Divinity Tribe mounted onto the enormous ship-shaped flying magical item. It whistled through the air, streaking through the clouds as it headed south at top speed.

The current power of the Crow Divinity Tribe far exceeded that of the previous five Tribes of the Crow Divinity. Although it could not currently compare to the great Tribes, they could now be considered to be at the peak of the mid-sized Tribe range.

As far as their migration went, they had now traveled about a third of the way to their destination. The rest of their path would take them through the Central Region of the Western Desert, to the South Region. The end of the path would of course be the Black Lands!

The parrot, in compliance with Meng Hao's request, began to pass on to the Crow Divinity Tribe the same spell formation that it had taught to the Church of the Golden Light!

Of course, the parrot completely agreed with the idea. In fact, because of the fact that Meng Hao wasn't paying attention, it had actually already started to teach the spell formation. Now that Meng Hao directly brought up the notion, it immediately got very excited.

“Little Haowie, don’t you worry,” it said, eyes shining brightly. “My dream is that, upon entering the Black Lands, there will be people there shouting the name of Lord Fifth. Then, my two great armies will join together to become like my wings!”

Chapter 498: Absorbing the Eight Branches

Chapter 499: An Old Friend

The violet rain fell harder.

Half a year later, the lakes in the Western Desert North region all connected, transforming into a great, Violet Sea. The great sea exterminated all life and cut off all spiritual energy.

The North region... was now completely devoid of any neo-demons. There was nothing alive. Any Tribes which had chosen not to migrate were now buried at the bottom of the sea.

The entire Western Desert North region was covered with a surging, Violet Sea, beneath the surface of which, mountain peaks were just barely visible.

Now that the North region had become a sea, the Western Desert Apocalypse exploded out with its first true display of shocking power. Massive, powerful waves rolled across the sea, spreading out to smash into and collapse the mountains separating the Central region from the North region. As the mountains fell, the Violet Sea expanded out into the East, West and Central regions.

As the Violet Sea expanded, the lakes in the East, West, and Central regions began to combine. The seawaters gradually grew more majestic, and rose with increasing speed.

The shaping and expanding of the sea was like a whip, lashing at the backs of the migrating Tribes. They had to move faster, and plunder more.

The number of dead and wounded... was impossible to count.

The effect of the spiritual energy being cut off spread throughout the Central region, as well as into the East and West regions. With the exception of the South Region, spiritual energy everywhere grew rarer and rarer.

Because of the lack of spiritual energy, the Cultivation base of Cultivators fell and led to deaths. Such deaths caused the totemic Sacred Ancients of the various Tribes to begin to weaken.

The weakening of the Sacred Ancients in turn caused the Tribe members to weaken. As such, any deaths caused a vicious cycle that was impossible to break out of.

During the half-year period, the Crow Divinity rode its flying magical item through the Western Desert Central region. They experienced dozens of battles, during each of which, their opponents came at them with the full power of an entire Tribe.

A defeat in any of these battles represented the destruction of an entire Tribe. And yet, the battles could not be avoided.

That was because the Crow Divinity Tribe had a flying magical item, which other Tribes wanted. They also possessed a Demon Spirit. As soon as a Demon Spirit appeared, other Tribes would go mad with greed. Even Meng Hao was worried about this phenomenon.

During the half year, Meng Hao's neo-demon horde shrank to 70,000, and that was even after bolstering them up along the way. That having been said, these 70,000 neo-demons were incredibly powerful.

As for Tribe members, there were 8,000. However, those 8,000 Tribe members were now veterans of countless battles!

Meng Hao ended up getting seriously injured twice during the half year period. However, with deliberate effort, he was able to cause his totemic power to grow more refined. Furthermore, his control of Demonic Qi reached a completely new realm.

It is only in that fine divide between life and death that battle prowess can be elevated. In addition, it was during this time that Meng Hao continued along on his path of enlightenment regarding the Violet Rain. Although his progress was slow, he was gradually getting more and more results.

Because the violet rain cut off the spiritual energy of Heaven and Earth, Meng Hao's superiority grew even more obvious. That was why it was so easy for him to slaughter a late Nascent Soul stage Cultivator.

The thinning of the spiritual energy actually allowed Meng Hao to

gradually increase his own power.

Meng Hao currently stood at the prow of the magical flying ship. His face was pale, and his body somewhat thin. The years of campaigning had truly changed him. He looked off into the distance and then sighed, "The day when there is no spiritual energy left at all in the Western Desert, is the day when I will truly make my rise."

During the half-year period, three other momentous events occurred. Three Demon Spirits appeared in the great lands of the Western Desert. It instantly drew the attention of various tribes, and resulted in plundering and fighting.

Meng Hao was well aware of what happened when a Demon Spirit suddenly appeared; that was exactly what had led to his two serious injuries along the campaign trail.

However, these other Demon Spirits relieved some of the pressure placed on Meng Hao and the Crow Divinity Tribe. No longer were they being attacked from all sides. They only continued to grow stronger and stronger.

Meanwhile, about half a month's journey up ahead of Meng Hao, three black flying machines that looked like swords were shooting through the air.

They were pitch black, and emanated pulsing, cold auras. Each of these sword-shaped magical ships were several thousands meters long, and were covered with black-robed Cultivators, all seated cross-legged.

Their faces were expressionless and their eyes closed as they sat in meditation. Occasionally, some of them would open their eyes, and a bright flashing could be seen.

Shockingly, these Cultivators' totem tattoos were all swords!

Huge black flying swords and totem tattoos depicting weapons were not things frequently seen in the Western Desert. In fact, in all of the great lands of the Western Desert, there was only one tribe had had black sword totems.... This Tribe was obviously the great Cloud Sky Tribe.

They had a Spirit Severing Patriarch, and were the most powerful Tribe in the Western Desert Central region. The Five Poisons Tribe had acquired the opportunity to become an auxiliary branch of this Tribe, but before the emissary could even reach them, they had been wiped out by the Crow Divinity Tribe.

Of the three black sword magical items, one flew in the lead position. Sitting cross-legged at the very tip of the sword was an old man. Unlike the other Tribe members, his robe was white. He had the bearing of a transcendent being, and proud expression covered his face. Sitting on either side of him were two middle-aged men who wore cautious, obsequious smiles on their faces.

“How much longer?” asked the transcendent-looking, white-robed old man, his voice cool. In both his facial expression and temperament, this man manifested an aloof proudness. It was as if years of being in a position similar to royalty had ingrained itself onto his very personality.

This was especially true of his transcendent aura. Each and every one of the members of the great Cloud Sky Tribe had looks of awe on their faces when they looked at him.

One of the middle-aged men sitting next to him replied, “Grandmaster Zhou, I’m happy to report that in approximately five days, we will reach that despicable Crow Divinity Tribe. Grandmaster Zhou, it is truly an honor for the Main Tribe to send you to direct the military operations of the Battle Branch.”

The Cloud Sky Tribe was a great Tribe, and commanded thirteen auxiliary Tribes. The Cultivators on these three black swords belonged to one of those thirteen Tribes, a Battle Tribe. As for this transcendent-looking old man, if Meng Hao were here, he would definitely have a strange expression on his face. He would instantly recognize the man to be Zhou Dekun.

Zhou Dekun, Furnace Lord of the Violet Fate Sect’s East Pill Division. Zhou Dekun... had lived quite an odd life. He had drifted from place to place, and had experienced things that other Furnace Lords would find

hair-raising.

He had been captured and taken to the Black Lands, where he eventually ended up being taken in by the Frigid Snow Clan as an esteemed guest. He became Frigid Snow City's Grandmaster of the Dao of Alchemy, surrounded by a host of concubines. His reputation grew until he became known as the greatest alchemist in all the Black Lands.

After that... he was taken prisoner again. He passed through many hands in the Western Desert. After all these years, it was impossible to know what exactly he had experienced. However, as of this moment, it was obvious that he was a member of the great Cloud Sky Tribe. Clearly, he occupied an extremely high position.

Obviously, it didn't matter where you went in the wide world, possessing pill-concocting skills could lead you into miracles....

A haughty expression filled Zhou Dekun's face as he nodded in response. Actually, it was of his own accord that he requested to lead this expedition. In recent years, life in the Tribe had become somewhat tedious. He wanted to get out and stretch his legs. Thankfully, the great Cloud Sky Tribe had arranged a mission for the Battle Tribe to go exterminate the Crow Divinity Tribe. One reason was because of the fact that the great Cloud Sky Tribe had made an agreement with the Five Poisons Tribe, only to learn that they were exterminated on the way by the Crow Divinity Tribe. In order to preserve their ability to intimidate others militarily, they had to wipe out the Crow Divinity Tribe. Another aspect, of course, had to do with the Demon Spirit.

Therefore, Zhou Dekun took on the mission. He would represent the Main Tribe to direct the military operations. That was why he was here. Because of his position, and the might of the great Cloud Sky, he was actually quite safe within the current Apocalypse.

He was well aware of that fact, as were the Greatfather and the High Priest of the Battle Tribe, who sat on either side of him. They knew that their mission here was actually secondary. The main purpose of the outing was to please Zhou Dekun, who occupied such a high position within the

Tribe.

As for the Demon Spirits, even Meng Hao knew about the other three that had appeared in the past half years. However, the great Tribes with Spirit Severing Patriarchs actually had even more accurate information. They knew that it was not just three that had appeared in the last half year, but rather, five!

The Heavenly Court Alliance in the Black Lands did nothing about the five Demon Spirits. Instead, vast amounts of Tribes fought and plundered over them. In the end, three of them were actually acquired by Tribes with Spirit Severing Patriarchs, after which, those Tribes entered into negotiations with the Heavenly Court Alliance.

The great Cloud Sky Tribe was one of the Tribes who had acquired a Demon Spirit. The other two were acquired by other great Tribes which did not have Spirit Severing Patriarchs. Other Tribes sent spies to get information about them, but because they were great Tribes and incredibly powerful, no one dared to try to do anything.

For Tribes with Spirit Severing Patriarchs, acquiring a Demon Spirit wasn't incredibly important. Such Tribes would be able to get into the Black Lands whether they had one or not. Therefore, it wasn't worth paying a heavy price to get one.

In the end, this was how two great Tribes with no Spirit Severing Patriarchs were able to keep ahold of the Spirit Demons they had acquired, and earn the right to enter the Black Lands.

"Grandmaster Zhou," said one of the middle-aged men next to him, speaking very cautiously, "if there is anything you require during the journey, please don't hesitate to speak up. We will spare no effort in meeting your needs."

"That's right, Grandmaster Zhou. The battles in the Apocalypse have been chaotic. With so many Tribes migrating, many treasures are out in the open. If you see anything you like, we can get it for you."

Zhou Dekun laughed heartily, his expression one of complacency. In recent years, he had often sighed emotionally when he thought about his

journey of life and how miraculous it had been.

“If there’s something I really need, then I won’t hold back from telling the two of you. Very well, let’s push forward with as much speed as we can muster. I’m very interested in that Demon Spirit that the Crow Divinity Tribe has.” With that, Zhou Dekun closed his eyes.

The two men next to him said nothing more. The three black swords shot forward at incredible speed, growing ever closer to Meng Hao and the Crow Divinity Tribe.

Time passed, and soon five days had gone by. On this day, the violet rain poured down the same as ever. Down below, rivers and lakes could be seen. The spiritual energy of Heaven and Earth was thin. It was around dusk when the Crow Divinity Tribe and the great Cloud Sky Tribe... finally caught sight of each other in the air above the Western Desert Central region!

Chapter 500: The Sky is Dark!

The three black swords moved with incredible speed, using a method that was beyond the comprehension of the Crow Divinity Tribe. They pierced through the air, appearing directly in the path of the Crow Divinity Tribe's magical airship.

The Crow Divinity Tribe's massive airship suddenly stopped in place. Thousands of sharp gazes came to fall upon the three black swords. The two sides faced off against each other, not moving a muscle.

The violet rain fell around them, and a wind blew that carried with it the power of extermination. A bitter cold pressed down on everyone; however, this coldness paled in comparison to the killing intent of both of these Tribes.

The eyes of the Crow Divinity Tribe members had gone wide when they saw the three black swords. Nearly ten thousand people had all risen to their feet simultaneously. They had experienced many, many battles, so death was something they had become accustomed to. Killing intent exploded out, along with countless ice-cold gazes.

No one spoke. There was no calling out. There was only a deathly silence and killing intent that seemed capable of affecting even the clouds and wind!

For such a shocking scene to arise, it was clear that neither of these two Tribes had any kind intentions!

The instant the killing intent of the Crow Divinity Tribe members rose up, bright glows appeared in the eyes the eight thousand Cultivators of the Cloud Sky Tribe on the three black swords. These people looked like sharp, unsheathed swords, their desire to kill rising up to the Heavens.

The wind and clouds seethed and the air rippled as the killing intent of these eight thousand sharp, unsheathed swords exploded out. It was in this moment that, shockingly, on the forehead of each and every person a black sword appeared. The black swords flickered brightly; obviously they possessed some unique totemic power.

In terms of their bearing, these two Tribes seemed to be evenly matched.

One was a famous Battle Tribe from a great Western Desert Tribe with a Spirit Severing Patriarch. It was only an auxiliary Tribes of the great Cloud Sky Tribe. However, in terms of battle prowess, even the Main Tribe completely repsected them.

The other Tribe had fought countless battles, and had experienced life and death. They had undergone constant transformation, existing in a state of perpetual war that had turned their blood into iron!

In this moment, the two Tribes could sense each other's valiance and power. The eight thousand members of the Cloud Sky's auxiliary Battle Tribe comprised about eighty percent of their entire Tribe. Right now, they could clearly see a will to fight emanating from the bodies of the Crow Divinity Tribe members. It was something they didn't see often.

When the two middle-aged men sitting by Zhou Dekun saw the Crow Divinity Tribe and sensed their valiance, intense looks appeared on their faces.

"The entire Crow Divinity Tribe has the same will! It's a killing intent that has been distilled into pure essence!"

"You usually only see something like this in the elite members of great Tribes! Who could ever have imagined that the Crow Divinity Tribe would have an aura like this!"

It wasn't just them. The rest of the Tribe members all had a similar reaction.

Both the Crow Divinity Tribe and the Battle Tribe could be described with the same words. Taciturn! Cold-blooded! Ruthless!

At the same time, when the Battle Tribe appeared in front of the Crow Divinity Tribe, they could instantly see that they were vastly different from any other enemies faced up against in the past. The pressure that emanated out from them caused an intense desire for battle to gleam in the eyes of the Crow Divinity Tribe members.

There were now thirteen Nascent Soul Cultivators in the Crow Divinity

Tribe. In addition to Ou Yunzi and the other of the five from the Eight Branch Alliance, during the past year of war, the Crow Divinity had picked up a few more.

Of the thirteen Nascent Soul Cultivators, two were of the late Nascent Soul stage, five were of the mid Nascent Soul stage and six were of the early Nascent Soul stage. A force such as this put the Crow Divinity Tribe on the border between a mid-sized Tribe and a great Tribe that lacked a Spirit Severing Patriarch.

The Battle Tribe saw all of this. The power of the Crow Divinity Tribe far exceeded what they had anticipated. They knew that this battle... would be extremely violent and bitter.

A deathly silence filled the air as the two parties faced off against each other. The killing intent from both sides slammed together, causing the Qi in the entire area to be thrown into chaos. In this moment of imminent crisis between the two parties... a strange expression suddenly appeared on Meng Hao's face as he caught sight of Zhou Dekun sitting there right in the middle of everything on the black sword.

Zhou Dekun's eyes went wide when he saw Meng Hao.

The two of them were separated by several hundred meters, but their gazes instantly locked. It only took a moment for wry smiles to appear on their faces.

The Battle Tribe High Priest had of course not noticed that Zhou Dekun and Meng Hao were looking at each other. The oppressive atmosphere had reached a peak. He suddenly opened his mouth and broke the deathly silence: "KILL THEM!"

However, even as the Battle Tribe members behind him, as well as the Crow Divinity Tribe members, were about to roar and charge into battle, Zhou Dekun suddenly leaped up and slapped the Battle Tribe High Priest across the top of his head.

"Shut up!" cried Zhou Dekun, flying into a rage. "Did I tell you to start fighting?! Everybody, stay your hand! Dammit! The orders from the Main Tribe were to do everything possible to induce them to surrender! I

haven't said a single word and you're already trying to kill them!?" The Battle Tribe members all stared over at him with cold eyes. In this critical moment in which their killing intent was exploding out violently, their gazes seemed sharp enough to rip everything to pieces. Instantly, Zhou Dekun felt his mind trembling. However, it only took a moment for his eyes to widen.

"Disobeying orders?" he asked, his voice as cold as ice.

The Battle Tribe High Priest looked up, seemingly on the verge of being shamed into rage. Although the slap just now had not contained any force, it had happened in front of all the members of the Tribe, and was a huge humiliation. However, when he thought about Zhou Dekun's status, he did nothing. The Battle Tribe Greatfather took a step forward and glared out at the other Tribe members. He gave a cold snort, causing them all to fall back silently.

Although the Battle Tribe Greatfather was secretly infuriated, he didn't let it show on his face. At least not too much. His expression somewhat unsightly, he said, "Grandmaster Zhou, please, what are your orders?"

At the same time that the Battle Tribe had been on the verge of charging into the battle, many members of the Crow Divinity Tribe were also on the verge of exploding out with the power they had built up. However, unlike the Battle Tribe, as soon as Meng Hao gave the word, they instantly backed down.

This caught the attention of the Greatfather and High Priest of the Battle Tribe, and instantly shook them. They exchanged glances and could see the thoughtful look in each other's eyes.

They knew that a Battle Tribe like the Crow Divinity Tribe had reached a shocking level of power.

Meng Hao stood, and then his body flickered as he moved out. This instantly caused the Battle Tribe to be filled with vigilance. Zhou Dekun gave a cold harrumph. His expression one of haughtiness, he moved off of the huge black sword to head toward Meng Hao.

The two of them flew up into the air, quickly becoming two tiny dots up

above.

The two Tribes down below stared at each other with killing intent, but made no moves.

Up above, Meng Hao and Zhou Dekun were tiny specks in the air, and it was impossible for the Tribe members below to hear anything they were saying. Meng Hao gave a wry smile as he looked at Zhou Dekun. He clasped hands and bowed.

“Elder Brother Zhou,” he said teasingly, “it’s been many years, but you look as graceful as ever,”

Zhou Dekun cleared his throat, looking a bit embarrassed, and even more emotional, as he gazed back at Meng Hao. “I never imagined that we two fellow disciples would meet here after parting ways all those years ago in the Southern Domain.” He sighed, his expression one of reminiscence.

Meng Hao sighed softly. He couldn’t help but recall past events. He thought about the return trip from the Black Sieve Sect, when he and Zhou Dekun ran into the Black Lands Cultivators and been forced to separate. He had never imagined that after that separation, they would meet again in the Black Lands and then again in the Western Desert.

“So, that alchemist in the Black Lands really was you?” asked Zhou Dekun with a wry smile. After the event had occurred, he had realized that the only person who could possibly have been so powerful in pill concocting was of course the person in front of him right now.

When Zhou Dekun thought back to how Meng Hao had consistently backed down in Holy Snow city in the Black Lands, allowing him to maintain his reputation, it actually caused him to be filled with gratitude. Over the years, that gratitude had fused with his previous feelings of friendship to form a warmth that had endured for years and years.

You could say that in all the Western Desert, Meng Hao was actually Zhou Dekun’s only family.

When Meng Hao looked at Zhou Dekun, he thought about the Southern Domain. He thought about his Master, Chu Yuyan, and all the people back

in the Violet Fate Sect. He thought about all his other close friends in the Southern Domain, about Fatty and Chen Fan.

And... Xu Qing.

Their faces floated in his mind, clear and not blurry at all. As he saw their faces in his mind's eye, he realized that he... missed home.

Except, his home was in the State of Zhao, which had long since disappeared from the Southern Domain.

Meng Hao and Zhou Dekun sighed and began to chat. Sometimes they smiled and laughed, sometimes they got excited and passionate. As they recalled past years, Meng Hao felt was awash with feelings that he rarely experienced. It was the same with Zhou Dekun.

When Meng Hao recounted some of the bitter difficulties he had faced, Zhou Dekun was shocked. To Zhou Dekun, Meng Hao's life was like an exhilarating adventure. As for Meng Hao, when he heard about Zhou Dekun's experiences, they seemed almost as miraculous as his own.

After hearing Zhou Dekun's story, Meng Hao smiled and said, "So, you are the Cloud Sky Main Tribe Elder of the Dao of Alchemy... a position comparable to High Priest. In the great Cloud Sky Tribe, you definitely wield much power and influence.... Elder Brother Zhou, I can't help but admire you, truly."

Zhou Dekun laughed, sounding quite pleased with himself.

Without even realized it, they had allowed four hours to passed. While the two reminisced about past times, the two Tribes down below simply had to wait.

The Crow Divinity Tribe seemed to take the situation in stride. Meng Hao was their totemic Sacred Ancient, and they were fanatically loyal to him. Even if they had to wait longer, they wouldn't mind.

The Battle Tribe was a bit different. They stood there, taciturn. The Greatfather and the Grand Priest exchanged suspicious glances. They looked up at the black dots up in the air that were Zhou Dekun and Meng Hao. They couldn't understand why Zhou Dekun had already taken four

hours trying to convince the enemy to surrender. By now, the sky was growing dark....

Chapter 501: I'll Escort You 500 Kilometers, Sir

Zhou Dekun looked up and then frowned. "It's getting dark, Meng Hao.... Enough chit-chat. You've gotten yourself into some big trouble here. The great Cloud Sky Tribe dispatched their Battle Tribe to wipe you out because of the incident with the Five Poisons Tribe that year, and also your Demon Spirit."

When he heard the words "great Cloud Sky Tribe," it caused a cold glow to suddenly appear in Meng Hao's eyes. He said nothing.

"Thankfully, I happen to be the leader of this group, so you don't have to worry. I won't let anything happen to my Junior Brother." He slapped his chest vigorously. Zhou Dekun was not young, but because of the twists and turns of life, he had lived quite comfortably, and actually looked much younger than he was.

"How many concubines do you have now?" laughed Meng Hao.

"Not many, not many. Last month I accepted an eighth." Zhou Dekun's face glowed a healthy red color and he coughed dryly. "There's no need to talk about that, though. Look, Junior Brother. The two of us are going to put on a little act...." He lowered his head and began to explain things to Meng Hao. Meng Hao's eyes went wide, and he put on a forced smile.

"Is that... really a good idea?" he said, hesitating.

"Don't worry about it! You listen to your Elder Brother!" Zhou Dekun looked very serious, so Meng Hao could do nothing but mutter and nod his head.

A few moments later....

"So, it turns out that you are the Crow Divinity Tribe, who crushed over a thousand Tribes to rise to prominence! You are the most powerful force in the Western Desert North, a force that strikes fear into the hearts of even great Tribes!

“My heart holds nothing but admiration for you! If we battle each other, there will surely be deaths and injuries. I, Zhou Dekun do not like to see blood. Also, the De 德 character in my name means ‘virtue.’ Therefore, I will use virtue to make you surrender!

“I will give you ten years, during which time I, Zhou Dekun, will use virtue to make you surrender!” Zhou Dekun’s shouting echoed out in all directions to be heard by both Tribes. The Crow Divinity Tribe reacted better than the Battle Tribe, who all stared in shock.

Although they didn’t know Zhou Dekun very well, they were members of a great Tribe, and had heard many stories. No matter which way you looked at him, he did not seem to be the type of person who won others over with virtue.

The Battle Tribe’s Greatfather and High Priest had eyes wider than anyone. They were completely stupefied, and had no clue what Zhou Dekun was trying to accomplish.

After flying down from their position up above, Zhou Dekun and Meng Hao separated. Meng Hao suppressed the awkwardness he felt inside to clasp hands and bow to Zhou Dekun.

“So, it turns out that you are from the great Cloud Sky Tribe, the illustrious Grandmaster Zhou Dekun, invincible in the Dao of alchemy and possessor of eight concubines. I truly admire you, sir. Very well, I accept your wager. I will give you ten years to try to use virtue to make me surrender.” The more he spoke, the more awkward Meng Hao felt. Coughing dryly, he headed back to his airship.

The words he had just spoken caused the eyes of the Crow Divinity Tribe members to widen. It felt very strange to hear such words coming out of the mouth of their totemic Sacred Ancient. To them, their Sacred Ancient was someone who could kill without batting an eyelid. How could he possibly say something like he just had?

“Excellent!” cried Zhou Dekun vigorously as he stepped back onto the black sword. He flicked his sleeve and continued in a determined voice: “Unfortunately, there must be a clear winner and loser between the two of

us. If it weren't for that, we could drink and chat merrily, and would surely become friends for life...." His emotional expression made it seem that he truly felt it to be a pity.

"I truly admire you," he continued loftily. "It turns out you want to see exactly how I plan to win you over with virtue. Very well, please proceed on your way. Three days from now, I'll catch up with you. This is my promise, and my first step in the process of using virtue to make you surrender." Next to him, the faces of the Greatfather and High Priest instantly flickered.

"Grandmaster Zhou, we can't do that. If we let them go, who knows where we will have to go to find them!?"

"Are you trying to prevent me from using virtue to make them surrender!?" said Zhou Dekun, glaring.

Meng Hao cleared his throat and looked at Zhou Dekun with a strange expression. He recalled the lines Zhou Dekun had give him to speak, but after thinking about them, he just couldn't make himself say them. He cleared his throat again and then said nothing more. The Crow Divinity's airship immediately shot off into the distance.

"Grandmaster Zhou!!" cried the Battle Tribe Greatfather anxiously. As the Crow Divinity Tribe flew off, Zhou Dekun's expression was one of loftiness. The Greatfather had no choice but to stand there and refuse to allow the Battle Tribe to pursue.

"You need to have faith in the great Cloud Sky Tribe. We WILL use virtue to make them surrender!" Zhou Dekun was sighing inwardly. He had prepared even more words for himself to say in response to Meng Hao just now.

"But the mission we accepted was to destroy the Tribe...." said the High Priest furiously.

"Could it be that you have no faith in the great Cloud Sky Tribe?" replied Zhou Dekun solemnly. "Or is it me you have no faith in? Hmm?" Regardless be it in terms of status or position, he was much higher than anyone present, and also the general of this force. Were the Greatfather to

take unilateral action, Zhou Dekun could report him, and then the entire Tribe would be in trouble.

Zhou Dekun's simple response caused the Battle Tribe Greatfather and High Priest to say nothing further. That was how three days of time was bought.

Three days later, the black swords once again whistled through the air.

A few days later, the three black swords were shooting at top speed toward Meng Hao. Zhou Dekun roared out: "So, we meet again! Crow Divinity Tribe, do you surrender or not?"

Killing intent instantly boiled out from the Crow Divinity Tribe. Clearly they felt the battle would begin at any moment.

The Battle Tribe was the same. They suppressed their irritation at the situation, and allowed their killing intent to roar up to the sky.

Meng Hao smiled wryly. He took a deep breath and then responded the way Zhou Dekun had indicted he should.

"We don't surrender...."

"Hahaha! I guessed you wouldn't. If you had, I would have assumed something fishy was going on. Very well. This time I'll give you seven days before I start chasing you again. This is how you use virtue to get someone to surrender!" In response to Zhou Dekun's lofty words, Meng Hao turned around with a wry smile. The airship once again shot off into the distance.

The Greatfather and the High Priest were enraged. There were even some Battle Tribe members who howled and charged forward to block the way of the Crow Divinity Tribe.

"Hold your hands!" roared Zhou Dekun. "Are you really planning to rebel against the Tribe!?"

Zhou Dekun's shocking roar caused the Battle Tribe members to instantly stop in place. The eyes of the Greatfather and the High Priest were bloodshot as they turned back to glare at Zhou Dekun.

Zhou Dekun gave a cold snort and then set his chin. His expression said,

“What do you think you can do to me?” He slowly pulled open his robe to reveal the command medallion of a Tribe Elder. After seeing it, the Greatfather and the High Priest could do nothing more than suppress their rage and lower their heads.

It was in this manner that three months slowly passed by.

“Do you surrender?!”

“You’re still not ready to surrender?”

“There’s no need to say it. I know that you won’t surrender. It doesn’t matter....”

During the three months, every time the Battle Tribe caught up, Zhou Dekun would come up with a vast array of excuses and reasons to let the Crow Divinity Tribe leave. Soon, the three black swords, despite being dispatched from a great Tribe, were beginning to run out of resources. Their speed was slowly being reduced to the point where soon, they wouldn’t be able to catch up with the Crow Divinity Tribe.

As the months went by, the Crow Divinity Tribe became used to the situation. Every time the Battle Tribe caught up, they would watch on curiously. By now, they could see that this old man named Zhou was actually a good person....

In fact, on one occasion, the Crow Divinity Tribe ended up being surrounded by another mid-sized Tribe. At the critical moment, the Battle Tribe appeared. Zhou Dekun roared and, using the pretext of using virtue to get the Crow Divinity Tribe to surrender, forced the Battle Tribe to attack. Finally, they were able to vent their recent frustrations on that mid-sized Tribe.

In the end, Zhou Dekun allowed the Crow Divinity Tribe to end the battle. Citing the desire to use virtue to make them surrender, he let the Crow Divinity Tribe take all the spoils of war. Their eyes gleaming with a strange light, they then made their ways off into the distance.

Another month passed. The Battle Tribe Greatfather and the High priest were no longer so upset. It wasn’t that Zhou Dekun wouldn’t let them

fight. What he wouldn't allow was a full-scale battle. Duels were permitted....

Therefore, during the following months, the two Tribes traveled almost one on top of the other. Occasionally, solitary Cultivators would fly out to engage to duels.

Each duel consisted of two fighters, no more....

Furthermore, as soon as the battle reached a critical, dangerous moment, Zhou Dekun would immediately end the fight....

As time passed, the Battle Tribe grew numb to the situation. They had long since figured out that Zhou Dekun and Meng Hao knew each other, and clearly, had a deep relationship. Even the Greatfather and the High Priest eventually gave tacit approval to the situation.

They knew that in terms of position and status, they were inferior to Zhou Dekun. Furthermore, he was the general. Therefore, all of the responsibility for the mission would naturally fall onto his shoulders.

Therefore, they gave up on their desire to exterminate the Crow Divinity Tribe. Whatever orders Zhou Dekun gave, they followed.

Eventually, it got to the point that Zhou Dekun and Meng Hao felt no need for any pretense. They would often set up a table in mid-air to chat and drink together. Slowly but surely, the members of the two Tribes came to acknowledge each other.

Soon, they even came to exist in harmony with each other....

What caused the Greatfather and the High Priest to be even more speechless was the fact that over the months of interaction, there were even members of both Tribes who ended up becoming friends. There would often be visitors from either Tribe who dropped by the other to exchange views regarding cultivation. The Greatfather and High Priest could only smile wryly.

After all, both of these Tribes possessed strong killing intent. They had experienced countless battles, and therefore took each other very seriously. They were worthy adversaries, and on top of that, in addition to

being veterans of many battles, they were all Cultivators. To be able to experience half a year of peace and calm like this was very rare.

Everything was harmonious....

Whenever they met enemies, there was no need for Zhou Dekun to say anything. Instantly, the Battle Tribe and the Crow Divinity Tribe would join forces to go into battle. The Greatfather and High Priest knew that their mission was a failure, so they did their best to ingratiate themselves with Zhou Dekun. That way, they might be able to build up more good will with the Main Tribe.

It was in this way that time went by. The Battle Tribe and the Crow Divinity Tribe put on a strange show with their close interaction and occasional pretense of fighting. By now, the Crow Divinity Tribe had passed through most of the Western Desert Central region, and were approaching the border of the South region....

One day, a succession of three jade slips arrived to the Battle Tribe. They contained wrathful messages from the Cloud Sky Main Tribe demanding an explanation and ordering the Battle Tribe and Zhou Dekun to return immediately.

The mission to destroy the Crow Divinity Tribe was now given to another auxiliary Tribe. Zhou Dekun sighed. He knew that he would not be able to escort Meng Hao any further than this.

Chapter 502: Flying Locust Tribe

When it came time to leave, it wasn't just Meng Hao and Zhou Dekun who were reluctant to part. The members of the two Tribes stared at each other silently. Neither harbored any further desire to fight each other anymore. Instead, they respected and appreciated each other.

As far as the Battle Tribe went, they were in somewhat of a better situation. They knew that soon, the Crow Divinity Tribe would be facing up against another auxiliary branch of the great Cloud Sky Tribe, and after that, the fearsome South region.

Each and every one of the Tribes who managed to slaughter their way into the South from the East, West, North and Central regions, were incredibly valiant. The ones that did not have Demon Spirits roamed the area near the Black Lands, hoping for other Tribes to arrive that did. It was just like the saying, "waiting by the tree stump, waiting for more rabbits to come and dash themselves against it."

That was the only hope for survival for such Tribes.

The Greatfather of the Battle Tribe had recently gotten to know the two late Nascent Soul Cultivators of the Crow Divinity Tribe. Now that the time had come to part, he sighed emotionally in his heart.

No one could possibly have predicted that these two Tribes would form such a strange relationship over the course of half a year.

The members of the Battle Tribe clasped hands. "Take care!"

The members of the Crow Divinity Tribe clasped hands and bowed in response.

Zhou Dekun was quiet for a moment as he looked at Meng Hao. Finally, he sighed. "Junior Brother, if you ever make it back to the Southern Domain, please find Master and kowtow to him for me. The year he came to the Black Lands, he accepted me as an apprentice. He told me that my path is not in the Southern Domain, but out in the rest of the world....

"I really want to go back to the Southern Domain. One day, if I don't

perish, then I, Zhou Dekun, will definitely return there, and return to the East Pill Division....

“Junior Brother, you must take care of yourself on your journey. I can only escort you to this point. In three days, the Flying Locust Tribe will arrive. Their mission is to exterminate you....

“Junior Brother, the time has come to part. I have nothing that I can offer to you as a gift except for this....” Eyes glittering, Zhou Dekun waved his right hand, causing 10,000 neo-demons to fly out from within his bag of holding. Each one possessed incredible Cultivation bases. They instantly flew out into the air, roaring, their auras clearly extraordinary.

“This is my personal neo-demon horde, although I can’t control them. In the Western Desert, neo-demons are valuable resources, so I will give them to you!” As soon as they appeared, they began to dissolve into chaos. Meng Hao glanced them over, and then caused Demonic Qi to emanate out from his body. The neo-demons instantly began to quiver as they looked over at Meng Hao. They roared, but they were no longer in a state of disturbance.

Zhou Dekun looked over at the Battle Tribe. “Battle Tribe Greatfather and High Priest, I will never forget the spirit of cooperation you have shown these days. I will take all responsibility for this mission.

“However, at the moment, I would like to ask you to lend me some neo-demons. When we get back to the Tribe, I will think of a way to repay you!”

Eight thousand Battle Tribe members stood there silently. Slowly, each and every one produced two or three neo-demons. In total, 20,000 were delivered over.

They had no Dragoneer, only personal neo-demons, each of which was not low level. The sight of the 20,000 neo-demons caused Meng Hao to be visibly moved. To any Western Desert Tribe, this represented a vast amount of wealth. Meng Hao looked at Zhou Dekun.

Zhou Dekun looked back. He took a deep breath and then began to speak in a tone that you would use with family, “There’s no need to refuse,

Junior Brother. This is the only way I have to help you. Meng Hao... take care!" Deep warmth filled his heart. They looked at each other for a moment, and then Zhou Dekun gave Meng Hao a firm embrace.

"Take care...." Zhou Dekun turned and flicked his sleeve. The members of the Battle Tribe gave the Crow Divinity Tribe one last deep glance before the black swords whistled off into the distance to disappear over the horizon.

Now, only the Crow Divinity Tribe was left floating there in midair along with 30,000 neo-demons. Meng Hao watched Zhou Dekun leave. After a long moment passed, he took a deep breath and then turned. He slowly wiped the emotion from his face, causing it to once again become ice cold.

He waved his hand, sucking the 30,000 neo-demons into his bag of holding. During the past half year, he had lost 50,000 neo-demons, including ones that had been consumed as food. With this replenishment, his horde now numbered 150,000!

When a horde of 150,000 neo-demons spread out, it was enough to shake the entire Western Desert. Such a vast number exceeded that which even great Tribes like the Five Poisons Tribe would have. If Meng Hao had possessed a neo-demon horde this large, then in the battle that year with the Five Poisons Tribe, he would have completely crushed them!

In the vast lands of the Western Desert, only great Tribes with Spirit Severing Patriarchs could sustain such a large accumulation of neo-demons like this.

Despite that, there was no Dragoneer who could possibly control 150,000 neo-demons at once. Even the legendary Grand Dragoneers would not be able to do so.

Meng Hao, however, could control that and even more.

150,000 neo-demons didn't count for much as far as he was concerned. He wasn't using his Cultivation base to control them, but rather, Demonic Qi. He could control 150,000, or 300,000, even 500,000.

Right now, Meng Hao and the Crow Divinity Tribe had reached a point

on their campaign trail in which they had completely risen to prominence from within the flames of battle. They could now thoroughly rock even great Tribes.

“We are more than halfway to our destination....” said Meng Hao. “Once we leave the Western Desert Central region, the only thing in front of us will be the Western Desert South region. Beyond that... are the Black Lands!” Meng Hao flicked his wide sleeve, and a gleam of determination appeared in the eyes of the Crow Divinity Tribe members. Their airship whistled into motion.

A rumbling sound could be heard as it transformed into a beam of colorful light.

Three days later, Meng Hao looked off into the far distance toward the area that was the border between the Western Desert Central and South regions. In recent days, the Western Desert North region had completely been turned into a sea. Of course, the East, West, and Central regions had no way to escape the disaster. The seawater flowed into those areas as well; the lakes were joining together and rising up.

No plains were visible. Mountainous valleys had long since been turned into underwater graves. The violet rain continued to pound down, inundating the land. The seawater grew deeper and deeper.... Everywhere was turning into a sea.

In some areas were places that resembled islands. However, the extermination of life force caused a thick aura of death to rise up everywhere. As for spiritual energy....

It was no longer extremely thin, but rather... not there.

The only hope lay in the South. The South region had the highest elevation, and was the only place that wasn't being run over with seawater. However, Meng Hao could only imagine how many Tribes must be gathered there. Although it might not be correct to say it was overrun, but probably close.

Now, though, the Crow Divinity Tribe were not the weaklings they had once been. They were fierce and intrepid. They were the type of Tribe that

others took seriously, even feared.

“We’re now on the final home stretch of our journey....” Meng Hao took a deep breath as the airship shot through the air. Even as they neared the border, Meng Hao’s eyes suddenly glittered with killing intent. He turned back to look off into the sky.

A yellowish glow could be seen shooting toward them from off in the distance. Before it even got close, buzzing sounds could be heard echoing out. It was now possible to see that the yellow glow was actually made up for countless winged locusts. Each one was about the size of a hand, and they were extremely fierce in appearance. There were tens of thousands of them, seemingly enough to blot out the sky.

Scattered about among the locusts were more than seven thousand Cultivators. All of them had expressions of disdain on their faces as they shot with the locusts toward the Crow Divinity Tribe.

Among the seven thousand Cultivators were twelve old men with cold, arrogant expressions. One of them suddenly said, “We are the Flying Locust Tribe of the great Cloud Sky Tribe! Crow Divinity Tribe, hand over your Demon Spirit. We will give you the space of three breaths to convince us why we shouldn’t exterminate your entire Tribe!”

Almost as soon as the words left his mouth, someone began to speak: “One, two....”

Before the third word could be uttered, the killing intent of the Crow Divinity Tribe exploded out. At the same time, Meng Hao, his expression the same as ever, waved his right hand.

As he did, 10,000 and then 30,000 neo-demons appeared, roaring.

“Small Tribes are small Tribes,” said another of the twelve old men. “If you dare to attack the great Cloud Sky Tribe with a trifling horde of 30,000 neo-demons then....” Before he could finish speaking, his eyes went wide with disbelief.

That was because the neo-demons didn’t stop at 30,000. Instead, their numbers grew to... 40,000. 50,000. 60,000.

By the time 60,000 neo-demons appeared, half of the group of twelve old men had serious expressions on their faces. Nearly half of the Cultivators they led were also panting. They could tell that if they wished to win a great victory in the coming battle, they would have to pay a steep price.

The man who appeared to be the leader among the group of twelve old men had a calm expression as he coolly said, “60,000 neo-demons. It seems the Main Tribe underestimate this Crow Divinity Tribe. Even still, we....” Before he could finish speaking, the faces of all twelve men completely fell. Even the man who had just been speaking couldn’t stop from gasping and opening his eyes wide in disbelief.

70,000. 80,000. 90,000. 100,000!

The sight of 100,000 neo-demons caused Heaven and Earth to shake. Their roars filled the sky, causing the sky to dim and a strong wind to kick up. The more than seven thousand Cultivators’ faces went pale and filled with astonishment. Even the twelve old men were panting and could feel their hearts pounding in their chests.

“100,000 neo-demons.... They’re all level six and above. This... this....”

“They have a neo-demon horde of 100,000! Dammit! How do we fight that!?!?”

“This is impossible. Even a Grand Dragoner can’t control a 100,000 strong neo-demon horde. How can that guy pull this off?!?!?”

Even as the members of the Flying Locust Tribe, including the Greatfather and Elders, panted in shock, their minds were then blown by the next thing that they saw. It was as if an invisible arrow had been shot directly into their brains. They were filled with shock and astonishment.

110,000. 120,000. 130,000.... Finally, all 150,000 neo-demons filled the sky. There is literally no way to describe the situation except with the expression “blot out the sky and cover up the earth.”

The members of the Flying Locust Tribe were struck completely speechless. They stared in shock, in stupefaction. A long moment passed

before they began to breathe again.

The twelve Nascent Soul Cultivators of the Flying Locust Tribe felt their scalps going numb as feelings of despair washed over them. Moments ago, they felt as if they were far above anyone else. To them, exterminating this Tribe was a trivial matter. In the blink of an eye, they suddenly found that the fierceness of this opponent made the entire situation the opposite of what they had thought. The truly trivial matter was how easily their opponent could exterminate them. Instantly, the entire Flying Locust Tribe began to tremble in their boots.

The vast difference between the two Tribes made it so that the Flying Locust Tribe Members could not muster even an ounce of fighting spirit. Their faces were completely devoid of blood.

Meng Hao's cold voice echoed out: "Flying Locust Tribe, I'll give you the space of three breaths to convince me why I shouldn't exterminate your entire Tribe!" The 150,000 neo-demons began to roar.

The roar transformed into sound waves that battered across the Flying Locust Tribe members. Their locusts let out plaintive howls and fell backward. The clothing of the Tribe members whipped about under the force of the roar and they retreated back. Their minds reeled, and they felt as if they were being suffocated.

Chapter 503: Choices

The faces of the seven thousand members of the Flying Locust Tribe were pale white, and they were shaking in fear. They almost couldn't believe their eyes as they stared at the neo-demons blotting out the sky.

150,000 neo-demons. A force this powerful could sweep over any mid-sized Tribe. Even some great Tribes that lacked Spirit Severing Patriarchs would be routed by such a force.

No Tribe would willingly go into battle against such a fierce neo-demon horde. It didn't matter that they were one of the thirteen auxiliary Tribes of the great Cloud Sky Tribe, nor that they had more than seven thousand Cultivators and tens of thousands of locusts.

There was no deadly Karma that existed between them and the Crow Divinity Tribe. They said that they were here because of the Five Poisons Clan. But the Five Poisons Clan had been exterminated long ago. Even the Flying Locust Clan didn't quite approve of such logic.

Clearly, the great Cloud Sky Tribe had simply made up a reason to attack, all for the purpose of saving face. And obviously, it made sense to take the Demon Spirit while they were at it.

If the matter were truly important to them, they could dispatch a Spirit Severing Patriarch to finish the matter quickly.

"One, two, three!" said Meng Hao, his voice cool as he stared icily at the members of the Flying Locust Tribe. When he finished speaking, he lifted his hand and pointed at them. The 150,000 roaring neo-demons were just about to charge the petrified Flying Locust Tribe when one of the twelve Nascent Soul Cultivators suddenly cried out.

"Fellow Daoist from the Crow Divinity Tribe, please wait a moment!!" This was the Flying Locust Tribe Greatfather, the one in the lead position.

Meng Hao's hand stopped moving, and his eyes flashed with coldness.

"This is all just a misunderstanding," said the Greatfather with a bitter smile. "Fellow Daoist from the Crow Divinity Tribe, please give just a

moment. I'll contact the Main Tribe and ask them to offer you an explanation. As for this battle... there's no need to actually fight. What do you say, Fellow Daoist...?" He sighed inwardly. If he had known that this opponent possessed such a fearsome neo-demon horde, then no amount of persuasion would have convinced him to accept the mission.

"Don't forget," he continued, "you could attack and wipe out the Flying Locust Tribe. However, if one of the great Cloud Sky Tribe's thirteen auxiliary tribes is destroyed, the enmity created... would never be wiped clean." The Greatfather produced a jade slip and then rotated his Cultivation based, sending power into it.

Meng Hao didn't interfere. In truth, Meng Hao was well aware that the best way to resolve the situation was to intimidate them, not engage in battle.

The Cloud Sky Tribe was a great Tribe after all, and had a Spirit Severing Patriarch. Meng Hao knew that, considering the level of his Cultivation base and the state of the Crow Divinity Tribe, even 150,000 neo-demons did not make him a match for the almighty Spirit Severing stage.

Not unless... the mastiff woke up!

Although signs had appeared recently that the mastiff would awaken, it was not fully awake.

Therefore, showing off some power to intimidate this opponent was the best choice. All actions taken by the Tribe would be decided based on the resulting cost or benefit. Meng Hao knew from Zhou Dekun that the great Cloud Sky Tribe wasn't extremely interested in Demon Spirits. They could do with one or without.

As such, if they could acquire a Demon Spirit without paying too much of a price, they would. But after considering, if they found that acquiring one would come at a heavy price, according to Meng Hao's analysis, they would most likely give up on the Demon Spirit.

After all, there was no true enmity between the two Tribes. Furthermore, the Apocalypse was reaching a critical juncture. Even great Tribes were in danger of being consumed by it; obviously they would not want to suffer

damage for no good reason.

All of this was what gave Meng Hao his current confidence.

The jade slip that the Greatfather held suddenly began to glow with a green light. The light expanded out, quickly becoming blinding. Gradually, it began to form into the shape of an illusory figure.

The Greatfather and High Priest of the Flying Locust Tribe, along with all the other Tribe members, immediately dropped to their knees in worship.

“We offer respectful greetings, exalted Emissary!”

As their voices echoed out, the green light congealed together. Suddenly, a man appeared. He appeared to be a bit over thirty, with handsome features and long, thin eyes that glowed with coldness. Although his body was illusory, his Cultivation base still rippled out with fearsome power that enveloped everything in the area.

His body glittered with a green light as he looked over Meng Hao and the 150,000 neo-demons. His pupils constricted, after which he then looked at the Crow Divinity Tribe members. He could sense their killing intent, and was clearly surprised.

A neo-demon horde like this left him shocked, and a Tribe like the Crow Divinity Tribe truly left him with the feeling that he was looking at a Battle Tribe.

Finally, his gaze came to rest on Meng Hao, and his eyes narrowed.

“Eccentric Bloodface!” he said slowly, using the title that people in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins had given him.

Actually, the rise of the Crow Divinity Tribe had not gone unnoticed in recent years. Of course, during that process, with more and more people paying attention, how could Meng Hao’s identity not have been revealed? After all, a blood-colored mask was something quite unique.

Of course, the origin of Meng Hao’s Demon Spirit had also been uncovered.

“It’s too bad that during the last appearance of the Realm of the Bridge

Ruins, I, Zhao, was in secluded meditation. Therefore, I didn't go. However, I heard of the matter afterward from Xu Bai of the great Black Dragon Tribe and Chen Mo of the great Demon Talisman Tribe. They were never able to forget the fact that you were able to snatch that Demon Spirit away, leaving them capable of only gnashing their teeth." 1

Meng Hao's expression was cold as he looked at the illusory image of the green-robed man. He said nothing. However, the coldness in his eyes seemed to grow deeper.

"You may choose to exterminate this Flying Lotus Tribe that you see in front of you," continued the man slowly. "However, the price you will pay is that the Cloud Sky Tribe will employ all of its forces to completely wipe you clean off the map.

"On the other hand, you could chose to come over and pledge allegiance to us, thus becoming an auxiliary branch of the great Cloud Sky Tribe. You have two paths to chose from. I await your response." The man looked over, smiling.

The killing intent of the Crow Divinity Tribes grew even more apparent. They stood there silently, as did Meng Hao. When it came to the two options presented to them by the great Cloud Sky Tribe, the only one which allowed them to continued to exist involved surrendering.

As one could imagine, if they surrendered and pledged allegiance, then it would secure them a spot in the Black Lands, as well as safe passage there. However, what they would lose, would be freedom. For generations to come, there would be no freedom.

Meng Hao did not have the right to make such a decision. He looked over his shoulder to look at the ten thousand members of the Crow Divinity Tribe. There were less than a thousand who were original Cultivators of the five Crow Divinity Tribes. Wu Chen was there, as well as Wu Ling. They had experienced the fires of war, and had long since grown up.

As for all the other new members of the Tribe, on this long road of war, they had come to rely on the Crow Divinity Tribe. At first, it seemed as if

they had lost their freedom; in truth, they had long since become an integral part of the Tribe.

Meng Hao's gaze swept over them. What he saw was reticence. It was a reticence filled with pride. It said, "I would rather die than live without my freedom."

That was their decision.

The 150,000 neo-beasts let out agitated howls as they hovered there, filling the sky. Their eyes glowed with the thirst for blood.

Meng Hao looked back at the green-robed man. When he spoke, his voice echoed out in all directions.

"The Crow Divinity Tribe will not choose to become an auxiliary Tribe.... If the Cloud Sky Tribe wishes to fight, then the Crow Divinity Tribe will fight!" As he spoke, the killing intent of the Crow Divinity Tribe exploded up.

All the members of the Flying Locust Tribe began to pant nervously, their faces pale. In terms of strength, they really did not measure up, which meant that they were in a hopeless situation. The green-robed man's eyes narrowed. He looked at Meng Hao for a long moment before suddenly laughing.

"My intentions were good in making my offer," he said. "However, if you and the Crow Divinity Tribe do not wish to become an auxiliary Tribe, Fellow Daoist, then let's just drop the matter. It seems there really have been too many misunderstandings here. Fellow Daoist, I wish you and the Crow Divinity Tribe good luck. Please be on your way to the Black Lands." The green-robed man smiled once again, and then slowly vanished. After seeing the Crow Divinity Tribe and the 150,000 neo-demons, he knew that a war with them... was not something that the great Cloud Sky Tribe would pursue.

The power of the Crow Divinity Tribe had grown to the point where it now truly was qualified to possess a Demon Spirit. The great Cloud Sky Tribe was not willing to pay such a heavy price only for a Demon Spirit. The end result would be that the great Cloud Sky Tribe would lose

multiple auxiliary Tribes. Even many members of the Main Tribe would also surely perish.

Recently, there had been many strange developments in the Black Lands. Everything seemed peaceful, but in fact, there were a lot of secret struggles going on. The great Cloud Sky Tribe couldn't afford too many losses at this point. In fact, the Spirit Severing Patriarchs currently in the Black Lands couldn't afford to step foot back out into the Western Desert. If they did, with the spiritual energy cut off, there was a high likelihood they could encounter other hostile Spirit Severing experts from great Tribes, which would result in deadly slaughter.

In such a time of momentous change, caution and prudence were the foundation of a great Tribe's ability to survive and thrive.

The Flying Locust Tribe Greatfather was finally able to let out a sigh of relief. He suddenly had a much better understanding of why the Battle Tribe hadn't been willing to go fight earlier. In his opinion, opting not to fight was definitely the sensible choice. Anyone who ran into a Tribe as fearsome as the Crow Divinity Tribe would surely feel their scalp go numb immediately.

He looked at Meng Hao, clasped hands and bowed. Then, he retreated at top speed, taking his seven thousand Tribe Members and tens of thousands of locusts with him. They transformed into a yellow cloud that shot off into the distance. In a short moment, there was no trace of them at all.

Meng Hao waved his hand, not to collect the neo-demons, but rather, causing them to fly in formation around the airship. The airship then began to speed through the air, accompanied by 150,000 neo-demons as it headed forward. Finally, it shot out from the Western Desert Central region into...

The Western Desert South region!

From this point, it was only half a year to the Black Lands.

As the Black Lands grew nearer and nearer, Meng Hao's eyes began to grow brighter and brighter. The members of the Crow Divinity Tribe were

filled with excitement and anticipation, and their killing intent even more intimidating.

Each and every member knew that the difficulty of this last leg of the journey would vastly exceed anything from before.

Right now, the Crow Divinity Tribe was completely different than it had been before; it had completely risen to prominence. This Tribe could cow great Tribes with Spirit Severing Patriarchs. It could sweep over mid-sized Tribes. As for great Tribes that had no Spirit Severing Patriarch, if they dared to block their path, then the Crow Divinity Tribe would fight!

They would not shrink back. They continued ever forward, their killing intent shocking. They were like a sharp, unsheathed sword. 150,000 neo-demons roared and howled, shaking everything around them, like a Heavenly sea of beasts. Standing atop their battleship, the members of the Crow Divinity Tribe proceeded onward, ready to brave any wind or waves that battered against them.

*

1. Xu Bai and Chen Mo appeared briefly in chapter 466.

Chapter 504: South Cleaving Pass

Three months had passed.

They were now deep into the Western Desert South region. Originally, the members of the Crow Divinity Tribe had assumed that they would experience an unprecedented campaign of constant battles. During the three months though, they only saw a few dozen Tribes. Two of them were great Tribes with no Spirit Severing Patriarch.

However... not a single battle resulted.

The reason for this was that the sight of Meng Hao and the Crow Divinity Tribe was simply too fierce. Their savagery had reached the point that when people saw them, they gasped. It didn't matter that the Crow Divinity Tribe had a Demon Spirit, no one dared to recklessly attack them.

The tribe numbered over ten thousand, with killing intent that reached to the Heavens. They had experienced a baptism in the fires of war; each and every member seemed equivalent to the elite experts of great Tribes. It was enough to intimidate anyone who looked at them. That was not even to mention... the 150,000 neo-demons. The sight of them was enough... to cause anyone to go numb, to send their mind spinning and their hearts to fill with astonishment.

Such an enormous neo-demon horde was large enough to trample any Tribe in the area. It was huge enough to determine whether or not a Tribe lived or died. Such power was something that no other Tribe would dare attack.

Because of all the battles, the name of the Crow Divinity Tribe had long since spread throughout the land. As of now, they were completely famous in all the Western Desert.

Virtually all Tribes knew of this group that had started out only one thousand strong. It had emerged from the Western Desert North region and traveled a path of war, slaughtering countless other Tribes. They fought for years, winning again and again, growing stronger and stronger. Now, they had reached a terrifying level of power.

Such fame and influence made it so that after the Crow Divinity Tribe reached the Western Desert South region, no one dared to even get in their way during the entire three months!

In fact, many Western Desert Cultivators now viewed the most powerful Tribes without Spirit Severing Cultivators to be the Crow Divinity Tribe, the Black Dragon Tribe and the Heavenly Wind Tribe.

Coincidentally, it was well known that all three of these Tribes possessed Demon Spirits.

One was from the East, one was from the West, and one was from the North. These three shocking Tribes had slaughtered their way out from three different directions.

The Crow Divinity's fame was astonishing, and their rise to prominence was already a legend!

As for the Black Dragon Tribe, years ago, they actually did have a Spirit Severing Patriarch. Unfortunately, his longevity had reached its end, and he was barely able to force himself to remain among the living. When the violet rain came with its power to exterminate life force and cut off spiritual energy, this previously all-powerful figure, a Spirit Severing expert, passed away and returned to the dust.

His death caused the Black Dragon Tribe to lose their qualification to enter the Black Lands. Despite that, they were still able to snatch a Demon Spirit. Now, they once again were the focus of attention.

When it came to the Heavenly Wind Tribe, they were a mysterious lot. They came from the east, and little information was known about their campaign of battles. It wasn't until they managed to snatch a Demon Spirit up that they suddenly rose to prominence.

Currently, these three great Tribes were generally acknowledged to be the most powerful.

During the three months of travel, nothing shocking happened, and they didn't stop to rest. Right now, they stood atop their airship, finally having arrived at a shocking stretch of mountains which rose up in front of them.

This mountain range stretched out as far as the eye could see in both directions. Lightning fell from up above down onto the mountain in constant waves, sending crashing booms out in all directions. It made the entire thing seem like the wall of a prison, completely sealed tight.

This was the location of South Cleaving Pass!

These mountains split the entire Western Desert South region into two parts. One part was considered completely part of the Western Desert. The other part was adjacent to the Black Lands. As such, you could not get to the Black Lands without going through this pass.

The fact that this mountain range swept across the land in both directions this way was because it was not a naturally occurring mountain range. Tens of thousands of years ago, when Southern Domain Cultivators made counter incursions into the Western Desert, they slaughtered their way to this point. It was then that all the Tribes of the Western Desert, and all of their powerful experts, spent several hundred years to raise up this mountain range.

It contained ancient spell formations that caused the lightning to exist permanently. In fact, what appeared to be lightning, was really a collection of countless sealing spells created by divine abilities and magical techniques. This place completely sealed off the rest of the continent; it was a door that, once shut, was impossible to break through.

Because of that, the great army of the Southern Domain was stopped outside, and eventually choose to leave.

This pass which led to the Black Lands became famous, and was kept in place after its initial creation. There was only one way in and out, and in that key spot, an enormous city was built.

That city was named South Cleaving City.

Any Tribe or group who wished to step foot into the Black Lands would have to pass through this city. Therefore, it became a very strategic point, and was naturally under heavy guard.

Currently, it was guarded by a great Tribe of the Western Desert, the Sea

Demon Tribe. 1

This great Tribe had no Spirit Severing Patriarch, but in terms of overall power, they were intrepid and valiant. Because they were in the South all along, they had experienced few losses. Furthermore, they occupied the city, which enabled them to grow only more and more powerful.

During the years in which it occupied the city, the great Sea Demon Tribe had eventually made a rule. That rule was that any Tribe who wished to travel through the pass had to pay them one half of all their resources, including Spirit Stones and neo-demons.

Only in this way would they be permitted to travel through.

Any Tribes who were inferior to the Sea Demon Tribe and chose not to travel through the pass, would camp in the area in the hope that the higher elevation in the area would prevent the seawater from spreading to them.

Any Tribes who chose to travel through the pass could only patiently bear the exploitation of the Sea Demon Tribe.

As for Tribes who were powerful enough to threaten the great Sea Demon Tribe, the only thing they could do was begrudgingly pay the price. They knew that in front of them was the Sea Demon Tribe, and behind them were powerful bandit Tribes who were encamped in the area.

Only someone incredibly stupid or egotistical would dare not to pay the price.

According to the rumors, behind the great Sea Demon Tribe lurked the shadow of one of the three leaders of the Heavenly Court Alliance, the great Heavenly Pursuit Tribe.

On this particular day, the Crow Divinity's battleship shot through the air, parting the clouds as it entered South Cleaving Pass. They were accompanied by 150,000 neo-demons. Below, many of the scattered Tribes camped at the bottom of the pass looked up with shock as the Crow Divinity Tribe approached.

Tens of thousands of Cultivators were camped out down below, all of

them from various different Tribes. As they looked up, discussions instantly broke out.

“That’s the Crow Divinity Tribe....”

“That guy in the front must be Eccentric Bloodface. According to the legends, he’s vicious and merciless. He’s not even a Cultivator! He was incarnated from a neo-demon, the totemic Sacred Ancient of the Crow Divinity Tribe!”

“Three months ago, when the Heavenly Wind Tribe faced up against the Sea Demon Tribe, they had no choice but to give up half of their valuables in order to be able to travel through. I wonder what the Crow Divinity Tribe will chose to do?”

Meanwhile, within South Cleaving City, the members of the great Sea Demon Tribe were looking out with expressions of scorn and disdain as they pointed toward the Crow Divinity Tribe. The Elders of the Tribe looked out coldly from their position on the city wall, contempt clearly written on their faces.

As for the Greatfather and the High Priest, they didn’t even appear. To them, the Crow Divinity wasn’t worthy of their presence.

“Halt!” As the Crow Divinity Tribe neared, one Sea Demon Tribe Elders appeared, an early Nascent Soul stage Cultivator. His expression was one of haughtiness, as if everything he saw was beneath him. The sight of 150,000 neo-demons shocked him, but he didn’t lose any of his lofty pride.

As his voice echoed out, the Crow Divinity Tribe’s airship came to a stop. Meng Hao stood on the prow, looking at South Cleaving Pass with a frown.

“If you wish to travel through the pass,” said the Elder coolly, “produce all of your valuables. After a thorough check, we will take half as payment. Then you may travel through the pass. The same goes for your neo-demon horde.” As his voice rang out, the Cultivators from all the other Tribes grew silent. Their eyes glowed brightly as they looked at the Crow Divinity Tribes.

Of course, they didn't dare to tangle with the Crow Divinity Tribe. However, if the neo-demon horde of the Crow Divinity Tribe were reduced by half, effectively diminishing their power by a huge amount, then... they might have the guts to attack.

It was not a minority who thought in this way. A black cloud formed on the other side of the pass as three Tribes appeared, each one numbering over 10,000, with tens of thousands of neo-demons. Their desire to slaughter was quite evident as they hovered about in the air near South Cleaving City. They looked like rapacious plunderers, just waiting for a Tribe to emerge from the pass. Their gazes locked onto the Crow Divinity Tribe, the greed in their eyes growing more and more intense.

Meng Hao saw them, and his frown deepened. The coldness in his eyes grew sharper. As for the members of the Crow Divinity Tribe, they stood there silently, their killing intent spreading out.

On the other side of the pass, the Greatfathers of the three bandit Tribes exchanged glances and then looked at Meng Hao with cold, mocking smiles.

“After all these months, we finally hooked a big fish....”

“That's right. Three months ago, some of the other Tribes tried to rob the Heavenly Wind Tribe. Although they let them go in the end, they still managed to snatch up some good loot.”

“The richer they are, the more powerful they are. Even if they don't have Demon Spirits, that doesn't mean they can't get a chance to enter the Black Lands.... Although, in this case, the Crow Divinity Tribe actually does have a Demon Spirit.” The Priests and Elders of these tribes were now panting, and their eyes shone with a bloodthirsty glow.

They were confident that the Crow Divinity Tribe would not dare to defy the rules of South Cleaving Pass. After all, according to the stories, the Heavenly Court Alliance itself supported the arrangement.

“The Crow Divinity Tribe has a Demon Spirit. They'll definitely travel through the pass... and sooner rather than later. After all, even more bandit Tribes are gathering behind them.”

“When they emerge from the pass, they will have lost half of their resources and neo-demons. Faced up against three bandit Tribes, the fighting will be fierce. However, they are flanked by even more bandit Tribes, so the result would be the same. I wonder what they’ll choose?”

The Tribes within the pass who had no option of traveling through to the other side, or perhaps were hesitating about whether to do so, could see the black cloud on the other side, and the three Tribes radiating killing intent. This caused their faces to flicker, and their minds to fill with a droning sound.

The entire Crow Divinity Tribe was silent, including Meng Hao. Up above on the walls of South Cleaving City, the members of the Sea Demon Tribe were all chatting and laughing as they looked contemptuously out at the scene playing out within the pass.

The solitary Sea Demon Tribe Elder was beginning to look impatient. His voice cold, he said, “You’re the Crow Divinity Tribe, right? If you’re not going to go through the pass, then screw off this instant!”

Meng Hao slowly lifted his head. When he spoke, it was calm, although the sound of his voice was like thunder. It echoed about, creating massive sound waves. “Would you pipe down?”

*

1. Sea Demon could also be translated “siren”.

Chapter 505: Do You Dare to Attack?!

As soon as his voice echoed out into the ears of the Crow Divinity Tribe, the heads of the more than ten thousand Tribe members all suddenly snapped up. Their eyes radiated killing intent. Meng Hao's gaze was icy cold as his hand stretched out. Suddenly, a long, black spear appeared in his hand.

This was the the spear given to him by Demon Weapon Lonelytomb, refined from the Devil Construct, and filled with ten percent of its power... the Devil Spear!

As soon as the spear appeared, the clouds in the area began to roil, and shocking killing intent appeared.

The response of the Crow Divinity Tribe, and the appearance of Meng Hao's Devil Spear, instantly attracted the attention of the three great Tribes on the other side of the pass. Smiles appeared on their faces as they looked at Meng Hao. Although they hoped the Crow Divinity Tribe would fight with the Sea Demon Tribe, deep inside, they felt this to be impossible. The Crow Divinity Tribe would only dare to attack... if they were crazy.

Their smiles were noticed by the tens of thousands of Cultivators inside of the pass. In this moment when anything could happen, those tens of thousands of people instantly began to discuss the matter anxiously.

"Those Tribes on the other side of the pass have no way of getting into the Black Lands. They roam about in the area outside of it, plundering and killing. Their main goal is to rob the Tribes that have just emerged from the pass...."

"A lot of Tribes have been destroyed in such a way. It looks like those people really do believe the rumor that people have been talking about. Who knows who started it...."

"We believe the rumor too. Supposedly, in the final moments of the Apocalypse, when the lands are on the verge of being submerged, whichever Tribe survives the final chaotic battle will have a chance to

enter the Black Lands! As long as the three leaders in the Black Lands approve of that Tribe's power, they will be pulled in as an auxiliary Tribe!"

This rumor had been spreading throughout the past few years, and was now deeply ingrained in the hearts of the local Cultivators. Many of the Tribes who were here without Demon Spirits had come to truly believe in the rumor.

As the discussions continued, Meng Hao stood on the prow of the battleship, Devil Spear in hand. Instantly, black mist began to roil and seethe around him. Within the mist could be seen countless faces, each and every one was vicious and savage. Ear-piercing laughter could be heard that sounded like the cries of nightbirds. It sounded almost like skulls being grated together, cold and hair-raising.

The Crow Divinity members behind Meng Hao all began to stand up. Killing intent roiled off their bodies, and their bloodshot eyes began to burn as if with fire. Their desire to kill was intense, but their hearts were exceedingly calm.

As of this moment, each and every one looked like a heroic veteran of hundreds of battles!

"What do you think you're doing?" said the Sea Demon Tribe Elder who stood there in the middle of South Cleaving City. He gave a cold, disdainful snort.

"You want to attack the Sea Demon Tribe of South Cleaving Pass?" he said arrogantly. "You've got guts, but if you dare to make even a single attack, or spill even a drop of Sea Demon Tribe blood, then your entire Tribe will be exterminated within three days!" He was convinced that the Crow Divinity Tribe would not dare to attack. All of this was just posturing in an attempt to reduce the price that would have to be paid to go through the pass.

He had seen a lot of Tribes like this. Up to this point, not a single one had dared to actually make a move. All had ended up bowing their heads in compliance.

It wasn't just him who thought in this way. The members of the Sea

Demon Tribe up on the walls of South Cleaving City were all laughing coldly, their scorn and disdain clearly visible.

At the same time, the tens of thousands of other Cultivators within the pass were all panting as they stared at the Crow Divinity Tribe and Meng Hao.

“Will the Crow Divinity Tribe actually dare to attack? I just don’t believe it!”

“Ever since the Apocalypse began and the Sea Demon Tribe took over the South Cleaving Pass, there has never been a single Tribe who attempted to attack and storm the pass.... I think the Crow Divinity Tribe is just doing some saber-rattling.”

Even as the sound of the discussions echoed out, the atmosphere up above in mid-air couldn’t be more tense. Suddenly, coldness sprang out from Meng Hao’s eyes.

The Sea Demon Tribe, his arrogance at its zenith, suddenly said, “Why haven’t you attacked yet? I’m waiting for you, you trifling Northern Tribe. You dare to act ferocious, but I’m waiting to see if you’ll actually have the gall to attack!

“In fact, as of now, I forbid you from saying that you won’t attack. Even if you get on your knees and beg, you can forget about paying only half of your resources to get through South Cleaving Pass. You will pay ALL of your resources and ALL of your neo-demons....”

It was at this moment that Meng Hao suddenly flung out the Devil Spear. The pitch black spear shot like lightning through the air. Rumbling filled the air.

A shrill, screaming sound could be heard, and a sound like something being ripped through, as if the air were being torn to pieces. The Cultivators down below saw a black beam ripping through the air, emanating a shocking aura as it shot directly toward South Cleaving Pass.

Black mist surrounded the Devil Spear, within which were maliciously laughing faces. The sound of the laughter echoed out, causing all hearts to

tremble. In the blink of an eye, the Devil Spear crossed the distance between Meng Hao and the Sea Demon Tribe Elder. The Elder's face filled with shock as the spear appeared directly in front of him.

His heart trembled as a fierce wind blasted against his face, as well as a sharpness that caused his chest to fill with stabbing pain. His clothing whipped about, his hair was thrown into disarray, and he felt as if he were being strangled. Without even thinking about it, he retreated. Even in his wildest dreams, he would never have imagined that... the Crow Divinity Tribe would actually dare to attack!

Waves of astonishment filled his mind, along with countless questions, making it impossible for him to have the time to dodge. At this point, he couldn't dodge even if he wanted to.

"They actually attacked?"

"They did! They attacked!"

The Sea Demon Tribe Elder's eyes went wide and his pupils constricted. His vision was suddenly filled by a black mist. All the onlookers watched wide-eyed as the long, black spear stabbed directly into his chest, tearing apart his clothes, shredding his flesh and blood. It stabbed through his heart, piercing him through, carrying him with it as it continued to scream through the air.

Blood sprayed from the old man's mouth. He looked down in disbelief at the Devil Spear vibrating in his chest as it carried him through the air.

"How is this possible...." He still almost couldn't believe what was happening.

At the same time, massive amounts of mist poured out from the spear. It looked like countless black snakes as it poured into the Elder's eyes, ears, nose and mouth. It even burrowed into the pores on his skin. As the mist sank into him, countless bloodthirsty faces pounced. The sound of chewing echoed out, accompanied by the bloodcurdling screams of the old man.

Those screams were filled with indescribable pain. One could only

imagine the unprecedented brutality that would cause an early Nascent Soul Cultivator to scream in such a way.

BAM!

The Devil Spear slammed into the city wall of South Cleaving City. Cracking sounds could be heard and fissures spread out across the wall as the Sea Demon Tribe Elder was impaled directly onto its surface.

Looking at the scene, however, the only thing that could be seen was a black mist. As for the horrific screaming, it had long since ceased.

Everything was deathly quiet. Meng Hao's expressions was the same as ever as he lifted up his hand and made a grasping gesture. Instantly, a droning sound could be heard as the spear dissipated. A black mist of countless vicious faces dispersed and then shot back toward Meng Hao, seemingly eager to report their success.

At the same time, it was revealed that in the middle of the mist... was no body! There was only a skeleton!

The bones of the skeleton were covered in bite marks, as if they had been chewed upon. Some were even completely crushed. Without the Devil Spear to hold it in place, the skeleton crumbled apart and fell to the ground. Only a few pieces were left, stuck in the cracks in the city wall. The sight was thoroughly astonishing.

The Sea Demon Tribe members were instantly shaken. The tens of thousands of Cultivators down below in the pass stared with wide eyes and open mouths.

The three bandit Tribes on the other side of the pass had similar reactions. The scene was completely shocking, causing them to pant and look on with disbelief.

Not a single person could have predicted that the Crow Divinity Tribe would actually dare to make a move, and that Meng Hao... would be so audacious as to slay an Elder of the Sea Demon Tribe.

Everyone who saw it happen felt as if their heads were about to explode. Each and every one was thinking the exact same thing.

“The Crow Divinity Tribe... did the unthinkable!!”

The tens of thousands of Cultivators within the pass stood as still as if they were dead. Only panting could be heard as they looked at Meng Hao and the Crow Divinity Tribe. It was as if this was their first time seeing them. They were overwhelmed with shock. Meng Hao's decisiveness, the awe-inspiring Devil Spear, the shocking attack, all of these things transformed into something like lightning that crashed around inside their minds. The scene just now was something that they would never be able to forget.

The three Tribes on the other side of the pass, who moments ago had been greedily eyeing the Crow Divinity Tribe, even laughing at them, now felt thunderstruck. Ordinary Tribe members, Priests, and even the Greatfathers were breathing heavily and had looks of amazement plastered on their faces.

How could they ever have imagined that the Crow Divinity Tribe... would really dare to make a move!! Furthermore, they didn't just simply attack. They actually killed someone!

Such decisiveness, such killing intent, such a desire to exterminate, caused the hearts of the members of these three Tribes to fill with madness. The confidence they had felt moments ago regarding their ability to defeat this opponent, was instantly shaken with grave intensity. Fear suddenly blossomed in their hearts.

The most shaken of all was the Sea Demon Tribe. Every Tribe member who saw what happened was unable to even react. From the very beginning, they had been literally incapable of believing that the scene they had just witnessed could possibly unfold. They just didn't believe that someone would actually dare to attack the Sea Demon Tribe....

After a long moment of deathly silence, enraged cries could suddenly be heard from within South Cleaving City. More than a dozen figures emerged to charge forward, followed by tens of thousands of neo-demons and twenty thousand Tribe members!

Among their number was a red-haired old man, the Greatfather of the

Sea Demon Tribe. His face was filled with shock, but also fury. He was clearly flustered and discomfited.

Before he could even say anything, Meng Hao's black mist returned to him and formed once again into the Devil Spear. He pointed it forward and cried, "Fight!"

No more words were necessary. Only one word.... Instantly, the eyes of the more than ten thousand Crow Divinity Tribe members turned red, and they began to shout.

"Kill them!" As the shocking sound rose up, the entire Crow Divinity Tribe shot forward. They looked like a group of fiends and monsters who had fought and survived hundreds of battles. Their charge was accompanied by dense killing intent which caused even the sky to dim. Clouds amassed up above, making it seem as if they were surging out from the depths of the yellow springs as they charged toward South Cleaving City!

Even more shocking, it was at this moment that 150,000 neo-demons appeared, bloodthirsty and furious. They blotted out the entire sky as they charged South Cleaving Pass!

Chapter 506: South Cleaving Sentinel!

Booms shook the sky and explosions caused the earth to quake. The entirety of South Cleaving Pass seemed to be trembling. The sound of close-quarters fighting could be heard echoing about.

The more than ten thousand members of the Crow Divinity Tribe had bloodshot eyes as they fought with frenzied madness. Magical techniques were employed, as well as the explosive power of the five elements totem tattoos. Instantly, an indescribably shocking aura rose up.

In the blink of an eye, a massacre began.

Wu Chen was no longer a youth. He looked like a grown man. However, this was not a change that happened because of the passage of time. Instead, it was the result of a baptism in the fires of war, a tempering that occurred within blood and gore. He looked far more mature than before, his face grave and stern. His eyes were filled with veins of blood and his body radiated killing intent and grim coldness.

He attacked, Wood-type totems magically appeared. Glowing light rose up, surrounding his hands as he lifted the severed head of a Sea Demon Tribe Cultivator high up into the air. Blood dripped down his arm as he looked up to the sky and howled.

Around him, similar scenes played out with other Crow Divinity Tribe members. Whenever they killed someone, they would hold a severed head up to the sky. The auras they emanated were shocking.

To them, war was like breathing. Well, perhaps that is a bit of an exaggeration. In any case, they were long since accustomed to it. Years of campaigning and countless deaths made it so that all the members of the Crow Divinity Tribe did not pay too much attention to the difference between life and death. However, their determination to enter the Black Lands only continued to grow stronger.

Such determination caused them to be filled with the mad desire to slaughter anything that stood in their way.

Their attacks were neat and tidy. They killed in the blink of an eye. The sight of blood spraying about did not cause them to tremble, but rather fueled their bloodthirsty desire to kill.

“Kill them!” It was hard to say who shouted it first. But soon, the voices of more than ten thousand Crow Divinity Tribe members joined together. The shocking roar of their shouts, filled with killing intents, rose up to the Heavens. The hearts of the Sea Demon Tribe Cultivators were instantly shaken. All of them felt their faces grow pale and their bravery drizzle away. The only thing they could do was fall back.

Such a massacre, such a show by each and every member of the Crow Divinity Tribe, made it seem as if their Tribe were a tempest of slaughter, ready to sweep across South Cleaving Pass. After being engaged in a battle for only the space of a few breaths, the members of the Sea Demon Tribe had already lost several thousand Cultivators.

They were incapable of withstanding even a single attack!

“This cannot be a Tribe from the North!!”

“The North region doesn’t have any Tribes like this! Only great Tribes with Spirit Severing Patriarchs have Battle Tribes like this!!” Thoughts of disbelief filled the hearts and minds of the members of the Sea Demon Tribe. Such feelings turned into wellsprings of fear. They could not control the trembling they felt inside.

Miserable screams could be heard, filled with despair and terror. Actually, for all of the members of the Sea Demon Tribe... it had been a very, very long time since they had experienced war. In the past, they had had their glories, but after the arrival of the Apocalypse, they had only encountered Tribes which would submit to them. This was the first time they had run into a Tribe which unexpectedly attacked with such savagery and fierceness.

The Sea Demon Tribe had started out furious, but now, that fury had turned into dread. Dread, and screams that echoed out in all directions. The tens of thousands of other Tribe members down in the pass below watched on with wide eyes and gaping mouths. They panted, staring

blankly at everything that was happening. The sounds of slaughter filled their ears, and any bit of courage in their hearts was washed away by the wailing and screaming.

All of this made them feel as if what they were watching wasn't even real. However, soon, all of the blood, all of the ruthlessness and slaughter on the battlefield, became incredibly clear.

"This is... the Crow Divinity Tribe?"

"The Crow Divinity Tribe... has become so powerful! In front of them, the Sea Demon Tribe is like dried up weeds and rotten wood, easily crushable!"

The observing tens of thousands of Cultivators could only breath heavily, their hearts filled with intense shock.

From a distance, the members of the Crow Divinity Tribe seemed like sharp arrows that could slash through anything that obstructed their way. They stabbed into South Cleaving Pass; there was not a Sea Demon Tribe Member they encountered who was capable of offering the least bit of resistance.

Throughout the course of their long campaign, the number of Nascent Soul Cultivators in the Crow Divinity Tribe had reached fourteen. Two were of the late Nascent Soul stage, five of the mid stage, and seven of the early stage. These fourteen Cultivators whistled through the air, slaughtering their way toward the Sea Demon Tribe's Nascent soul Cultivators. The two forces slammed into each other with a bang, and deadly fighting broke out.

Booms echoed out, shaking the mountain peaks. The sound of the slaughter shook Heaven and Earth. As for Meng Hao, he floated in mid-air, looking around coldly. He did not need to attack; instead, his 150,000 neo-demons swept forth with crushing will. Any resistance was like trampling weeds and smashing rotten wood.

The neo-demons of the Sea Demon Tribe were instantly ripped into shreds, transformed into food. Meng Hao did nothing to gather them into his horde; after all... his neo-demons had been starving for months....

At the moment, Meng Hao's neo-demon horde was enjoying a sumptuous feast.

He held the Devil Spear in hand as his eyes swept over the battlefield. The air rippled as two old men appeared in front of him, having slipped past all obstructions.

The Cultivation bases of these two old men were not weak. Flames of fury raged in their eyes as divine abilities magically appeared. Totemic power exploded out like an ocean, transforming into the image of a Sea Demon that immediately shot toward Meng Hao, exuding massive pressure that weighed down on him.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever. He didn't move other than to lift up the Devil Spear and stretch it out. Like a long dragon crossing a sea, devilish mist exploded out. Countless misty faces shot toward the two old men.

Meng Hao used none of his own power; this was purely the might of the Devil Spear. As of this moment, Meng Hao could sense that this spear would not last forever. After all, it was refined from a Devil Construct, and as time passed, the Devilish will inside would fade away. Before too much time passed, it would dissipate completely.

It had nothing to do with whether or not Meng Hao used it. It would fade away either way.

Booming filled the air as the two old men shot backward, blood spraying from their mouths, faces filled with astonishment. Strands of Devilish mist bored into them, and ferocious mouths began to bite into them. The old men's faces fell as they shot back. No longer did they harbor thoughts of attacking; unfortunately, they were immediately blocked by the Crow divinity Nascent Soul Cultivators who had been chasing them.

It was at this point that ferocious roaring could suddenly be heard from within South Cleaving Pass. Suddenly, blue ripples appeared, shooting up into the air to form an expansive sea.

The tens of thousands of Cultivators down below were panting. Some of them immediately recognized what these ripples were.

“Sea Demon totem!!”

The roaring and the spreading ripples seemed to cause the Sea Demon Tribe members, who were in the middle of being routed, to suddenly find hope within their despair. Their eyes instantly began to glow with wild joy.

At the same time, the ground rumbled as an area within South Cleaving city suddenly collapsed. A blue beam of light shot up into the air. Ripples spread out like sea waves as it shot toward Meng Hao.

A creature appeared. Blue scales covered its body, giving it a bizarre appearance. It was shaped like a human, except that it had the tail of a fish, and four arms. Each of its four hands brandished a trident.

Four tridents all danced with lightning. The instant this creature appeared, a shocking aura exploded out. With a roar of fury, it shot toward Meng Hao.

Before it could get close, a gust of wind blew through the air as the Outlander Beast appeared. As it slammed into the creature, the parrot also appeared, flapping its wings as it squawked:

“No fur or feathers! Dammit! You also have no fur or feathers!! Beloved concubine, put it to death!” Amidst its high-pitched squawks, the parrot suddenly transformed into a spearhead which shot toward the totemic Sea Demon.

Huge booms filled the air as vast quantities of Sea Demon Tribe members died. Blood rained down onto South Cleaving Pass. Even their souls were destroyed. The entire battlefield was a mass of redness.

It seemed as if the Sea Demon Tribe was about to be completely exterminated. However, it was at this point that the Sea Demon Tribe Greatfather let out a miserable howl.

“Main Tribe, save me!!” As his voice echoed out, South Cleaving Pass began to shake. Multiple fissures appeared on the surface of South Cleaving City and began to spread out rapidly, almost like lightning bolts. Many of the buildings within the city simply collapsed, causing dust to billow up into the air. A strange murmuring suddenly could be heard. It

seemed as if this strange murmuring was a calling, a call to an enormous, ancient statue which existed beneath South Cleaving City. The statue slowly began to break out of the ground and rise up.

It was pitch black and had eight arms. At first, it seemed similar to the Sea Demon totem, however, the feeling it gave was one of complete ancientness. There also seemed to be some type of evil within the aura that emanated out from it. As it rose up, its closed eyes suddenly opened.

It seemed to be just a statue, however, in the blink of an eye, some sealing was apparently shattered and its soul suddenly awoke. Instantly, the power of this ancient statue's soul exploded out.

The moment its eyes opened, a tremor ran through Meng Hao's body and a sense of profound deadly crisis filled him. Although his eyes went wide, he did not retreat in the slightest. His right hand lifted up and he hurled the Devil Spear toward the statue.

BZZZZZZ!

The Devil Spear split the air, transforming into a beam of blackness that shot forward.

"South Cleaving Sentinel!!"

"I... I read about that once in the ancient records! A total of one hundred were created in the Western Desert to defend against the great army of Southern Domain Cultivators. That's a South Cleaving Sentinel!"

"A Black-Armored Sentinel!!"

"No wonder the Sea Demon Tribe could take over this area. Their totem is similar to this Black-Armored Sentinel. Don't tell me... the Sea Demon Tribe is actually descended from this thing!!"

Even as the tens of thousands of Cultivators below discussed the matter, the Devil Spear shredded through the air. In the blink of an eye, it was directly in front of the statue, heading toward its forehead, carrying with it a Devilish mist filled with countless vicious faces.

However, the statue completely ignored the Devil Spear. Its eyes glowed

with a strange light as it stared at Meng Hao. In the exact moment that the Devil spear reached its head, its lips moved and it spoke a word.

“Psyche.”

It was only one word, but Meng Hao’s body trembled and blood sprayed from his mouth. He tumbled backward, face pale. It was as if his soul were about to be ripped into shreds. An intense pain suddenly stabbed out throughout his entire body.

It was as if this one word carried the power to cause anything the statue looked at to be destroyed!

Meanwhile, the three bandit Tribes on the other side of the pass exchanged glances. Suddenly, the three Greatfathers stepped forward.

“They dared to attack the guardians of the pass, the Sea Demon Tribe!” they cried. “This is an opportunity we can’t pass up. We can’t just stand by and watch!” Hearing the voices of their Greatfathers, the members of the three bandit Tribes instantly shot toward South Cleaving Pass.

Obviously, they saw that Meng Hao had been injured, which changed the tide of the battle. Now was their chance to slaughter and plunder!

Chapter 507: Black Dragon Tribe!

Almost at the same moment in which the three bandit Tribes charged forward, further off back in the pass, a black dragon roared. This black dragon was several thousand meters long; atop it stood over ten thousand Cultivators. Around the wrist of each one of these Cultivators was a black cord.

Killing intent pulsed out from within the black cords. The garments worn by the ten thousand Cultivators were simple, and hard looks could be seen on their faces. Their gazes were cold, and at first glance, looked very similar to the expressions of the Crow Divinity Tribe.

The main difference between the two was that, shockingly, on their foreheads could be seen the mark of a black dragon.

This was... the great Black Dragon Tribe!

Before, they had a Spirit Severing Patriarch, and had shined gloriously for a thousand years. Unfortunately, their Spirit Severing Patriarch had perished. After that, they had relied on their own strength to plunder a Demon Spirit, and had then slaughtered their way out from within the Western Desert East region. Now they had finally arrived at South Cleaving Pass!

During their journey, their Tribe of close to one hundred thousand had been reduced to only about ten thousand. More than seventy percent of their Tribe had perished. Even still, this was the great Black Dragon Tribe. This was still that Tribe that was strong enough to strike fear into the hearts of Western Desert Cultivators.

Behind the Black Dragon was a rope that was festooned with... skulls!

More than one hundred thousand skulls were threaded onto the black rope which was woven together to form something almost like a cape. It fluttered in the air as the black dragon flew, casting a shadow over the land beneath.

An aura of death surrounded it, and it was even possible to hear the

sound of mourning souls that were sealed within the skulls, struggling to free themselves.

These were the skulls of enemies killed by the Black Dragon Clan in the battles on their journey. They were trophies of war, used to shock the surrounded thieves and robbers!

On the head of the black dragon were eight Cultivators. Most were old men with cold eyes, who made the Tribe as a whole seem like a sharp, unsheathed blade.

Among the eight men was a younger man who stuck out from the rest. He was extremely muscular and very tall, about a head taller than the average Western Desert Cultivator. He wore a simple black garment, and a fierce black dragon totem tattoo could be seen on his forehead. He looked rugged, and his eyes shone with a bright light.

Around his right wrist was wrapped a black cord. It seemed ordinary, and didn't appear to have any unusual characteristics, as if it were just a traditional ornamentation of the Black Dragon Tribe.

This person was none other than Xu Bai! 1

Years ago in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, he and Chen Mo of the great Demon Talisman Tribe had attempted to snatch a Demon Spirit only to have it grabbed by Zhixiang. In the end, the three of them had watched wide-eyed as Meng Hao attacked, and then managed to grab the Demon Spirit for himself.

They gave chase, but Meng Hao was too fast. Then, Zhixiang interfered, forcing Xu Bai and Chen Mo to give up. It was with great regret that Xu Bai left the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. At the same time, he was left with a deep impression of Meng Hao and Zhixiang.

As the Black Dragon Tribe neared, it instantly attracted the attention of the tens of thousands of Cultivators who were watching the battle between the Crow Divinity Tribe and the Sea Demon Tribe. As soon as they looked over, they recognized the Black Dragon Tribe. Instantly, their faces began to flicker as they wondered what the Tribe would choose to do.

Xu Bai looked at the battle unfolding in South Cleaving Pass, and lightning seemed to dance in his eyes. He saw Meng Hao retreating from the bizarre statue, blood oozing out of his mouth.

Xu Bai saw Meng Hao, he saw the Sea Demon Tribe, he saw the strange, eight-armed statue, and he saw the three bandit Tribes whistling toward them from the other side of the pass.

He was quiet for the space of about three breaths, after which he lifted his head back and laughed.

“Eccentric Bloodface, Meng Hao.... I’ve heard your name mentioned a lot recently. I’ve been following the rumors with quite some interest.... You led the Crow Divinity Tribe out from the Western Desert North region all the way to here. You... have really caused me to admire you!” His laughter was bright and crisp, without any feeling of insincerity. He truly did feel incredible admiration for Meng Hao. After all, stories about the Crow Divinity Tribe, Meng Hao and the events in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, had long since spread far and wide.

In some ways, his feelings toward Meng Hao could be summed up in the expression, “those who have the same illness sympathize with each other,” or maybe even, “people of talent appreciate one another.” The Black Dragon Tribe and the Crow Divinity Tribe started out in much the same situation, although the Black Dragon Tribe was a bit better off. After the Apocalypse began, their Spirit Severing Patriarch perished and they lost their qualification to enter the Black Lands. The Tribe members abandoned themselves to hopelessness and despair. In addition to that, old enemies besieged and attacked them. However, the Patriarch had made certain preparations before death, and then Xu Bai rose to prominence, leading the Tribe on a path of slaughter that caused their faith to once again grow strong. At that point... the great Black Dragon Tribe was firmly entrenched in the history books.

This was how they were similar to the Crow Divinity Tribe, and also the reason why Xu Bai next lifted his hand and pointed.

“I, Xu Bai, detest those who interfere in the battles of others. Crow

Divinity Tribe, allow my Black Dragon Tribe to obstruct the path of these three bandit Tribes!” Instantly, the black dragon roared, and the ten thousand members of the great Black Dragon Tribe poured forth, transforming into black beams of light as they charged. They were accompanied by a sizable number of neo-demons. They shot into the battlefield, but didn’t stop. They continued onward, directly toward the incoming three bandit Tribes.

The Greatfathers of the three other Tribes instantly shouted out.

“Xu Bai, what are you doing?! There are no ill-feelings between us.... We didn’t attack you either! We’re only helping South Cleaving Pass! Don’t tell me that you’re also trying to break through the pass like the Crow Divinity Tribe!?”

“Great Black Dragon Tribe, you need to think things through clearly! If you start fighting us, then it means you’re declaring war on all the bandit Tribes! Once you leave the pass, you won’t be able to move a single step!”

“I’ve already thought things through clearly,” replied Xu Bai, his voice cool. Rumbling killing intent spread out from the members of the Black Dragon Tribe. The faces of the members of the three bandit Tribes fell as intense fighting suddenly began!

Xu Bai laughed coldly. He truly had thought things through clearly. Even if the situation hadn’t played out this way, he knew that after traveling through the pass, he would be surrounded by bandits. He also really did admire Meng Hao and the Crow Divinity Tribe. The fact that they dared to defy the South Cleaving Pass was something even he would not have been able to do.

In fact, before coming here, he had already grudgingly made the decision to hand over half of the Tribe’s belongings.

But now, an opportunity existed that Xu Bai naturally could not pass up. He would never attack the Crow Divinity Tribe. That was because fundamentally speaking, in this Apocalypse, the Black Dragon Tribe and the Crow Divinity Tribe... were the two most suitable Tribes to form an alliance!

Xu Bai had thought the matter through thoroughly. “Divided, we fall. Forming an alliance is the best decision. If we can find the Heavenly Wind Tribe, and form a three-Tribe alliance, then we could fight directly back against those damned bandit Tribes outside of the Black Lands!” He was certain that the Crow Divinity Tribe and the Heavenly Wind Tribe were also thinking the same thing.

The slaughter began. Booms filled the air. Meng Hao wiped the blood from his mouth as he ground to a halt. He didn’t pay any attention to the great Black Dragon Tribe. That was because at the moment, he had to devote complete attention to this bizarre statue that he was up against.

His Devil Spear had stabbed into the statue’s forehead, causing its head to crumble half apart. Furthermore, three of its arms had been shattered.

However, as the Devil Spear circled back around and then stabbed through the statue again, it didn’t seem to inflict any damage. It was as if it had suddenly lost some of its effectiveness.

This caused Meng Hao’s heart to tremble. The statue’s remaining eye glittered coldly as it once again looked at him. Without hesitation, Meng Hao produced the blood-colored mask and put it on. Instantly, a bloody aura billowed up around him.

“Ji Clan Blood Clone!” Meng Hao’s eyes flashed and a bright red glow of blood shined out from his forehead. At the same time, a long, blood-colored strand appeared which turned into a drop of blood. It wriggled as it suddenly expanded, transforming into a Blood Clone that looked exactly like Meng Hao. The statue’s mouth was open as if it were about to speak again, when suddenly the Blood Clone shot toward it.

Instantly, the statue closed its mouth. It allowed the Blood Clone to pounce, and yet strangely, no injury was inflicted, not even the slightest. Meng Hao found this difficult to believe. The Blood Clone, having passed through the statue, was taken aback, as if it didn’t understand.

It was at this point that the multi-armed statue’s ghastly voice once again could be heard. “Destruction!”

A thunderous roar filled Meng Hao. Suddenly, his mind exploded with a

burst of power that was a full three times stronger than his own five elements type power that he had used previously. It felt as if a sword were tearing through his brain, stabbing into his mind, ripping everything apart. Blood sprayed from his mouth and his face went pale. He suddenly felt incredibly weak.

This statue's divine ability was extremely bizarre, and Meng Hao was powerless to block it. He bit the tip of his tongue, using the pain to clear his head. His eyes were bloodshot as he, instead of retreating, turned into a beam of light that shot directly toward the statue.

"The Blood Clone doesn't work...." he thought as his speed increased. He transformed into a green smoke and a black moon. As he neared, he lifted his right hand up. Suddenly, Blood Immortal divine abilities manifested. Booms filled the air as he unleashed them all. However, just as was the case with the Devil Spear, none of them hurt the statue even the least bit.

This caused Meng Hao's face to fall. He waved his hand and the Lotus Time Formation appeared. It spun rapidly, rumbling as it unleashed the power of Time. It was not effective either.

"Divine abilities are useless. Magical items are useless. The Devil Spear only worked once.... Just what exactly is this statue made of!?!?" Meng Hao's eyes flickered with killing intent as he endured the splitting pain in his head.

"Why did the Devil Spear work once...? When the Blood Clone neared, it was obviously about to speak, but then shut its mouth!" Hundreds of ideas and possibilities flickered through Meng Hao's mind. Suddenly, his eyes narrowed.

"Don't tell me...." He gritted his teeth and then, without hesitation, shot toward the statue, mentally preparing himself.

The statue's expression was as cold as ever. The remaining eye on its half-destroyed head gleamed with mysterious coldness as it once again spoke, a third time: "Incantation!"

Psyche Destruction Incantation!

As soon as the third word began to leave its mouth, Meng Hao lifted his hand and employed the power of the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex. His finger pointed toward the Statue's open mouth. Even as the sound was coming out, and it suddenly stopped moving, Meng Hao slapped his bag of holding. Four wooden swords appeared, which instantly transformed into prismatic beams that shot toward the statue.

Simultaneously, in response to Meng Hao's advanced preparation just now, the Blood Clone pounced. Screaming sounds could be heard as the Devil Spear shot forward in attack. The Time Sword Formation rotated. The Blood Immortal divine abilities were unleashed. As soon as the word "incantation" left its mouth, booming could be heard!

A massive rumble shook everything as the entire statue began to tremble. The four wooden swords caused it to lose any power to resist. Boom! It began to collapse as the Devil Spear slammed into it. The Blood Clone absorbed its life force. The Time Sword Formation transformed it into ash. Meng Hao's Blood Immortal divine abilities then destroyed the ash!

At the same time, Meng Hao was coughing up blood. After the statue spoke the final word, a power three times more powerful than before exploded out inside of his body. Thankfully, it only lasted a brief instant. The statue was destroyed, making the pain last for only a short moment. Even still, blood oozed from Meng Hao's eyes, nose, ears and mouth. Even as he tumbled backward, he produced handfuls of medicinal pills, which he instantly consumed.

He looked up at the disappearing ash, and his eyes gleamed with coldness.

"When its mouth was closed, it couldn't be hurt. When its mouth opened, it revealed its weakness!"

*

1. Xu Bai's name in Chinese is Xǔ bái. Xu is a common surname. Bai

means “white”.

Chapter 508: A Bet

The destruction of the eight-armed statue was like a death knell, ringing out to declare what the future of the Sea Demon Tribe would be. The ten thousand Crow Divinity Tribe members fought fiercely. 150,000 neo-demons screamed through the air. This was not a battle between two Tribes; this was a slaughter.

Miserable shrieks filled the air, the cries of the dying. A strange mixture of violet rain and fresh blood showered down onto the ground, pouring down through South Cleaving Pass, seemingly mixing with all the blood of previous battles in the area....

Meng Hao floated in mid-air, his eyes shut as he rotated his Cultivation base with full force to absorb the power of the medicinal pills and heal himself. His mind was still filled with a pain that felt like countless stabbing needles. The eight-armed statue had been powerful. If Meng Hao hadn't noticed its weakness, and it opened its mouth a fourth time, even though he was at the great circle of four of the five different elements, he still would have been powerless to resist. His soul would have been ripped apart, his mind exploded. His body might not have been destroyed, but his soul would have.

Thinking back, Meng Hao was actually shocked. He suddenly realized that he had to be vigilant in regard to the Western Desert and all the bizarre things which existed therein. Gone was the arrogance he had felt because of his powerful Cultivation base.

His eyes were closed as he went about healing himself. Around him, a shocking massacre played out. The powerful experts of the Sea Demon Tribe were trying to break through to interfere with Meng Hao's healing. Before they could even get near, they were intercepted and prevented from getting even within three hundred meters of him.

Bloodcurdling screams echoed out as the Sea Demon Tribe members were beaten back and killed ruthlessly. As of this moment, there were less than one thousand Tribe members left. Despair washed over them as they

realized that... the moment of complete Tribal extermination was approaching.

There was nothing they could do. The valiance and brutality of the Crow Divinity exceeded their imaginations over and over again. This Tribe was possessed with a madness that caused them to self-detonate rather than be slain, something that few members of the Sea Demon Tribe could make themselves do.

Overall there were too few who chose to self-detonate, and it did little good. Within the space of a few breaths, rumbling sounds filled the battlefield as all of the Sea Demon Tribe members, except for the dozen or so Nascent Soul Cultivators, were exterminated!!

The Sea Demon Tribe's neo-demons had long since been wiped clean away, having been viciously consumed by Meng Hao's neo-demons, who hadn't eaten in months. Even the bones were not left behind, but were crushed and eaten.

The sight of this shook the minds of the tens of thousands of Cultivators down below in the pass. They panted and watched on in a daze, completely shocked by the Crow Divinity Tribe.

What they were witnessing was something that would be branded into their minds for the rest of their lives. It was a feeling that told them that the Crow Divinity Tribe would never, ever be defeated.

As these tens of thousands of Cultivators panted, the members of the Crow Divinity Tribe rushed over to plunder South Cleaving City. Meanwhile, on the other side of the pass, the Black Dragon Tribe was locked in combat with the three bandit Tribes, whose minds were spinning from what they had just seen. They were astonished to find that the Crow Divinity Tribe members were like gods of war. An intense fear and shock rumbled in their minds as they started to retreat.

It was at this moment that Meng Hao's eyes opened. In that instant, he transformed into a green smoke, within which was a visible green moon. In the blink of an eye, he appeared behind a Sea Demon Tribe mid Nascent Soul stage Elder who was in the midst of fighting Ou Yunzi.

As soon as Meng Hao appeared, the Elder's face fell. Just as he was about to dodge to the side, the Devil Spear in Meng Hao's hand shot forward. It pierced through all the Elder's defenses and plunged into his chest, stabbing directly through his heart.

Devilish mist exploded out, along with countless excited, savage faces that swarmed around the man. Within the space of a few breaths, Meng Hao pulled the devil spear back. He disappeared, leaving behind only a skeleton which fell down to the ground.

Ou Yunzi took a deep breath, then shot off to find other fellow Tribe members to assist.

When Meng Hao reappeared, he was next to another Sea Demon Tribe Elder. The man's face fell and he instantly began to retreat. However, before he could get very far, a bloody flash of light appeared in front of Meng Hao as the Blood Clone appeared. Considering the Blood Clone's speed, the old man was incapable of evasion. In the blink of an eye, the Blood Clone pounced on him. It departed a moment later, taking all of the old man's life force along with it.

Meng Hao attacked like lightning. Wherever he went, powerful experts of the Sea Demon Tribe perished screaming. In a short period of time, three defiant howls could be heard. The Sea Demon Tribe Greatfather, High Priest and Grand Elder all shot backward in retreat, each one moving in a different direction as they attempted to escape.

The moment they began to flee, though, a despairing, plaintive roar echoed out. This roar came from none other than the Sea Demon Tribe totemic Sacred Ancient!

Because of the death of all the Tribe members, the totemic Sacred Ancient's strength suddenly decreased rapidly. Furthermore, the Blood Clone had long since cast its eyes toward it. Taking advantage of another of the Outlander Beast's attacks, the Blood Clone finally pounced, sucking away its life force and essence. In the blink of an eye, the Sea Demon Tribe totemic Sacred Ancient let out the miserable shriek just now.

As the Sea Demon Tribe totem was destroyed, blood shot out of the

mouths of the Greatfather and the others, who were in the midst of fleeing. Their faces were pale, and their expressions desolate as they let out bitter laughs. Even as they fled, Meng Hao flung the Devil Spear out in front of him, causing it to fly through the air with a rumbling sound.

Off to the side, the Blood Clone licked the blood off of its lips and then began to pursue. In addition, the two late Nascent Soul Cultivators from the Eight Branch Alliance shot in pursuit, their eyes glittering.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Three massive bangs could be heard, and three dying screams ragn out. The Devil Spear stabbed through the Greatfather. The High Priest became food for the Blood Clone. As for the Grand Elder, his Cultivation base was falling, and he was instantly killed by the combined attack of the Eight Branch Alliance Greatfather and High Priest.

It was in this manner the the entire Sea Demon Tribe was thoroughly exterminated. Not a single person remained!

The tens of thousands of Cultivators within the pass were left completely shocked. Their gazes were filled with awe as they looked toward the Crow Divinity Tribe.

Meanwhile, Meng Hao turned his head to look toward the other side of the pass, where the four tribes were fighting each other.

The three bandit Tribes were currently in a state of retreat, trying to leave the battlefield. However, the might of the great Black Dragon Tribe had them pinned down.

Meng Hao's eyes flashed with killing intent. He had just exterminated the Sea Demon Tribe, so he would naturally show no softheartedness toward these three Tribes who had planned to take advantage of the situation.

Meng Hao didn't even need to say anything. He lifted his hand and made a clutching motion, causing the Devil Spear to materialize. He pointed forward, and the members of the Crow Divinity Tribe instantly charged forward into the battlefield outside the pass, their eyes red with death.

Meng Hao strode forward, instantly picking up speed as he transformed into a beam of light that passed through South Cleaving City and South Cleaving Pass. As he neared the battlefield, he saw that the great Black Dragon Tribe was primarily battling one of the three Tribes. The other two were simply pinned down and couldn't leave.

He glanced over the battlefield, whereupon his gaze came to rest on Xu Bai. Xu Bai saw him, and instantly, both of their eyes began to shine brightly.

Meng Hao narrowed his eyes and then gave a slight smile. His body turned into a beam of light as he shot toward the Tribe that was engaged in fierce battle with the Black Dragon Tribe. Following the lead of Meng Hao, the thousands of members of the Crow Divinity Tribe also flew in the same direction.

Xu Bai laughed heartily, and the glow in his eyes grew more intense. He fell back two paces. Following his lead, so did other members of the great Black Dragon Tribe. They stepped aside to create a path so that Meng Hao and the Crow Divinity Tribe, like a long dragon, could thread through them.

There was no need for any words to be exchanged between the Black Dragon Tribe and the Crow Divinity Tribe. There was no prior consultation or discussion. Instead, both Tribes instantly began to inflict fatal blows upon the bandit Tribe.

The sound of the slaughter echoed about. Black Dragons circulated around Xu Bai as he made extremely vicious attacks. As for Meng Hao, with the Devil Spear in hand, every place he went echoed out with bloodcurdling screams.

Either of these two Tribes were incredibly powerful and valiant. When they joined forces, they were like two sharp sabers, stabbing directly into the bandit Tribe.

In the blink of an eye, screams of pain rose up. The faces of the Greatfathers of the other two bandit Tribes instantly filled with fear. Without hesitation, they took advantage of what was happening to try to

retreat from the battlefield with their Tribes.

“Dammit! The great Black Dragon Tribe and the Crow Divinity Tribe actually have the gall to be so domineering!! But it doesn’t matter; they’ll inevitably be outmaneuvered later by other Tribes!”

“We don’t need to do anything! The path ahead of them is filled with other bandit Tribes that will look at them like tigers eyeing prey!”

The two bandit Tribes retreated as fast as they could. However, the instant they left the battlefield was the same instant in which the final members of the first bandit Tribe were surrounded by the Crow Divinity and Black Dragons Tribe, and killed.

The entire bandit Tribe was completely eradicated!

This development slammed like a lightning bolt into the hearts of the Greatfathers and other Tribe members of the other two Tribes. They began to flee even faster.

The moment the first Tribe was exterminated, Xu Bai laughed and said, “Brother Meng, why don’t we have a little competition!?”

“That’s just what I was thinking!” replied Meng Hao coolly.

“Great! These remaining two Tribes are about equivalent in power. Let’s see which of the two of our Tribes can wipe one out first!” Xu Bai’s eyes glowed brightly. He could tell that Meng Hao also harbored thoughts of forming an alliance. However, in such an alliance, one of the two of them would be in the lead position, the other would be in the secondary position.

This competition would choose which of them would be the leader, and which would be secondary!

The instant Xu Bai’s words left his mouth, he pointed out with his right hand. In response, the members of the great Black Dragon Tribe shot forward with killing intent toward one of the bandit Tribes.

Meng Hao smiled faintly. The killing intent of the Crow Divinity Tribe rose to unprecedented heights as they roared toward the other fleeing

bandit Tribes.

As for Meng Hao and Xu Bai, they floated there in mid-air, refraining from attacking.

Chapter 509: Title at the end!

“Brother Meng, I often think about what happened that year in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins,” said Xu Bai with a laugh. He looked over at Meng Hao.

Even as he spoke, the great Black Dragon Tribe began to slaughter its respective bandit Tribe.

Meng Hao looked back at Xu Bai and chuckled. His voice as calm as the breeze, he replied, “Oh, that was just a fluke. Brother Xu, you were able to singlehandedly stop that Demon Spirit from moving. I truly admire you for that.”

The rumbling of intense combat rose up from either side of them. At the moment, the great Black Dragon Tribe was going all out in their massacre.

The Crow Divinity Tribe was the same. They had no desire to come in second to the great Black Dragon Tribe and cause their totemic Sacred Ancient to lose all face. That was especially true of the Nascent Soul Cultivators. They were all crafty and cunning, and as soon as they saw what was happening in this critical moment, they understood that this simple battlefield bet... was in reality a foreshadowing of an alliance, and would decide who held the dominant position.

Therefore, it was without hesitation that they used the full power of their Cultivation bases to wrest away the lead position of the alliance.

Both sides attacked with gusto on this battlefield-cum-gambling hall. The bandit Tribes let out grievous cries; they were forced to fight, and yet, were capable of doing nothing but being defeated.

Meng Hao’s 150,000 neo-demons obfuscated the sky. In an instant, the Crow Divinity Tribe took the lead. However, moments later, the great Black Dragon Tribe’s totemic Sacred Ancient, as well as the two bandit Tribes’ Sacred Ancients, suddenly appeared on the battlefield, and the Crow Divinity Tribe began to fall behind.

But then, three beams of light suddenly appeared within the Crow

Divinity Tribe. These were three beams of colorful light that had not appeared in the previous battle with the Sea Demon Tribe. Instantly, powerful cries rose up to the Heavens as... three totemic Sacred Ancients appeared!

These were three totemic Sacred Ancients that Meng Hao had absorbed into his force that year along with the Eight Branch Alliance. Instantly, the intensity of the slaughter ratcheted up.

“Brother Meng,” said Xu Bai, his voice cool, “you and your Crow Divinity Tribe fought your way down here all the way from the north. I’ve heard many stories. However... this last leg of the journey will be the most difficult.

“In the end, all the most powerful Tribes will gather together. Whether they want to or not, if they have no Demon Spirit, they all will become bandit Tribes in the end.

“They will all attempt to snatch a Demon Spirit and rob the resources of other Tribes, slaughtering their way into being noticed by either the Heavenly Court Alliance, or other great Tribes who have resources capable of surviving in the Black Lands. Any of them would chose to become auxiliary Tribes in exchange for the chance to survive.” The fierce fighting had now reached a critical juncture. The Crow Divinity Tribe was gaining an even greater lead, and if nothing went wrong, it seemed the great Black Dragon Tribe would fall clearly behind.

“The only option for us is to form an alliance,” continued Xu Bai slowly. “The Crow Divinity Tribe and the Black Dragon Tribe need to find the Heavenly Wind Tribe to form a three-Tribe alliance. If we push forward together, then after reaching the Black Lands, our Tribes can continue on forever. That is the only way that we can ensure our ability not only to get to the Black Lands, but to stay there safely. I’m sure you understand all of this already, Brother Meng. I don’t even really need to bring it up.”

Booming sounds could suddenly be heard from the direction of the Crow Divinity Tribe. By now, eighty percent of the enemy were dead. The remainder were scattered and attempting to flee for their lives.

Obviously, it wouldn't be very long before the entire bandit Tribe was exterminated.

As for the great Black Dragon Tribe, they had only destroyed about fifty percent of the bandit Tribe they were fighting; they were clearly going a bit slower.

Xu Bai frowned. Inwardly, he was shocked, and his respect for the Crow Divinity Tribe grew. Even as Meng Hao mulled over the things he had just said, he cleared his throat and looked deeply at the members of the Black Dragon Tribe.

This look caused the eyes of the members of the great Black Dragon Tribe to turn red. It was as if they felt ashamed, as if some great pressure had been put onto them. All of the Tribe members instantly unraveled the black cords that were tied around their wrists. In that moment, they lifted their heads to the sky and roared; their Cultivation bases exploded up by nearly fifty percent. It was with explosive madness that they continued to battle against the fleeing bandit Tribe.

The rampage of the great Black Dragon Tribe suddenly reversed their situation. The casualties among the bandit Tribe soared, shocking them completely. The surviving members of the bandit Tribe were filled with despair and terror, and began to retreat in chaos.

"Kill them!!" roared the members of the great Black Dragon Tribe as they continued the massacre. The Crow Divinity tribe also advanced. After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, the two Tribes completed the slaughter at about the same time. Still burning with killing intent, both Tribes returned to stand behind Xu Bai and Meng Hao.

The two Tribes faced off; it seemed neither was willing to give in to the other.

Xu Bai looked at the Crow Divinity Tribe and took a deep breath. Deep inside, he was shocked. He knew that it was only by unsealing the black ropes that the great Black Dragon Tribe had been able to secure a draw. However, he was still of the opinion that if they had opened the seal in the beginning of the battle, the Crow Divinity Tribe would not have been able

to measure up.

But then he glanced at the neo-demon hordes. It was at this point that he noticed that the Crow Divinity neo-demon horde was no longer 150,000 in number. It was now larger by 20,000 which caused him to gasp. His heart trembled and he began to breath heavily.

“No wonder the rumors say that the Crow Divinity Tribe... feeds off of battle!” he thought. “Every battle makes them stronger! Furthermore... their most powerful totemic Sacred Ancient, Meng Hao, didn’t even make a move! This Crow Divinity Tribe is far more powerful than I ever imagined.”

As for Meng Hao, he had already put a lot of thought into what happened after the Black Dragon Tribe remove the seals. This caused his admiration for the Black Dragon Tribe to grow even stronger.

Xu Bai’s hearty laughter echoed about. It was genuine sincerity that he looked at Meng Hao and said, “Brother Meng, let’s form an alliance. What do you say?!”

“I say yes!” replied Meng Hao without hesitation. The benefits of such an alliance far, far outweighed the drawbacks. Besides, Meng Hao knew that after reaching the Black Lands, the Crow Divinity Tribe could merge with the Church of the Golden Light. At that time, he would actually not go with them, but would part ways.

Therefore, in the end, adding another ally would only provide further safety for the Crow Divinity Tribe.

“Men, make preparations for a sacrifice and a blood oath!” cried Xu Bai. To the Black Dragon Tribe, an alliance was very important. Even as the words were leaving Xu Bai’s mouth, the Elders and Priests of the Black Dragon Tribe approached. As for the Greatfather of the great Black Dragon Tribe... that was none other than Xu Bai.

On Meng Hao’s side, all the Nascent Soul Cultivators of the Crow Divinity Tribe approached. The sacrifice was made, and an oath was sworn by smearing blood on the lips. An alliance was formed just like that which existed in the legends of the Western Desert. The neo-demon ancestors

and the totemic Sacred Ancients swore oaths, and a bilateral alliance was formed with no primary and secondary party!

The next day was a day of rest and reorganization. The two parties redistributed their resources evenly. As for Meng Hao, at the moment of truth, it was revealed that he could in fact control the 70,000 strong neo-demon horde of the Black Dragon Tribe. As such, when the time came for battle, Meng Hao's neo-demon horde would number 240,000!

A black dragon and a battleship shot through the sky toward the south.

The final leg of the journey would only take three months to complete. However, those three months would without a doubt be the most difficult military campaign that the great Black Dragon Tribe and the Crow Divinity Tribe had ever carried out!

In the first month, they went into battle seven times, against nine different Tribes. Roughly every three to five days, they ran into bandit Tribes. Despite all the warfare the Crow Divinity Tribe had experienced, such frequency of battle was unheard of.

It was the same for the great Black Dragon Tribe. Were it not for the fact that the two Tribes were allied, they would surely have experienced significant losses, perhaps even more than half. It might not have been as bad for the Crow Divinity Tribe, because of their neo-demons. The great Black Dragon Tribe, however, would have found the situation much more difficult.

However, because of their two-Tribe alliance, the month of campaigning left them exhausted, but prevented significant losses.

There were three occasions in which the course of the battle was changed because of Meng Hao's neo-demons, which now included the neo-demon horde of the great Black Dragon Tribe.

The fearsome power he was able to wield caused the members of the Black Dragon Tribe to be filled with shock, and even more so, excitement. Even Xu Bai was astonished by Meng Hao. He had never heard of any Dragoneer who could do what Meng Hao did.

During that first month, even though both Tribes sustained some losses, Meng Hao was able to grow his neo-demon horde even larger. Because of this, the great Black Dragon Tribe cooperated in an arrangement of not attacking enemy neo-demons. In the end, Meng Hao's neo-demon horde reached 300,000 in number!

When such a vast number of neo-demons appeared, Heaven was shaken and the Earth trembled!

In the second month, they experienced more than twenty battles. On two occasions, they encountered bandit Tribe alliances. However, faced up against Meng Hao's terrifying neo-demon horde, the bandit Tribes were crushed like dried weeds.

By the end of the second month, Meng Hao's neo-demon horde numbered... a shocking 400,000!

400,000 neo-demons was something never before seen or heard of in the Western Desert. Even a great Tribe with a Spirit Severing Patriarch could never have such a large neo-demon horde. It was simply impossible for a Dragoneer to brand so many neo-demons. In fact... the food required to sustain 400,000 neo-demons was enough to cause even a great Tribe to go completely broke in a very short period of time.

When Meng Hao's neo-demon horde reached 400,000, battles... became simple. During the last month, they encountered virtually no hostile Cultivators. They sped across the land unimpeded as they headed toward the Black Lands.

In fact, it seemed there were to be no repercussions for the extermination of the Sea Demon Tribe in South Cleaving Pass.

Nonetheless, Meng Hao couldn't shake the feeling of impending crisis that continued to float within his heart. Even Xu Bai frowned continuously. Something didn't seem right. The other Nascent Soul Cultivators also had similar reactions.

At the end of the third month after leaving South Cleaving Pass, the great Black Dragon Tribe and the Crow Divinity Tribe finally... laid eyes on the Black Lands!!

The instant they did, the faces of Meng Hao and Xu Bai, as well as all the members of their Clans, instantly became extremely unsightly.

Chapter 509: Laying Eyes on the Black Lands!

Chapter 510: The Last Battle!

The Black Lands was like a plateau, shoved high into the sky seemingly by geological forces. Far down below was the Western Desert.

This was Meng Hao's first time seeing the border between the Black Lands and the Western Desert. Years ago when he left the Black Lands, he had not traveled through this area, but rather, had been teleported through an ancient portal to the Western Desert North region.

Seeing the lay of the land for the first time caused Meng Hao's eyes to subconsciously widen slightly. Now, he finally understood why the Black Lands was the only place where one could escape from the Western Desert Apocalypse.

The Western Desert South region was much, much higher in elevation than the northern parts. That was why right now, the West, North, and East regions had already been completely submerged and transformed into a Violet Sea. In those areas, it even smelled like a salty sea. Here in the south, however, rivers had not yet even formed.

All of the falling rain continued to flow down toward the north.

The Western Desert South region was high enough as it was, but the Black Lands... were even higher. They jutted up thousands of meters into the sky, cliff-like, as if formed by an earthquake.

Needless to say, endless mountain ranges existed along the edge of the Black Lands. Those mountains seemed to connect to the sky itself, preventing the violet-colored tempest up above, along with any other living thing, from entering.

Those mountains made the Black Lands' total elevation reach a shocking height. It could prevent the spread of the Violet Sea, and furthermore, there was only one way in....

Blackgate Fort!

It was eighty thousand meters wide, right in the middle of all the mountains. It stood there, tall, straight, enormous. All the Cultivators who

saw it would gasp.

Blackgate Fort was the color of night, and its gate shut tight. Atop the eighty thousand meter wide fort stretched a battlement, upon which could be seen tens of thousands of Cultivators, bunched together in groups. They were chatting and laughing, as they looked out over the battlement, occasionally pointing down below.

What caused Meng Hao's pupils to constrict was that the violet rain which he had grown so accustomed to over the years did not fall on Blackgate Fort. Outside, it continued to pour down, but not a drop fell onto Blackgate Fort or that enormous battlement.

Outside of Blackgate Fort, the land was filled with fog and mist, and was hazy. In fact, it had been years since Meng Hao even caught a glimpse of the sun. And yet there, within Blackgate Fort, a majestic blue sky could be seen, even fluffy white clouds.

Blackgate Fort was like a division between two different worlds.

What caused Meng Hao and Xu Bai's faces to become extremely unsightly was that between Blackgate Fort and their two Tribes could be seen... more than twenty bandit Tribes positioned in formation across the land. These Tribes were currently looking at the Crow Divinity and great Black Dragon Tribes with avarice, ridicule and killing intent.

Twenty bandit Tribes, with a total of 200,000 Cultivators and 400,000 neo-demons. They were positioned in front of the fort, and it was clear that they intended to prevent anyone from entering the Black Lands.

Within their eyes, Meng Hao could see greed, savagery, and also a message.

"If we can't get in, then you can forget about going in yourself! If we will die... then you will die with us!"

Meng Hao stood there silently. Then he noticed something located in front of these more than twenty Tribes. Tens of thousands of bamboo poles had been erected and were swaying slightly in the wind. All of these poles were covered with dried blood that had already turned black.

Atop each bamboo pole was a head. This was an entire Tribe, including old people and children. Further up could even be seen an enormous neo-demon head, which was obviously... this Tribe's totemic Sacred Ancient.

All dead.

This was none other than the Heavenly Wind Tribe.

Even closer to Meng Hao and Xu Bai were more than 20,000 bamboo poles stuck into the ground, completely bare. The significance of these poles was obvious... they were there for the heads of the Crow Divinity and Black Dragon Tribes.

The battlefield in front of them was deathly silent. No one spoke. Only the soft whimpering of the wind could be heard. Hundreds of thousands of Cultivators began to breathe heavily, and their killing intent rose up into the sky.

Blackgate Fort... was not easy to enter!

Another sound could be heard. It came from the tall battlement on the Black Lands. Tens of thousands of Cultivators were there watching the proceedings as if it were some sort of play.

To the people atop the battlement, the members of the Crow Divinity Tribe, the Black Dragon Tribe and the more than twenty bandit Tribes were nothing more than actors on a stage, putting on a performance for their enjoyment.

Some of them were members of the Heavenly Court Alliance. Others were members of Western Desert great Sects with Spirit Severing Patriarchs. Naturally, they could stand apart from the masses and watch down at the life or death game playing out in front of them.

Zhou Dekun was on the battlement, fists clenched tightly, expression sorrowful. There was nothing he could do to change anything about what was happening. He could only watch Meng Hao in silence.

Standing next to Zhou Dekun was the young man from the Cloud Sky Tribe named, who had appeared to Meng Hao in illusory form to parlay in front of the Locust Tribe. He sighed as he looked over the lands down

below, as well as Meng Hao and the Crow Divinity Tribe.

“What a pity,” he said, shaking his head.

On another section of the battlement stood a woman who was surrounded by powerful experts. Clearly, she occupied a very high position. This was none other than... the woman who by chance had met Meng Hao in the Black Lands and had been frightened away by him. This was a Chosen of the great Demon Butterfly Tribe, one of the three forces that made up the Heavenly Court Alliance. Goddess Duo Lan! 1

She was currently frowning as she looked over the lands below. Her gaze eventually came to fall on Meng Hao.

“Duo Lan, why are you frowning? Don’t tell me this person offended you?” The gentle voice came from a young man standing next to her. He was big and tall, with handsome features and long hair. With his long, spotless white robe and charming smile, he was the spitting image of a Chosen.

He was surrounded by three old men who had profound Cultivation bases. Clearly this young man had an illustrious status.

This was the Chosen from the great Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, another of the leaders of the Heavenly Court Alliance. Zhang Wenzu!

“Oh nothing,” replied Duo Lan coolly. “He just seems familiar. I feel like I’ve seen him somewhere before, but can’t seem to remember where.”

Zhang Wenzu smiled as he stood there next to Duo Lan, looking at Meng Hao.

“A trifling insect,” he said, looking back at Duo Lan with a brilliant smile. “If you can’t remember, there’s no need to even think about it. It’s meaningless.”

Duo Lan didn’t seem to be used to him being so close to her. Without thinking about, she took a few steps back. What she didn’t notice was off in the distance in the crowd on the battlement, someone’s gaze shifted from her to Zhang Wenzu. That person’s gaze was filled with hatred.

The hatred quickly vanished without a trace. The gaze belonged to none other than former Black Lands Dao Child Luo Chong. He stood there in the crowds, his expression the same as ever, but inwardly gnashing his teeth. His former Sect had become an auxiliary branch of the Heavenly Court Alliance, and he had lost his former position. Although he was of the Core Formation stage, such a Cultivation Base was nothing outstanding. 2

“Slut!” he thought to himself. “And you, damnable Zhang Wenzu! You dare to touch the woman I’ve taken a liking to? One of those days I’ll see you dead!!” It was at this point that suddenly he stared in stupefaction out at the lands below. He rubbed his eyes vigorously as he looked at Meng Hao. Then, he began to pant.

“It’s... it’s him? How is it possible....”

Meanwhile, back in the Black Lands, in the area controlled by the Heavenly Court Alliance, was a completely unremarkable Sect. Its name was Church of the Golden Light.

Currently, the Church of the Golden Light had around seven or eight thousand disciples. All of them had excited expressions on their faces as they ran to and fro through mid-air. A bright glow gradually began to spread out, along with a shocking aura.

“A message from Lord Fifth has arrived! The Patriarch has returned!! Let’s go receive the Patriarch and Lord Fifth!”

“Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life! When the Lord Fifth appears, who dares to cause strife!”

Back on the border between the Black Lands and the Western Desert, outside the enormous Blackgate Fort, Meng Hao and Xu Bai stood amidst the deathly silence.

Meng Hao looked over at Xu Bai and slowly said, “The last battle.”

Xu Bai was silent for a moment, then laughed. It was clear and bright laugh, filled with stubbornness. He looked back at Meng Hao and nodded.

“The last battle! Victory means we can enter the Black Lands. The

announcement was made promising entrance into the Black lands for anyone who brought a Demon Spirit. There is no need for any regrets on our part. If we lose....

“Meng Hao, if I end up dying, will you allow the great Black Dragon Tribe to become a part of your Crow Divinity Tribe? What do you say?” Xu Bai’s expression was pure sincerity as he looked at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao looked back at Xu Bai and then nodded deeply.

“In that case, what need is there to fear death?! This is going to be one delightful battle!” Laughing heartily, Xu Bai leaped off of the black dragon. A thunderous sound could be heard as muscles bulged and his frame grew larger, revealing the shocking power of his physical body.

“Black Dragon Tribe!!” he cried, looking back at the members of his Tribe. All of them lifted their heads to look back at him. “Remove the seals. Fight!!”

The entire Black Dragon Tribe responded: “FIGHT!!”

The members of the Black Dragon Tribe followed Xu Bai as he charge forward. They untied the black cords tied around their wrists, causing an incredible aura to roar out. All of them instantly began to grow larger. This seal held back the true power of the great Black Dragon Tribe’s physical body training method. After opening the seal, the Tribe members’ bodies grew a full head taller. They looked like fierce, black dragons as they shot forward.

As for Meng Hao, he took a deep breath. He lifted his right hand up, within which appeared the Devil Spear. He looked back at the members of the Crow Divinity Tribe, and beyond, toward the Western Desert North region. That was the home of the Crow Divinity Tribe. He thought of the Golden Crow and the great tree. He thought about his promise to them, and about the long road upon which he had led the Crow Divinity Tribe, all the way to here.

Many images flitted in his mind, eventually transforming into the current moment. This was... the last battle!

“FIGHT!” This one word spoken by Meng Hao boomed out like thunder. The members of the Crow Divinity tribe felt their blood burning with righteous indignation. Killing intent boiled up, flared out. The Tribe knew... that this was the final moment which would decide the difference between life and death.

400,000 neo-demons filled the sky, emitting Heaven-shaking roars. Big Hairy was there. By now, he was a level 10 neo-demon. Hairys #2, #3 and the others weren't quite a match for him, but they were intrepid nonetheless. The Wild Giant could also be seen. Gu La, as a true Dragoneer, had been of much assistance to Meng Hao throughout the journey. Right now, his eyes were bright red.

400,000 neo-demons charged roaring into battle.

The parrot's shrill squawk suddenly rang out.

“Get into formation! Remember, get into formation....”

*

1. We met Duo Lan in chapter 323. She encountered Meng Hao and called him “Demon Lord”.
2. Luo Chong is the guy that Meng Hao a.k.a. Fang Mu slashed with the Wooden Time Sword by the Ancient Dao Geyser in chapter 269. Later, when he first arrived in the Black Lands, Meng Hao a.k.a. the Demon Lord poisoned Luo Chong in chapter 325. Later, he reappeared leading a force from the Black Palace against Holy Snow City in chapter 372. He escaped with his life while Meng Hao fought the Spirit Severing Cultivator.

Chapter 511: The Spell Formation is Seen Again!

20,000 people versus 200,000!

This was a battle in which the difference between the two forces was immense. To many onlookers, it seemed as if it would be nothing more than a crushing.

Even though the Black Dragon and Crow Divinity Tribes were veterans of hundreds of battles, to face ten times as many bandit Tribes as their own number made the odds of victory too small. It appeared that the only thing they could do was work hard to kill as many of the bandit Tribe members as possible before being killed themselves.

That seems to be the only option.

But... as far as the Crow Divinity and Black Dragon Tribes were concerned, there was still another option.... Meng Hao, the totemic Sacred Ancient of the Crow Divinity Tribe, had an amazing ability to control and attract neo-demons. The Crow Divinity Tribe had started out with only a thousand members, but had grown to its current valiant state because in each battle, Meng Hao's neo-demons would become the linchpin to victory.

400,000 neo-demons, a power that no other Tribe could possibly possess, would without a doubt be a deciding factor in this battle.

A shocking roar filled the air as slaughter broke out between the two sides on the battlefield. In the blink of an eye, the Crow Divinity Tribe and the Black Dragon Tribe were like sharp blades that slashed into this alliance of twenty bandit Tribes.

The sound of the fighting rocked Heaven and Earth. The Crow Divinity Tribe's battle tactics seemed different during this battle than from previous battles. They would occasionally stagger their positioning, as if they were fighting in a unique battle formation.

The wind whistled and the sky dimmed. Broken patches of clouds drifted

to and fro. It seemed as if some great change was occurring in the Heavens.

The ground quaked and the mountains trembled. The sound of shouting caused the sky to tremble. The violet rain fell down onto a scene of a ruthless slaughter!

The great Black Dragon Tribe seemed crazy. More than 10,000 Tribe members exploded out violently. Not a single bandit Tribe member could do anything to stand up against them.

As for the members of the Crow Divinity Tribe, their killing intent rose to the Heavens. Their eyes were shot with blood. This was the last battle, which would decide whether they lived or died. If they didn't live... then what did it matter if they died!?!?

Their only chance was to enter through the Blackgate Fort up ahead. Otherwise, their spiritual energy would waste away in the violet rain and they would wither up like mortals. Therefore they exploded out with all the scorching fire their life force could muster. Even dying, they laughed uproariously.

Booming sounds could be heard as magical techniques exploded out. Growling roars filled the air. All of it mixed together to form a joyous song of battle. There was no music, only the majestic sound of fighting. There were no lyrics, only shaking and rumbling.

Xu Bai lifted his head up to the sky and laughed heartily as he shot forward through the battlefield. He was unstoppable, and spattered with blood. Some of the blood was his own, but most belonged to enemies. His laughter contained some sadness, but also stubborn hopefulness. It also said, "If I can't survive, then I will die in battle!"

Meng Hao looked over the scene, and his heart trembled. The blood in his veins boiled and veins of blood appeared in his eyes. This was the last battle, and it had his life force boiling.

"What happens in front of Blackgate Fort is like a play.... All the people on top of the battlement are the audience members, looking down at a play. He looked at the twenty Tribes of killers, hundreds of thousands of

Cultivators, so thickly gathered that you could hardly see their end. They were like tidewaters of extermination, boiling with killing intent as they roared into battle.

Violet rain fell down endlessly, spattering onto the bodies of everyone present.

“It doesn’t matter if you’re watching the play or in the play.... It’s still nothing more than a battle.” Killing intent exploded out of Meng Hao’s eyes. He waved his arm and 400,000 roaring neo-demons shot toward the bandit Tribes.

In total, there were more than a hundred Dragoneers among the bandit Tribes. They floated in mid-air under heavy protection, using all their power to control their own force of 400,000 neo-demons to fight back against Meng Hao’s.

It was at this point that the Nascent Soul Cultivators of the twenty bandit Tribes all began to fly out. They radiated ruthlessness as they shot toward the Black Dragon and Crow Divinity Tribes.

They moved with such speed that they were nothing more than blurs. Almost as soon as they appeared, they were in the middle of the battle. The sound of slaughter rose up, along with the booms of divine abilities and magical techniques. The Nascent Soul Cultivators of the Crow Divinity and Black Dragon Tribes did not even number thirty in total. Compared to the number of Nascent Soul Cultivators from these twenty bandit Tribes, they were at a serious disadvantage.

However... Meng Hao’s neo-demon horde was large enough that he could afford to send some extremely powerful neo-demons to join that battle. Instantly, they began to cause havoc on the battlefield.

Next, the totemic Sacred Ancients from the twenty bandit Tribes whistled into battle. They were of a variety of appearances, but they all emanated shocking auras. As they arrived, the totemic Sacred Ancients of the Black Dragon Tribe and Crow Divinity Tribe both appeared. Along with the Outlander Beast, they charged to fight back.

The battle had just begun, and already, it was shocking to the extreme.

Four totemic Sacred Ancients and twenty Nascent Soul Cultivators suddenly appeared to lock down Meng Hao and Xu Bai. This was especially true of Meng Hao; three of the totemic Sacred Ancients and seven of the Nascent Soul Cultivators targeted him specifically. They knew who he was and also knew that if they killed him, his neo-demon horde would disperse. If that happened... the battle could be won easily.

As they closed in on him, Meng Hao's eyes glittered with killing intent. He waved his right hand and a flicker of lightning could be seen as the soul of the Li Clan Patriarch suddenly was unleashed by Meng Hao.

As soon as the soul emerged, red lightning crackled about with the Li Clan Patriarch at its center. Boundless lightning shot out in all directions, instantly enveloping everything for hundreds of meters in every direction, creating a lake of lightning.

Within the lightning, the seven Nascent Soul Cultivators who had been so intent on killing Meng Hao, as well as the four totemic Sacred Ancients, all trembled violently. This was not ordinary lightning, this was Tribulation Lightning that had been absorbed by the Li Clan Patriarch as a Soul of Lightning.

Rumbling could be heard as the bodies of Meng Hao's enemies shook. Instantly, he transformed into a green smoke and a black moon. He shot with incredible speed towards a nearby early Nascent Soul stage Cultivator in the forces of the bandit Tribes. He was upon him in the blink of an eye. The Devil Spear appeared in his hand, and a seething devilish mist rolled out, filled with countless savage faces.

Miserable screams echoed out as the Devil Spear stabbed through the chest of the early Nascent Soul stage Cultivator. Mist enveloped him and savage, laughing faces began to consume him. Meng Hao disappeared again.

A howl could be heard as the seven late Nascent Soul stage Cultivators along with the four totemic Sacred Ancients charged toward Meng Hao.

As they closed in on Meng Hao for a second time, a blood-colored face magically appeared next to Meng Hao. As the Blood Immortal divine

ability roared out, a rain of blood filled the area. The two sides clashed, and Meng Hao's body trembled. Blood sprayed from his mouth and he tumbled backward, coming to a stop and coughing up more blood. His host of opponents instantly stopped in place, their faces pale. A moment later, they continued forward in pursuit.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered. He had no time to even wipe the blood from his mouth. His body transformed into a green smoke, and he even added on the Bloodburst Flash. When he reappeared, he was behind an early Nascent Soul Cultivator. His right hand clenched into a fist which slammed into the man. The Cultivator's body shook and all of his defenses crumbled as Meng Hao's fist plunged directly into his body and smashed his Nascent Soul.

"Meng Hao!!" roared one of the late Nascent Soul Cultivators that was chasing him, his eyes brimming with killing intent. "Do you dare to fight with us?!"

"I'm not an idiot," replied Meng Hao, a bit of disdain flickering within his eyes. "Seven late Nascent Soul Stage Cultivators versus only one me? And you ask if I dare to fight you? Why don't you first see if you can do anything to stop me?" He once again used the Bloodburst Flash and disappeared.

At the same time that he disappeared, two more totemic Sacred Ancients suddenly appeared in the same spot. Even as Meng Hao fled, they joined the group of other totemic Sacred Ancients to pursue him.

In just a few moments, Meng Hao danced back and forth across the battlefield, evading one deadly attack after another. Although he was hit a few times, after coughing up some blood, he would consume some medicinal pills. His speed didn't reduce in the least bit.

Any feeble early Nascent Soul stage enemies that he saw were doomed to die.

Slowly, more and more late Nascent Soul stage Cultivators joined the group which were trying to kill Meng Hao. Currently, there were nineteen of them, as well as nine totemic Sacred Ancients. They charged Meng Hao

from all directions. Further off in the distance, one of the most powerful of the enemy Cultivators also began to approach with killing intent.

A scornful smile could be seen on Meng Hao's face. He flickered away, reappearing next to one of the bandit Tribes' early Nascent Soul stage Cultivators. That person's face fell, and before he could do anything, Meng Hao waved his hand, causing the flag of three streamers to appear. It instantly wrapped the man up and began to hurl him away.

Even as the flag unfurled, the man's body exploded into pieces!

Such provocation on Meng Hao's part, especially the appearance of his 400,000 neo-demons, instantly had a huge effect on the battlefield. More and more Cultivators joined the force that was trying to slay him.

At the same time, because the most powerful members of the enemy force were focused on him, much of the pressure was taken off of the Crow Divinity Tribe and the great Black Dragon Tribe. In the initial clash just now, both Tribes had sustained losses of more than thirty percent. There were even Nascent Soul Elders who perished.

Similarly, the bandit Tribe alliance had paid a heavy price, having lost nearly 30,000 Tribe members in death.

As of this moment, it was becoming more obvious that the Crow Divinity Tribe members were setting up a formation. In fact, it was now possible to see a fog forming within their ranks!

"Meng Hao, don't tell me the only thing you can do is run away!? If you keep fleeing and killing our Tribe members, then we'll have to go slaughter some of the ordinary Cultivators of your Crow Divinity Tribe!"

"That's right! We can slaughter people just as well as you!"

Meng Hao completely ignored the cries of the people chasing him. His body continued to flicker at top speed.

Meanwhile, back on the battlement of Blackgate Fort, the Cultivators of the Heavenly Court Alliance and the other great Tribes were laughing and chatting.

“That guy can control 400,000 neo-demons! What a talent! However, it’s also completely idiotic to have only one person controlling so many.”

“He will definitely die sooner or later.”

As such conversations proceeded, Luo Chong stood there with his fists clenched. He had very complicated feelings regarding Meng Hao....

Duo Lan frowned, but said nothing. Next to her, Zhang Wenzu was smiling just as he had been the entire time. The people engaged in battle down below were nothing more than ants to him.

Meanwhile, down on the battlefield, the late Nascent Soul stage experts realized that Meng Hao was ignoring them. Enraged, they were on the verge of splitting up to go slaughter the regular members of the Crow Divinity Tribe, in order to force Meng Hao to fight them.

Currently, the seven thousand remaining members of the Crow Divinity Tribe had finished preparations for the spell formation. No longer were they emanating killing intent. Instead, they began to run. As they did, fog rose up to roil out in all directions.

At this moment, the parrot shot up to soar through the sky. Its face radiated arrogance and complacency as it squawked:

“Come, come. Recite along with Lord Fifth. Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life! When the Lord Fifth appears, who dares to cause strife!”

Chapter 512: Title at the end!

Voices joined together to instantly shake the surrounding Cultivators of the alliance of twenty bandit Tribes. They stared in shock, along with the members of the Black Dragon Tribe. Everyone was flabbergasted.

At the same time, the seething fog began to grow thicker and emanate a shocking aura. The surrounded members of the bandit Tribes had no choice but to fall back. Some who didn't move fast enough were sucked into the fog. Instantly, bloodcurdling screams could be heard as they were trampled to death.

It wasn't just the Cultivators of the twenty bandit Tribes that gasped. The members of the Black Dragon Tribe were the same, and even the Cultivators of the Heavenly Court Alliance and other great Tribes who were on Blackgate Fort. Everyone was completely shaken.

"What are they yelling?"

"Who is Lord Fifth?"

"How come I feel like I've heard this before...?"

As of this moment, Meng Hao was now the only member of the Crow Divinity Tribe who was on the outside. His body was a wisp of green smoke that flickered back and forth, taking advantage of this opportunity to slay more of the early Nascent Soul Elders.

Even as miserable cries rang out, countless bloodshot gazes suddenly came to rest on Meng Hao as all of the Nascent Soul Cultivators suddenly turned to look at Meng Hao.

Given that they could no longer attack the Crow Divinity Tribe, Meng Hao was suddenly a glowing target. Instantly all of the bandit Tribes' Nascent Soul Cultivators shot toward Meng Hao, along with more than ten totemic Sacred Ancients. They radiated killing intent as they neared him.

These powerful experts were a force that could cause anyone under the Spirit Severing stage to be dumbstruck. Even Meng Hao would not be able

to stand up to their combined attack. In fact... if they managed to attack him from all sides, then he would certainly be torn to pieces and completely exterminated.

The forces aligned against him were far more than he could handle. However... that was exactly what Meng Hao wanted.

Roughly seventy percent of the bandit Tribes' most powerful experts and totemic Sacred Ancients were now closing in on Meng Hao, filled with killing intent, their eyes shining with the desire to slay him. It was at this point that Meng Hao suddenly stopped moving. For the first time, he hovered there in mid-air, not moving even an inch.

The fact that he had stopped instantly attracted countless looks from the majority of the members of the twenty allied Bandit tribes. Virtually all of their most powerful experts looked at Meng Hao with vicious killing intent, and then shot toward him. Instantly, he was being charged from all directions.

"DIE!!" came the grim cries as the people came closer and closer. In the blink of an eye, they had surrounded Meng Hao. It was at this point that Meng Hao slapped his bag of holding with his right hand. Instantly, a wooden box appeared which he held high up into the air. His expression was dark as he slowly opened its lid.

Within the wooden box was a blooming flower.

Exotic Heartdevil Flower!! 1

In this instant, all eyes subconsciously looked over at the flower. When that happened, an intense rumbling filled the minds of all onlookers. Instantly, the whole battlefield turned deathly silent.

Within that deathly silence, the Exotic Heartdevil flower began to wilt. This flower was extremely powerful, but there were simply too many Cultivators present. The vast number of people in the area was causing the flower to begin to wither.

Of course, Meng Hao had long since predicted that this would happen. After acquiring the flower, he had studied it and come to understand it. All

he wanted was this one brief moment.

During that moment, the only people who weren't affected were the members of the Heavenly Court Alliance and the members of the great Tribes up on the battlement of Blackgate Fort. It was as if they were in a different world.

However, their expressions were filled with shock. Absolute silence reigned. They looked down at the Exotic Heartdevil Flower, and the deathly still that covered the battlefield.

“Exotic Heartdevil Flower....”

“Who could ever have imagined that the Crow Divinity Tribe would still have that flower!?”

“It's a rare flower, but actually somewhat weak. However, if you use it cleverly it can be considered a precious treasure!”

Duo Lan was breathing heavily as she looked down at the scene. The sense of déjà vu she was experiencing continued to grow stronger. However, she still could not figure out who exactly Meng Hao was.

Next to her, Zhang Wenzu seemed to be paying attention to the scene below, although only slightly.

As for Luo Chong, he was panting as he looked down at Meng Hao. Within his complicated feelings was a touch of admiration.

Zhou Dekun was blinking. He had never imagined that Meng Hao would have a treasure such as this.

Even as everyone up on the battlement of Blackgate Fort was shocked, down on the battlefield, the Nascent Soul Cultivators who had been chasing Meng Hao, as well as the totemic Sacred Ancients, were all trembling, motionless. It was at this point that Meng Hao made his move.

A Blood Clone appeared. Its expression was one of greed, as if it thirsted to drink up lives. As it shot toward the group of more than ten totemic Sacred Ancients, Meng Hao stepped forward and hurled the Devil Spear out. A towering devilish mist rose up, filled with countless faces, to shoot

toward the crowds of people.

Next, Meng Hao took a deep breath as his Wood-type totem tattoo magically appeared on his forehead. A sea of flames roared into being and freezing Frost soil spread out. The all-conquering power of the his Metal-type totem tattoo was fused in as well. Four of the five elements instantly exploded out.

The sea of flames burned everything. The gigantic tree extinguished lives. The power of metal slashed through the air. The Frost soil kicked up a frigid wind that froze the sky.

Booming filled the air as all of these things happened in the exact same moment. There were no bloodcurdling cries. However, one totemic Sacred Ancient after another withered up. One Nascent Soul Cultivator after another felt their bodies exploding.

All of it happened in the space of only eight breaths. During those eight breaths, Meng Hao was able to completely reverse the situation on the battlefield.

For four breaths of time, the power of Meng Hao's four elements totems swept out explosively in all directions. The power transformed into an attack which slammed into the Nascent Soul Cultivators.

One bandit Tribe Elder after another felt their Cultivation base burn under the power of the Exotic Heartdevil Flower. Their bodies were not under their own control, and their wills were lost. Any power they had to resist Meng Hao's divine abilities and magical techniques was completely weakened to the point where they could not withstand even a single blow.

Massive booms echoed out across the battlefield as the ordinary Cultivators of the bandit Tribes trembled, their faces filled with confusion. They felt as if they were experiencing an out of body experience, as if their bodies were mere husks.

Meng Hao knew that the entire battlefield would belong to him for the space of time of eight breaths.

At the same time, discussions broke out on the battlement of Blackgate

Fort.

“This guy is completely cruel and diabolical!!”

“He intentionally caught the attention of all the powerful experts, then took advantage of the situation to take out the Exotic Heartdevil Flower. He’s not just vicious, he’s adept at scheming. However, if he thinks he can turn the tide of the entire battle with only that flower, then he’s a bit naive!”

“That flower has its limits. At the most it will probably last for the space of ten breaths before vanishing. Maybe he can kill some people during that time, but, exactly how many? For example, those late Nascent Soul stage experts are fundamentally powerful enough to last for even sixteen breaths under the influence of an Exotic Heartdevil Flower.”

By this time, five breaths of time had passed. The Exotic Heartdevil Flower was half withered, and its power was beginning to wane. The late Nascent Soul stage Cultivators were showing signs of intense struggle; it seemed it wouldn’t be long before they were able to shake off the effects of the flower. Meng Hao’s eyes flickered. He did not continue with any slaughtering, but instead began to perform an incantation. He pointed his finger down toward the ground, causing boundless Demonic Qi to instantly rise up. A vortex appeared that only he could see as it then began to rotate soundlessly. Meng Hao became the center of a raging tower of Demonic Qi.

Under the crushing pressure of this Demonic Qi, the 400,000 enemy neo-demons, who were no longer under the control of their Dragoneers, and were also being affected by the Exotic Heartdevil Flower, also began to tremble.

In their eyes, Meng Hao was like some sort of Demon Emperor. Because of the Demonic Qi, they had no choice but to yield to the pressure. As the last of the eight breaths ran out, one neo-demon after another lowered their heads and began to approach Meng Hao.

The Exotic Heartdevil Flower was fully wilted; it transformed into ash which then drifted away with the wind.

Everyone on the battlefield seemed to wake up as if from sleep. Their bodies trembled as they looked out in confusion. It took only a moment for the members of the bandit Tribes to suddenly gasp. Their expression instantly filled with complete disbelief.

The moment that they woke up, the Blood Clone finished consuming a fifth totemic Sacred Ancient. At the same time, thirteen of the Nascent Soul Elders who had been surrounding Meng Hao, exploded into showers of blood under the power of Meng Hao's four elements totems.

If that were the extent of it, it wouldn't count for much. However, before the Cultivators of the bandit Tribes alliance could even recover from their shock, they saw Meng Hao floating there in mid-air, surrounded by 400,000 neo-demons.

At the same time, shocking roars could be heard as the bandit Tribes' own 400,000 neo-demons shot toward Meng Hao. This was not an attack, but rather, they joined to circulate around him, emitting subservient cries.

As of this moment, 800,000 neo-demons were completely shaking Heaven and Earth!!

From ancient times until now, there had never been a person who could control an 800,000 strong neo-demon horde. To everyone watching, this was virtually inconceivable.

Nonetheless, the sky outside of Blackgate Fort was now filled with 800,000 roaring neo-demons. The sky shook, and everyone on the battlement of was thoroughly astonished. Within Blackgate Fort itself, the Heavenly Court Alliance was startled. As for the powerful experts of the great Tribes with Spirit Severing Patriarchs, their minds were all filled with profound trembling.

In fact... four streams of indescribably powerful Divine Sense suddenly spread out from within the Black Lands. These were... streams of Divine Sense belonging to Spirit Severing Patriarchs!

These streams of Divine Sense were filled with intrepid, savage power. They passed through Blackgate Fort to sweep across the lands of the Western Desert, eventually coming to rest on Meng Hao and his horde of

800,000 neo-demons.

As of this moment, the tide of the battle truly had turned!

Everyone who stood atop Blackgate Fort was panting and staring in shock. It was in this moment that a tremor ran through Duo Lan. She suddenly realized why Meng Hao seemed so familiar.

“He’s....” Her face filled with an expression of complete disbelief.

Next to her, Zhang Wenzu’s face was now filled with concentration. As he looked at the 800,000 neo-demons, his scalp went numb.

As of now, the Crow Divinity Tribe didn’t even need to attack. Nor did the Black Dragon Tribe need to fight. Meng Hao waved his hand, causing the 800,000 neo-demons to charge toward the allied bandit Tribes. The land trembled and the sky shook. The clouds in the sky roiled as the sounds of slaughter began to spread out.

Miserable shrieks rang through the air one after another as the bandit Cultivators, as well as their totemic Sacred Ancients, Greatfathers, and other powerful experts, were instantly stupefied.

They wanted to kill Meng Hao, but he was now hidden behind 800,000 neo-demons. How could they possibly kill him!?

They wanted to slaughter the members of the Crow Divinity and great Black Dragon Tribe, to cause Meng Hao to show his face. However, the fog of the Crow Divinity Tribe’s spell formation towered up, within which could be seen the shadows of running figures. The members of the great Black Dragon Tribe were quickly absorbed into the fog of the spell formation, concealing them completely.

Chapter 512: 800,000 neo-demons!

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1. The Exotic Heartdevil Flower was used by the Five Poisons Tribe against the Five Crow Divinity Tribes in chapters 439, 440 and beyond.

Chapter 513: Title at the end!

When he had first laid eyes on these twenty allied bandit Tribes, Meng Hao knew that in this last battle, despite the unsurpassable battle prowess of the Crow Divinity and great Black Dragon Tribes, they would be defeated in the end.

There were just too many Cultivators in the bandit Tribes.

Even if by some miracle the more than ten thousands members of the Crow Divinity Tribe did not die, and a few hundred managed to enter into the Black Lands, by that time, they would no longer be the Crow Divinity Tribe.

On the other hand, if the Crow Divinity Tribe was able to continue on with majority of its strength, after it entered the Black Lands, it could combine with the Church of the Golden Light. Then, they would be a powerful force, and would thus be able maintain their self respect and continue on.

That was exactly the outcome Meng Hao hoped for. And there was only one way to make that happen.... That method had nothing to do with strength or weakness of Cultivation base. It had nothing to do with strength in numbers. No, Meng Hao knew that in the Western Desert... there was only one thing that was considered the source of true power.

His greatest strength did not lie in the five elements totems, nor in the power of his Cultivation base or his magical items. People who exceeded him in terms of such aspects were not rare. Even his position as a totemic Sacred Ancient did not count for much.

His Blood Clone was strong, but how could it possibly stand up to 200,000 Cultivators?

The Devil Spear was domineering, but he only had one!

Meng Hao knew that his most powerful asset, the greatest strength he had to rely on, was his identity as a Demon Sealer. In the great lands of the Western Desert, the fact that Meng Hao was a Demon Sealer meant that

he could congeal and manipulate boundless Demonic Qi.

He could cause great changes in neo-demons, make them even more powerful than himself. He could control them and use them to accomplish things that he alone could not accomplish.

That was his greatest asset. It was also why the Crow Divinity Tribe had been able to leave the Western Desert North region and travel all the way to here.

Therefore... the Exotic Heartdevil Flower had appeared. Slaying totemic Sacred Ancients and Nascent Soul Elders was secondary to his true goal. While everyone was paying attention to him, he needed a brief pause in the battle, only four or five breaths of time while he was being surrounded.

That brief amount of time was crucial. To ensure success, he needed to make sure that the hundred or so Dragoneers of the allied bandit Tribes lost control of their neo-demons. It was in that way that Meng Hao could perfectly pull off his plan.

That was the entire reason why he had pulled out the Exotic Heartdevil Flower!

His goal was not to cause confusion for the ordinary Cultivators, nor was it to bewilder the Nascent Soul experts. Instead... he had been targeting the one hundred Dragoneers, who were hidden within their neo-demon hordes. These were the Cultivators who, seemingly from the beginning, had been completely ignored by Meng Hao, as if he didn't care about them one bit.

As of this moment, he had accomplished his goal.

800,000 neo-demons shook heaven and earth, completely rocking the battlefield. The Heavenly Court Alliance was shocked, as were all of the other Western Desert Cultivators who were watching.

The neo-demons instantly charged towards the well over 100,000 shocked bandit Tribe members.

This last battle was destined to be filled with foul winds and rains of

blood. It was something the likes of which had never occurred in the history of the Western Desert. Everyone atop Blackgate Fort watched on in silence, even the four streams of Divine Sense from the Spirit Severing Patriarchs.

As the 800,000 neo-demons closed in, the eyes of the 100,000 bandit Tribe members went red. they also charged forward, howling: “Kill them!!”

At the same time, all of the totemic Sacred Ancients and all of the Nascent Soul Cultivators shot forward, transforming into something like a sharp arrow, piercing through the neo-demon horde toward Meng Hao.

“Kill Meng Hao and the neo-demon horde will collapse!!” In this critical moment, the Greatfathers of the twenty bandit Tribes roared, congealing the peak power that existed on the battlefield as they shot toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao was there within the neo-demon horde, looking around with cold eyes as neo-demons circulated around him. Miserable shrieks sounded out constantly as Cultivators were ripped to shreds by neo-demons.

As of this moment, Meng Hao could sense the intense ruthlessness of warfare. It was no exaggeration to say that the world in front of him was awash in redness.

That redness was blood. The blood of neo-demons and the blood of Cultivators. The land turned red, so red that even the violet rain that fell could not wash it away.

This was a true massacre!

The vast amount of neo-demons in the horde made it so that even though neo-demons were constantly dying, there were always more to attack the bandit Tribe Cultivators. Bloodcurdling screams filled the air as the deaths intensified. Right now, it was like the yellow springs of the underworld had turned completely red.

“Blood....” thought Meng Hao as he looked down at the ground. Suddenly, he reached a bit of new enlightenment. Blood... was also water,

correct? It was a type of water that contained life; it was in fact the source of life force.

Having blood didn't necessarily mean you were alive, but without it, you would certainly not be.

"It seems that I'm bound to blood by Karma. The Blood Immortal legacy, all the slaughtering that resulted from my practice of cultivation.... Blood, is also a kind of totem.

"Besides, what are totems anyway? Totems... are not a manifestation of my own will and enlightenment. No, they are a force of power of the Nine Mountains and Seas. They are a seed of power!!"

Muttering to himself, he closed his eyes, ignoring the powerful experts of the bandit alliance who were going all out to try to reach him and kill him. As they neared, neo-demons attempted to block their way, resulting in even more blood showering about.

It was at this moment that suddenly, the members of the Crow Divinity Tribe moved forward along with the spell formation. Fog churned, and the sound of running echoed about. Massive golden figures could be seen within, charging into the battle.

As soon as the fog reached the members of the bandit Tribes, miserable shrieks could be heard.

A howl could be heard as the excited parrot suddenly appeared in mid-air. In a squawk that the entire battlefield could hear, it said, "Come come. Shout out with me! Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life! When the Lord Fifth appears, who dares to cause strife...."

As soon as the voices began to echo out from within the spell formation fog, another batch of roiling, cloudy fog could be seen within the Black Lands. It was exactly the same in appearance, and loud, clear voices rang out from within. They were filled with excitement and determination.

"Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life! When the Lord Fifth appears, who dares to cause strife! Lord Fifth, we welcome you back with respectful hearts!! Patriarch, we welcome you back with respectful

hearts!!” These resounding voices caused the observers on the battlement of Blackgate Fort to stare in shock. When they looked over, they could see that within the approaching fog were seven or eight thousand enormous figures. They charged through mid-air, passing out from the Black Lands to enter the Western Desert and charge down toward the battlefield.

“That’s....”

“The Church of the Golden Light!!”

“The spell formation of the Crow Divinity Tribe is exactly the same as that of the Church of the Golden Light!!”

When the Church of the Golden Light appeared, it was like a sharp blade that stabbed into the already scattered and battered bandit alliance. Together with the Crow Divinity Tribe, they began a slaughter of spell formations that hit the enemy from two directions at the same time.

The members of the great Black Dragon Tribe also charged out from within the center of the Crow Divinity Spell Formation, engaging in bloody slaughter down to the very end.

The battle was now completely one-sided. Any position of superiority the bandit Tribes had was completely lost because of the 800,000 neo-demons. Hopelessness and terror filled their hearts and minds. Miserable screams filled the air as they completely lost any will to fight.

The slaughter continued nonetheless!

150,000. 130,000. 100,000... 80,000... 50,000!!

It did not take long for the bandit Tribes’ numbers to be reduced to only 50,000 Cultivators. The other 150,000 were nothing more than corpses. Their blood flowed out, causing the area outside of Blackgate Fort to become a lake of blood!

The reek of gore filled the air. As for the top experts and totemic Sacred Ancients of the bandit alliance, they were seriously injured and virtually going mad as they slaughtered their way through the neo-demons to grow closer and closer to Meng Hao.

The slaughter down below wasn't actually drawing much attention. The eyes of the Cultivators on the battlement of Blackgate Fort were all drawn toward the neo-demons that were protecting Meng Hao, who floated there in mid-air.

Meng Hao was the key to everything. If he died... then the bandit Tribes could still secure victory in the battle!

Booming filled the air as dozens of Nascent Soul Cultivators and more than ten rapidly weakening totemic Sacred Ancients mowed their way through the crowds of neo-demons. They carved out a bloody path as the neo-demons, giving no thoughts to their own lives, threw themselves in front of the enemy. The enemy had no choice but to continue the slaughter as they tried to near Meng Hao.

The distance between the two was still several hundred meters, packed close with crazed neo-demons. Unfortunately the enemy Cultivators weren't able to get to Meng Hao. There were just too many neo-demons. The Demonic Qi of a horde of 800,000 neo-demons was something that the Nascent Soul Cultivators couldn't see. However, they could sense that there was some unspeakable pressure in the area that made minor teleportation impossible.

All they could do was charge physically and try to kill their way to Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's closed eyes suddenly snapped open. When they did, his pupils glowed with a red will of blood that seemed to be a reflection of the lake of blood down below. It was the same color as his mask, as if it was in fact, merged with the mask.

"Blood is water.... As it turns out, I had the totem with me all the time, I just never realized it.... It has always been here." His skin was now completely the color of blood. It almost seemed as if the Blood Immortal mask had disappeared. Meng Hao's entire body was the same color as the blood-colored mask. It was no longer a mask, but rather, Meng Hao's true face.

In this moment, his long robe had also turned red. Even his hair was

crimson. Right now you could actually say that he looked... exactly like a Blood Clone.

“Not quite there,” he murmured. “Unfortunately... this blood totem will belong to the Blood Immortal, not me....” He raised his right hand, causing the Ji Clan Blood Clone, which was off in the distance pouncing toward another Cultivator, to suddenly tremble. It seemed unwilling to respond, but also unable to control itself. It disappeared, and when it reappeared, it was directly in front of Meng Hao.

Meng Hao pointed at the Blood Clone, and instantly, it transformed into a beam of light that fused into Meng Hao’s finger. Shockingly, a totem tattoo suddenly appeared on Meng Hao’s finger in that same spot!

A red totem tattoo. A blood totem!

As soon as the totem appeared, Meng Hao’s Cultivation base exploded up. It was as if it had been restrained for too long, and now it was finally able to climb high. In the blink of an eye, it exploded out in a way that caused the approaching bandit alliance experts and totemic Sacred Ancients to be filled with stupefied astonishment.

Chapter 513: Blood Totem!

Chapter 514: Five Elements Temporarily Combine!

Meng Hao's hair whipped about his head despite the lack of wind. His eyes glowed with a profound light. Everything around him was bright red. The lake of blood below began to boil and rise up into the air.

If that were all there was to it, the true fearsomeness of the blood tattoo would not have been made manifest. However, all of the cultivators in the area suddenly felt that the blood inside their bodies was suddenly out of control, as if it were about to burst out from within them!

The bandit Tribe members felt this way, as did the Cultivators atop Blackgate Fort!

Everyone was instantly shocked by this development.

Everything dimmed; up above, winds blew and clouds roiled. A fountain of blood could be seen in mid-air within the neo-demon horde, focused on Meng Hao's index finger!

At the same time, in the Southern Domain, some distance from the border of the Black Lands....

A bloody glow rose up into the sky from the Ancient Temple of Doom. This glow instantly caused the great Sects and Clans of the Southern Domain to stir into action.

All of the deity statues within the Ancient Temple of Doom began to weep tears of blood. It was a bizarre sight which shook the entire Southern Domain.

It almost seemed that these statues were commemorating the power of the Blood Immortal as it returned into the world!!

Meanwhile, back in the great lands of the Western Desert, outside Blackgate Fort.

Meng Hao slowly looked up at the shocked peak experts of the bandit alliance.

“With the Ji Clan Blood Clone, I can congeal a blood totem. It can’t compare to the violet rain, so I don’t want it to be permanent. However, to temporarily reach the full circle of the five elements will do nicely. Or perhaps... I can use the blood totem as the foundation and fuse it with the violet rain. Then I can reach the great circle of the Water-type totem!” Eyes filled with anticipation, Meng Hao lifted his hand up and pressed his index finger onto his forehead.

“Five elements.... temporarily combine!”

The power birthed of the spirit of the Golden Crow! Metal!

The boundless life force of the Greenwood Tree! Wood!

The Frost soil which gave birth to the Frost Soil Demon Emperor! Earth!

The Everburning Flame! Fire!

And now, the legacy power of the Blood Immortal, transformed into blood. Water!

In this instant, the five elements reached their great circle. I might only be a temporary great circle, but it caused Meng Hao’s Cultivation base to soar up nonetheless. His Perfect Gold Core emanated with limitless golden light. A transformation began during which it seemed... a Nascent Soul became visible!

At the same time, the five elements began to combine!

Metal. Wood. Water. Earth. Fire. Five elements fused together, both promoting and restraining each other as they united to form a primeval Chaotic will. Within this primeval Chaos appeared a single strand of light!

This light was golden in color, the same gold as the metal of the five elements, and the same color as the Metal-type totem tattoo. It also was the same color as Meng Hao’s Perfect Gold Core. As soon as the golden light appeared, Meng Hao’s Cultivation base roared up.

It climbed up ceaselessly. In the blink of an eye... he broke out from the Gold Core stage and into the early Nascent Soul stage!

His Perfect Gold Core began to melt, from within which emerged a

Nascent Soul that belonged uniquely to Meng Hao!!

As of now, Meng Hao could slay the early Nascent Soul stage, shock the mid Nascent Soul stage, and hold his own against the late Nascent Soul stage. It was hard to say if he would be able to come out victorious against the latter. In any case, this was a power that the Core Formation stage simply could not possess. The power of Meng Hao's Five-Colored Nascent Soul had been completed one step at a time as the various totem tattoos appeared. As of now, he possessed a battle prowess that was completely unprecedented and thoroughly frightening in the Cultivation world.

Surprisingly, in the view of the Divine Sense of outsiders, Meng Hao actually appeared to be of the great circle of Core Formation. However, no one could deny that he was of the Nascent Soul stage. Many people actually assumed that Meng Hao was deliberately putting on a front to make it look as if he was of the Core Formation stage.

Currently... in the moment that Meng Hao's Cultivation base exploded upward, causing him to enter the early Nascent Soul Sage, a Nascent Soul was formed within his Gold Core. The faces of all the Cultivators who were watching instantly filled with disbelief, and they gasped.

"He... had a Cultivation base breakthrough? He's in the Nascent Soul stage?"

"How... how is this possible? He reached the Nascent Soul stage? Don't tell me that before, he really was just a Core Formation Cultivator!?!?"

"That's impossible! Perhaps he was already a Nascent Soul Cultivator before, but because of some unforeseen circumstances, experienced a Cultivation base drop, and only now is faintly able to recover?" Astonished conversations spread out on the battlefield as well as among the audience up on the battlement of Blackgate Fort, and even among the groups of bandit Tribe peak experts who were trying to fight their way through the neo-demon horde.

Even as they were locked the throes of astonishment, a second beam of light rose up from Meng Hao, in addition to the golden light.

Green!

Flickering green light interlocked with the golden light. Meng Hao's hair whipped about as boundless life force suddenly began to emanate out from him. In this moment, his Cultivation base soared even higher. As of now... he was at the peak of the early Nascent Soul stage, only a step away from the mid Nascent Soul stage!

This sudden explosion instantly shook the minds of everyone who was watching. Even as Meng Hao lifted up his head and roared, three colors appeared behind him, a three-colored sky!

Gold, green, plus the color which represented his Water-type blood totem, red!!

The three colors of the sky that appeared behind Meng Hao were reflected in the firmament up above as Meng Hao's Cultivation base once again leaped higher. It climbed up ceaselessly, breaking through from the early Nascent Soul stage to the mid Nascent Soul stage.

As of this moment the faces of each and every person observing were filled with disbelief. Duo Lan's eyes were wide, as if she was seeing something unimaginable. Even Zhang Wenzu's eyes were flickering with deeper and deeper concentration.

Next, a fourth, world-shaking color suddenly appeared. Yellow!

Behind Meng Hao, a four-colored sky could be seen. His Cultivation base did not stop climbing, but rather, continued to rocket up. It was as if all the methodical preparations he had made were now being unleashed with explosive results.

His energy exploded out and his aura grew vastly more intrepid as behind him, five beams of light interlocked to form a Five-Colored Sky!

That fifth color was... black!

Five elements, five colors. In this moment, they transformed into a Five-Colored Sky that circulated around Meng Hao. His clothes rippled, and his hair was in chaos. His eyes glowed with a bizarre, brilliant light.

Meng Hao floated there, his body emanating radiant five-colored light, a Five-Colored Sky behind him. As of this moment, there were no totem

tattoos visible on his body. All he possessed... was the Five-Colored Sky and an indescribably fearsome aura!

These five colors stemmed from Meng Hao's five elements. Gold came from the Metal-type tattoo. Green came from the Wood-type. The Water-type blood made red. The soil of Frost was black!

Finally came fire. It was not red, but yellow, a raging flame that rose up into the sky.

His Cultivation base rocketed up a final time. His aura exploded out with incredible intensity, profoundly affecting all the Cultivators who were watching. Deep in their hearts, it caused all onlookers to feel fear and trembling.

Finally, he reached the peak of the mid Nascent Soul stage. His distance from the late Nascent Soul stage was... only a sliver. At last, the rocketing climb of his Cultivation base came to a stop. Everyone on the battlefield was shaken as they looked at Meng Hao.

This explosive Cultivation base growth came after years of suppressing his Gold Core. In this instant, he experienced meteoric growth into the peak of the mid Nascent Soul stage as he unleashed all that had been pent up before.

Earlier, he could battle with the late Nascent Soul stage. As of now... Meng Hao was powerful enough that, although he might not be able to shake the Spirit Severing stage, he could crush any Cultivator under that stage like dry weeds or rotten wood. He would be able to cut through any of them like a hot knife cutting through butter!

Despite all that, Meng Hao let out a sigh.

"If I can understand this violet rain, then I could merge it into the blood totem and create a great circle Water-type totem. When that happens, my Cultivation base will definitely be able to break through from the mid Nascent Soul Stage!" Meng Hao knew that his current Cultivation base was not truly of the great circle of the five elements and thus, could not propel him past the mid Nascent Soul stage.

That was not what he truly wanted. The water of these five elements contained part of the blood of the Blood Immortal. What he wanted was the violet rain of the Western Desert Apocalypse.

That was his choice.

At present, his five elements Cultivation base was only a temporary fusion. In fact, his Nascent Soul was actually illusory, and the five elements were not fully combined. He had not concocted his Five-Colored Nascent Soul. Once he did, then his Cultivation base would be completely stable.

Suddenly, a bizarre light shone in his eyes. He looked off into the distance at the countless neo-demons and the astonished experts and totemic Sacred Ancients of the bandit tribes.

“I think it’s time to test out the battle prowess of this temporary combination of the five elements!” Even as he murmured to himself, the neo-demons roared and pounced onto the bandit Tribe experts, forcing them to defend themselves. Suddenly, one of the Nascent Soul experts was separated from the others by the neo-demons. A wide-open space was then cleared, an empty lane providing a clear line of sight from him to Meng Hao, who was a few hundred meters away.

The old man and Meng Hao looked at each other for a moment, and then Meng Hao coolly said, “Bring it on.”

“Such arrogance and conceit!!” roared the old man, who happened to be a High Priest. His eyes flickered coldly as he used minor teleportation to shoot toward Meng Hao.

The rest of the members of his Tribe, including the Elders and the Greatfather, had been killed because of the Exotic Heartdevil Flower. As of now, he was the only peak level expert left from his Tribe. He shot forward, his eyes flickering with intense killing intent. As he neared, his totem magically appeared above his head. It was an immense star which then transformed into a gigantic boulder three thousand meters wide. Rumbling sounded out as it shot through the air toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao hovered there, his expression tranquil. He waved his right

hand, causing the Five-Colored Sky to flicker. A swooshing sound could be heard as a five-colored light expanded out and then disappeared. A moment later, the incoming boulder shook and then disintegrated.

The sight of this caused everyone watching to be shocked, especially the charging High Priest. His face filled with disbelief. It was at this point that Meng Hao distractedly waved his hand and pointed forward.

As he pointed, the Five-Colored Sky rippled and then disappeared. When it reappeared, it had congealed onto Meng Hao's finger. Then his finger descended, and blinding five-colored light shot toward the old man.

He was a High Priest, but his face flickered nonetheless. He roared as he unleashed divine abilities and magical items. He shot backward, using several minor teleportations to suddenly disappear and then reappear off in the distance.

He reacted quickly and moved with incredible speed. It seemed as if no matter how swift and fierce the five-colored beam of light was, it wouldn't be able to touch him. However... suddenly he found that his entire body was trembling. He coughed up a mouthful of blood as a five-colored glow appeared on his chest. He stared down in disbelief, unable to do anything except gape.

"How is this possible...?"

"As you can see," said Meng Hao softly, his eyes shining with enlightenment, "you cannot evade the power of the five elements."

The old man said nothing, but a bitter smile appeared on his face. Suddenly, his entire body turned red as all the blood inside exploded out. Popping sounds could be heard as it was transformed into a bloody mist. At the same time, a golden light flew out from within him, transforming his entire body, from inside to out, into a statue made of gold. However, he still wasn't dead. The fact that he theoretically had a chance to survive was like a bitter torment as he fell toward the ground. But then, a sea of flames erupted out from inside of him, burning him dead, body and soul.

Chapter 515: An Initial Understanding of Karma

“Different combinations of five elements will have different manifestations....” thought Meng Hao, having gained new enlightenment. He looked up at the pale-faced bandit Tribe experts and totemic Sacred Ancients. They wanted to kill him, but were now surrounded and cut off by countless neo-demons, and were severely weakened.

They really had no way to get to him. They were surrounded by hundreds of thousands of neo-demons. They couldn't even reach Meng Hao, let alone... kill him.

“We're defeated....” said one of the old experts bitterly. As of now, they knew they had lost and knew that Meng Hao fundamentally could not be killed.

Meng Hao was not an impulsive person, and despite his sudden increase in battle prowess, he would still act cautiously. They knew that he would only allow one of them to attack at a time, and would not presumptuously try to take them all on at the same time.

Facing up against an enemy like this caused these bandit alliance experts to be filled with a sensation of powerlessness.

As soon as the old man's words echoed out, the scattered bandit Tribe members down below on the ground slowly began to give up. They ceased fighting back, and stood there silently.

Of the original 200,000 Tribe members, not even twenty percent remained. This battle had not been won single-handedly by Meng Hao. Rather, the unstoppable crushing power of the 800,000 neo-demons he wielded was a force capable of causing any enemy force to be moved.

Now that he had defeated the bandit alliance, Meng Hao did not continue to contain or slaughter them. He allowed the broken remnants of the Tribes to leave the battlefield. As they disappeared off into the surrounding plains, Meng Hao led the Crow Divinity Tribe, the Church of

the Golden Light, the great Black Dragon Tribe and 800,000 neo-demons forward to stand in front of Blackgate Fort. He lifted his head up to look at the battlement up above.

“The Crow Divinity Tribe has arrived with a Demon Spirit!” he said slowly, his voice echoing out into the Black Lands!

Xu Bai stood next to Meng Hao. He looked up at the enormous gate leading into the Black Lands, took a deep breath, and said, “The great Black Dragon Tribe has arrived with a Demon Spirit!”

There was a brief moment of silence, after which...

An enormous rumbling could be heard as Blackgate Fort’s huge gate... slowly began to open!

As the gate opened, the crowds on top of the battlement looked down. Virtually all of the gazes swept over the people down below and came to rest on Meng Hao.

Conversations immediately began to spread out.

“It seems that from now on, the Black Lands is going to be a bit more lively than before.”

“This Meng Hao has an extraordinary Cultivation base and bizarre divine abilities. His totems are even more shocking. He can even slay late Nascent Soul stage Cultivators. He will definitely rise to even more prominence in the future here in the Black Lands!”

“The Western Desert Apocalypse has reached its culmination. It won’t be long before we will be able to see the sea from Blackgate Fort.... The Crow Divinity Tribe and the great Black Dragon Tribe slaughtered their way here from the Western Desert. They are the only two Tribes that actually gained entrance to the Black Lands this way with a Demon Spirit. Very unusual....”

Hearing their conversations caused Luo Chong to roll his eyes. He occasionally looked back down into the crowd of people below at Meng Hao. As for what he was thinking, it was impossible to tell.

Zhou Dekun's expression was one of excitement as he looked down at Meng Hao, a wide smile splitting his face.

Duo Lan was frowning at first, but quickly caused her face to relax. She continued to look deeply at Meng Hao.

Next to her, Zhang Wenzu was smiling. Shaking his head, he said, "Five elements totems, combined together.... An interesting idea. Unfortunately, it's only temporary. It won't be long before it floats away like a rootless lily pad. He's definitely not Chosen material.

"When I meet him in the future here in the Black Lands, I'll have to help him understand why combining the five elements is nothing more than a joke." He smiled.

At the moment, the massive rumbling continued to sound out as the gate finished opening completely to reveal an opening that looked like a door, roughly three hundred meters wide. Sunlight poured out from within. On the other side was the Black Lands. It was as if this door was the separating point between two worlds.

Xu Bai took a deep breath and then turned to Meng Hao. Clasping hands, he bowed deeply. "Brother Meng," he said, "words cannot express the depth of my gratitude for your kindness. The alliance between the two of us will never change! For now, I, Xu Bai, will lead my Tribe into the Black Lands. After we have time to reorganize, then the two of us can find some time to chat!"

Meng Hao laughed and nodded in response, but didn't say anything.

With that, Xu Bai led the thousands of members of his great Tribe toward Blackgate Fort. They quickly disappeared inside and entered into the Black Lands.

As the Black Dragon Tribe made their way in, Meng Hao looked back at the members of the Crow Divinity Tribe behind him.

After a long moment, his gaze finally came to rest on the members who had once been part of the Five Tribes. There were only a few hundred left. Wu Chen and Wu Ling were among them.

There was also the Greatfather who had burned his life force all those years ago. He was now very old, with not much longevity left.

Meng Hao looked at them. They looked back. No words were exchanged. After all the years spent together, they knew Meng Hao quite well. Within the silence was a deep melancholy.

After a long moment, Meng Hao smiled.

He looked at the few hundred former members of the five Crow Divinity Tribes, as well as the other Tribe members they had picked up along their journey. His voice warm and amiable, he said, "At long last I have led you here. Now, I deliver your hope to you."

He had traveled with these people for many years, had fought by their side to reach this point. At long last, they had reached their destination, the great gate which led into the Black Lands.

The gate had been opened, and was just waiting for them to walk through it.

"You may continue to practice cultivation with my totems," he continued. "In addition, I have branded the other totemic Sacred Ancients that we acquired so that the Crow Divinity Tribe may form totems from them.

"My vines... have recovered. I will give them to you as a protector and guard." He waved his hand, causing a Thorn Rampart Vine seed to appear. He quickly branded it with a mission.

Protect the Crow Divinity Tribe!

After that, he gave the vine seed to the Crow Divinity Tribe Greatfather. The old man looked silently at Meng Hao and thought back to all the scenes from years past, and to what Meng Hao had said about giving hope to the Tribe.

All of the things that had happened flashed through his mind, causing his vision to blur somewhat as he looked at Meng Hao.

"Starting today," said Meng Hao softly, "the Church of the Golden Light

will be part of the Crow Divinity Tribe. From now on... the Tribe will not be called Crow Divinity, but rather, the Golden Crow Clan!" The members of the Crow Divinity Tribe began to tremble. It was hard to say who did it first, but they all began to drop to their knees and kowtow to Meng Hao.

No one spoke. However, the tears in their eyes and the looks on their familiar faces made clear their deep respect, fanaticism, and gratitude for Meng Hao.

Meng Hao looked at them and smiled. It was a smile that said, "The time has come to part."

He turned and looked at Gu La. "Gu La.... Henceforth, you are free. Before releasing you, though, I must say that I truly hope you remain as a member of the Golden Crow Clan, to be their Dragoneer."

Gu La trembled as he dropped to his knees and stared at Meng Hao in a daze. On the long road of travel, his past grievances had long since vanished. He wore a strange expression at the moment, one filled with reluctance to part ways. After a moment, he lowered his head and voiced his agreement.

"I give you the Wild Giant," continued Meng Hao. "Treat it well." Meng Hao looked over at the Wild Giant. Throughout the years, it had been injured over and over again, and its body was now covered with scars. Despite that, it was mighty. It looked at Meng Hao with a blank expression, as if it didn't quite understand everything that was going on.

"As for these 800,000 neo-demons, I will not take any of them with me. I give them to all of you, to form the backbone of the Golden Crow Clan's battle prowess. I will personally brand all of them so that you don't need to control them. They will be here to protect the Golden Crow Clan." With that, he waved his right hand. Immediately, 800,000 neo-demons roared a shocking roar. Each one of them looked at Meng Hao, as if they were communicating with him....

Grievous whines could be heard from Big Hairy and the others, as if they were unwilling to separate.

Meng Hao looked at the Greenwood Wolves with a soft smile. He

thought back to all the years ago when he had joined the five Crow Divinity Tribes, and had first laid eyes on the five Greenwood Wolf pups.

He could still remember their plaintive yips after going hungry for a whole night.

He thought about how he ran out into the mountain forest to find food for them.

“You’ve grown up now,” he said softly. “You don’t need to follow me any more.... Where I’m going... the five of you can’t go.”

Their mournful howls seemed to cause the surrounding members of the Golden Crow Clan to be roused from their prostration. They raised their heads to look at Meng Hao with expressions of grief.

“Exalted Sacred Ancient, please, do not leave the Golden Crow Clan....”

“Exalted Sacred Ancient, can’t you stay with us in the Black Lands?”

“Without you, exalted Sacred Ancient, we would have long since perished on the way here. Sacred Ancient, the Golden Crow Clan will forever remember your kindness!”

Hearing the all their words caused Meng Hao to stand there silently for a long moment. Finally, he shook his head and looked at them earnestly.

“There is no need for you to thank me,” he said quietly. “Everything I did was to pay a debt of gratitude to the Golden Crow and the great tree. It was also my way of making an apology. Perhaps... this is Karma.” He waved his hand, causing one of the Demon Spirits he had sealed to fly over into the hands of the Greatfather.

“Take it and enter in the Black Lands!” He gave a deep look to the Golden Crow Clan, then glanced at the Black Lands. He knew that the remaining Demon Spirit he possessed would soon lead to conflicts. Deciding not to remain behind any longer, he turned his back on the Black Lands and strode off. Taking advantage of the temporary five elements combination, he quickly shot off into the distance and disappeared.

“Beloved concubine,” said the parrot, in a fair imitation of Meng Hao,

“You stay behind here to recover from your wounds. Please take care of the Church of the Golden Light for me. Lord Fifth... will come back for you.” Looking both sad and arrogant, it flapped its wings as it shot off into the distance to follow Meng Hao.

“Haha! Freedom, bitches! My beloved concubine is too protective. I can’t deal with that. Finally I’m free.... Ah, the smell of freedom! How lovely!”

“Exalted Sacred Ancient!” As Meng Hao left, all of the members of the Golden Crow Clan turned and once again prostrated themselves toward him. After a long time passed, they slowly rose to their feet. Filled with melancholy, unsure of the future, they took their 800,000 neo-demons and entered the Black Lands.

Meng Hao’s departure caused the faces of crowds on the battlement above to be filled with shock. Zhang Wenzu’s pupils constricted. He suddenly realized that his judgement of Meng Hao had been completely off.

“Where is he going...?”

Duo Lan was shocked. Zhou Dekun stared with wide eyes.

Far off in the distance, Meng Hao proceeded onward. His expression was calm, his entire bearing completely different than it had been before.

“If I hadn’t chosen to go to the five Crow Divinity Tribes that year, the Golden Crow could have lived for another thousand years. My arrival was the sowing of Karma. The reaping of that Karma was the death of the Golden Crow. However, that reaping was another sowing. Because the Golden Crow perished, the Crow Divinity Tribes declined, and narrowly escaped being exterminated. They were nearly wiped away in the Apocalypse. That was a reaping of Karma.

“Sowing contains reaping, reaping contains sowing. Everything that happened before was all sowing. Karma was reaped after I led the Crow Divinity Tribe out of the north all the way to the Black Lands.

“It is similar to repaying kindnesses. The kindness is the sowing of Karma, and the repayment is the reaping of it!

“Karma is about cause and effect. I... understand now.” As he traveled along, his eyes began to glow with enlightenment. It was as if he could see the faint Karma threads attached to all living things!

Laughing, Meng Hao slapped his bag of holding to produce the Ji Clan fishing rod. As he cast it out, within his heart floated the sense of the Karma of all living things.

Chapter 516: Without Severing the Spirit, How Could You Live Past 1,000?

Starting in the north and then extending to the east and west, the great lands of the Western Desert slowly became a violet-colored sea. The sea spread out to eventually cover the south as well. It stopped outside Blackgate Fort. At this point, it was truly a boundless sea.

Blackgate Fort was eventually submerged by the water. Ten thousand years later, after the seawater vanished, a new land would be revealed.

That would be the true end of the Western Desert Apocalypse. The seawaters would disappear, and the Western Desert would once again appear.

Perhaps by that time, the land would be unfamiliar to the Western Desert Cultivators residing in the Black Lands. However, there would definitely be people who would go to search for the roots of their Tribes from ten thousand years before.

Right now, Blackgate Fort's gate was closing, signifying an official end to the migration....

Meng Hao's laughter rang out as he gained enlightenment regarding Karma. He saw the Karma threads. By casting out the fishing line, he could control the treasure just like a member of the Ji Clan. To Meng Hao, this was an extra, unexpected benefit.

"So Karma has been with me all along...." He shot through the air, the parrot perched on his shoulder. The meat jelly was attached to the parrot's foot like always. One man, one parrot, and one meat jelly shot through the downpour of violet rain. They were surrounded by the power of extermination. Spiritual energy was completely cut off.

After parting ways with the Golden Crow Clan, Meng Hao chose not to enter the Black Lands. He made a different choice. He would stay behind within the Violet Rain Apocalypse in order to form his Water-type totem.

As for the blood totem, that was not Meng Hao's choice of totems. He

would place himself within the Violet Rain Apocalypse in order to to gain enlightenment and understand the true meaning of the Violet Sea.

As he shot through the air, his eyes suddenly glittered.

“Now that I’ve left the plains outside the Black Lands,” he murmured, “the pursuit should be catching up....” He suddenly stopped in mid-air, turning to look behind him.

“I’m probably being chased, not by the Nascent Soul stage, but... Spirit Severing!!” His eyes glowed brightly as he looked around, and he smiled.

A long moment passed before his gaze came to be fixed at a spot not too far off.

“It will most likely be Spirit Severing. After my display back at Blackgate Fort, no ordinary Nascent Soul Cultivator would be willing to try to interfere with me.” As Meng Hao thought about the Spirit Severing stage, his eyes suddenly filled with a burning passion.

Spirit Severing... was an indescribably powerful stage!

It was something that Cultivators sought after with passion secondary only to Immortal Ascension!

The mysteries of Spirit Severing had nothing to do with variations in divine abilities, but rather the manifestation of the Domain. Each of the three Severings were an instance of the use of the Domain.

Only within the Spirit Severing stage was it possible to have the qualification to call one’s cultivation... a Dao!

In the cultivation of the Spirit Severing stage, medicinal pills were secondary. The most important thing was... enlightenment regarding the Domain.

Every Spirit Severing Patriarch had a different Domain. Based on their different experiences in life, the Dao of the Domain chosen by the Cultivator transformed into a blade of Severing. The first Severing was the early stage, the second Severing was the mid, the third Severing was the late!

Each of these Severings would cause the Cultivation base to rise to a new realm. When all three Severings were completed, the great circle of Spirit Severing was complete. After that, there was only one path to follow... and that was Dao Seeking.

The reason why it was called Dao Seeking was that the body of the Cultivator contained a Dao. Within the three Severings of the Spirit Severing stage, one's Dao was discovered, then questions arose.... Once the Dao was solidified, then one was qualified for Immortal Ascension.

Unless... doubts arose during Dao Seeking. Then the Dao vanished and the body perished. Everything became emptiness.

There is a saying that once enlightened, one can die happy. That is how one could describe the Dao Seeking stage. Once enlightenment was gained, and one's own Dao was solidified, then one could smile even in death.

Spirit Severing, Dao Seeking, Immortal Ascension!

Those were the ultimate pursuits of the Cultivators in the great lands of South Heaven. Three stages, each one of which could lead to death. However, when the final goal of Immortal Ascension was reached, the Cultivator would then be qualified to leave South Heaven and travel among the stars. There, one's personal Dao could become even more strong, and blossom like a resplendent flower!

When such a beautiful flower blossomed, one could die laughing at the Heavens, having lived a life not in vain!

That was the path of Immortal Ascension!

Meng Hao's path. Xu Qing's path. Chu Yuyan's path. Chen Fan, Fatty and all the others all were treading such a path....

Objectively speaking, though, whether you looked at the Western Desert or the Southern Domain, Dao Seeking experts were as rare as phoenix feathers and qilin horns.... Even Spirit Severing experts were not common. Generally speaking, even great Tribes in the Western Desert would have only one Spirit Severing Patriarch, which was the reason why they could

sustain their legacies throughout the years and become truly powerful.

It was similar in the Southern Domain. Spirit Severing experts were not common. Furthermore, the majority... remained within the First Severing. Those who reached the Second were less common and as for the Third... they were even rarer.

That was because... each Severing could be fatal. Lack of success... meant certain death. In fact, many Cultivators who became Spirit Severing Patriarchs... chose not to continue on with further Severings.

Failure... meant death!

The power of the Spirit Severing stage lay in the Domain. It could influence divine abilities, could change the laws of nature, could accomplish whatever the heart desired. From the perspective of Nascent Soul Cultivators, it could do things that seemed impossible.

Take for example Patriarch Reliance. The fact that he could carry away the State of Zhao with him had something to do with this Cultivation base. However, that action was actually a manifestation of Spirit Severing!

Another example was the Patriarch of the Frigid Snow Clan. Of his own power, he could shake everything in the area. However, once his Cultivation base fell, it instigated an attack.

If one wished to enter the Spirit Severing Stage, the initial step was the first Severing, which could not be avoided.

It was an enormous obstacle that had to be passed by any Cultivator who wished to proceed beyond the Nascent Soul stage. In fact, it was an obstacle that many Nascent Soul Cultivators could not pass. Because of that, they ended up staying within the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage until their longevity expired, whereupon they became skeletons and returned to the dust.

If one could not live past one thousand years, and could not defy the heavens, how could one be of the Spirit Severing stage?

The longevity of the Nascent Soul stage was roughly one thousand years. Even with the use of shocking medicinal pills that could increase

longevity, it was impossible to exceed one thousand years of life. That was one of the laws of Heaven and Earth. One thousand years was the absolute limit to the longevity of a Cultivator.

However, with the First Severing of Spirit Severing, five hundred to a thousand years of longevity could be hewn out. As to exactly how much, that depended on the person as well as the Domain.... In any case, the longevity would definitely exceed one thousand years!

Passing beyond one thousand was a defiance of the Heavens!

That was why reaching Spirit Severing was so difficult. It was difficult... to an ultimate degree!

Meng Hao took a deep breath, taking the stubbornness and desire that shone in his eyes and concealing it deep within his heart. He would continue down this path to Immortal Ascension... in a way that had never been done before. That was the determination in Meng Hao's heart.

The Five-Colored Nascent Soul was only the first step!

Meng Hao looked out into the air, but could only see the downpour of violet rain. Everything was deserted, with no one visible except for him. Meng Hao was quiet for a long moment, ten breaths of time to be exact. Suddenly, a translucent figure slowly began to appear in mid-air several thousand meters in front of Meng Hao.

As the figure became visible, a strange, invisible power seemed to affect the violet rain in the area. It was pushed aside, ensuring that not even a single drop landed on the figure.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever, as if nothing out of the ordinary was going on. However, it was at this moment that the parrot opened its eyes wide. All of the multicolored feathers on its body stood on end. The meat jelly bell on its foot began to tremble, causing tinkling bell sounds to ring out.

"Dammit, Spirit Severing!!" said the parrot, gaping. It was impossible to tell exactly what it was thinking. It looked down ruthlessly at the meat jelly bell and said, "Shut up! Quit shaking! Your shaking is really annoying

Lord Fifth!” In response, the meat jelly’s shaking grew even more intense.

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever. He had long since predicted that after the Crow Divinity Tribe entered the Black Lands and handed over the Demon Spirit, the fact that there was a second Demon Spirit would quickly be discovered.

Considering that the Heavenly Court Alliance wanted Demon Spirits, it was possible that other great Tribes with Spirit Severing Patriarchs would grow greedy. That meant there was a high possibility that they... would try to catch and kill him.

Such circumstances would have been even more difficult to avoid if he had entered the Black Lands himself. Furthermore, it would have implicated the Crow Divinity Tribe. His only option was to leave.... Even leaving, though, would likely result in people coming after him.

However, it now had nothing to do with the Crow Divinity Tribe. The scene of Meng Hao leaving Blackgate Fort had been witnessed by too many people. From that moment on, it was tantamount to Meng Hao severing his Karma with the Crow Divinity Tribe.

“Do you know why I’m here?” asked the transparent figure, slowly opening its eyes. The opening of its eyes caused everything in the vicinity to suddenly change. It was as if some indescribable, invisible force of law had enveloped the entire area. The figure did not open its mouth to speak. Instead, its voice resonated in Meng Hao’s mind like thunder.

An intense aura caused Meng Hao to feel as if he were about to suffocate. A mere thought on the part of this figure caused the violet rain in the area to stop moving. It paused, motionless in mid-air. The sight of the drops of water floating there motionless in midair was truly shocking.

This was something that no Nascent Soul Cultivator could do. This was not a divine ability, but rather but a command of laws. This was... a Domain!

Only Spirit Severing experts were possessed with Domain!

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered as he looked at the translucent figure. “So, I

have been pursued, not by a Nascent Soul Cultivator, but someone of the Spirit Severing stage!”

“Hand over that Demon Spirit,” said the translucent figure, staring at Meng Hao. “Then you can be on your way.” Its expression was one of neither happiness nor anger. It continued to stand there, its mouth closed but its voice echoing in Meng Hao’s mind.

“Hold on a second!” squawked the parrot. It suddenly flew up into the air. At the same time, the meat jelly bell on its foot continued to chatter.

Flapping its wings rapidly, the parrot continued, “Heh heh. Look, big brother. Lord Fifth is not on the same side as this kid. Aiya. Now that I think about it, my beloved concubine is back at home waiting for me. See you later!”

“Big brother,” gushed the meat jelly, “Lord Third is not on the same side as this kid....”

Meng Hao’s expression was unsightly as he glared at the parrot and meat jelly. “That is the Demon Spirit!” he suddenly said, pointing at the parrot.

Suddenly, the semi-transparent figure looked over at the parrot.

“Meng Hao, we’re on the same side, bitch! You, you, you....” The parrot began trembling, having been instantly sent into a fluster.

“This is wrong,” howled the meat jelly. “This is immoral! This is going to provoke Heavenly Tribulation. You....”

Chapter 517: Valiant Zhixiang

At the same time that the parrot and the meat jelly were howling, the translucent figure suddenly opened its mouth in a cold harrumph.

This time, it was not a sound that echoed out only in the mind. It really did open its mouth to emit a sound. The sound reverberated out like magic, shaking everything!

The parrot and meat jelly were instantly silenced.

Everything in the area was completely still and silent. Meng Hao seemed incapable of even breathing. This was not the first time Meng Hao had faced a Spirit Severing Cultivator. However, this was the first time... that he truly faced up against one completely on his own. It was his first time relying only on himself to stand up to the crushing pressure of the Spirit Severing stage.

Years ago when he faced Patriarch Reliance, Meng Hao did it as a Demon Sealer. The only thing Patriarch Reliance did in the end was flee in frustration.

Later in Holy Snow city, the legacies of the Frigid Snow Clan enabled Meng Hao to fight against a Spirit Severing Patriarch. In reality, though, that battle was not fought by Meng Hao, but by the legacies of the Frigid Snow, and the Agarwood!

This was the first time doing it while truly alone.

The intensity of the pressure felt to Meng Hao like Heavenly might. His Cultivation base was rotating rapidly and five-colored light glittered out of his body, a manifestation of the power of the five elements. However, despite this, his eyes were instantly shot with blood.

“A five elements totem. Nice idea,” said the semi-transparent figure, its voice cool. “If you could stabilize it, it might be considered stunning and peerless. Unfortunately, you can’t. With your current combination, you could sweep across the Nascent Soul stage, but you wouldn’t be able to stand up to a single blow from me. Very childish.” Its tone was not one of

arrogance, but rather one of unquestionable strength. It was a strength that spread out into the area and caused cracking sounds to ring out as fissures split the air in all directions.

“These two trashy neo-demons are in no way Demon Spirits. If you don’t hand it over willingly, then I’ll just take it. Although, I do have to say that this physical body of yours is pretty good....” Except for the cold harrumph from earlier, the translucent figure hadn’t opened its mouth again. Its voice continued to echo in Meng Hao’s mind. As it finished speaking, it casually lifted up its hand and pointed toward Meng Hao.

The finger instantly caused a cold, emotionless feeling to fill the area. A tremor ran through Meng Hao’s body, along with an icy coldness.

At first, the coldness seemed to be something that affected his physical body. But actually, it was a coldness that filled his heart and soul. It was a coldness that affected the seven emotions and six pleasures. This coldness seemed to affect all of Meng Hao’s feelings, freezing them over, transforming him into a state of true cold-blooded unfeeling.

This transformation almost seemed to be putting him to some sort of special state, a state which was suitable for possession.

“Enough, enough!” squawked the parrot. “Spirit Severing my ass! This isn’t Spirit Severing, bitches! Meng Hao, even though you tried to con me, if you say the word, I’ll run off to find someone to get revenge for you....” At the same time, the meat jelly was howling out some complaints.

Meng Hao ignored them. His face was calm as he suddenly understood the meaning of the coldness inside of him.

“So this is the Domain?” He took a deep breath, and then his eyes began to fill with a bright light. “Zhixiang, if you don’t do something, then you’ll have to go by yourself to the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane.” As soon as his voice echoed out, the eyes of the translucent figure flickered, but its hand did not stop moving. Meng Hao’s body continued to fill with coldness; his heart slowly stopped beating, and his emotions turned as cold as ice.

This was not a divine ability or a magical technique, but merely the

pointing of single finger. Everything seemed calm, but incredible changes were occurring, changes that influenced the laws of reality. Meng Hao felt as if he were bound up, incapable of resisting. It was as if his Cultivation base existed in name only, and was incapable whatsoever of resisting this surprise onslaught from the Domain.

The only thing he could do to fight against it would be to employ the Agarwood for the final time to escape death, or his final bit of Dancing Sword Qi. However, Meng Hao would not act rashly. Besides, it wasn't absolutely necessary for him to use his trump cards when facing up against the Spirit Severing stage.

That was because he had Zhixiang!

He wasn't nervous at all. He knew that before going the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane, there was someone who was very interested in whether he lived or died.

Besides, even if his guess about the situation was wrong, he was still prepared to take other action. The will of the Agarwood was currently swirling in his mind, ready to awaken.

That was another reason why he had been so casual, first about leaving, then about waiting in this spot.

At the same time, his eyes slowly started to turn blue. However, in that moment, an annoyed, cutesy snort suddenly filled the air. At the same time, a blooming white lotus appeared in front of Meng Hao. The translucent figure's face fell.

Cracking sounds echoed out as fissures filled the air around Meng Hao. They spread out with a boom, transforming into countless fragments which then exploded.

Strangest of all, the explosions were actually illusory. This collapse was not a true collapse, but rather ghost images. Even as everything shattered, it faded away.

Meng Hao took a deep breath as his body returned to its normal state. The coldness, however, remained behind. It seemed that Zhixiang,

annoyed as she was, wasn't willing to help him dispel it.

Meng Hao didn't care. He smiled as the color of his eyes returned to normal. Even as his body returned to normal, he retreated backward. Suddenly, he turned into a green smoke and a black moon. He even employed minor teleportation as he fled off into the distance!

The translucent figure frowned, and was just moving forward to pursue, when it stopped in place. That was because it suddenly found that a grim-faced woman was directly ahead, floating in mid-air.

The woman was incredibly beautiful. She wore a light green gown, the sleeves of which were embroidered with light blue peonies, and was hemmed with silver thread in the shape of auspicious clouds. The front of the garment was covered with light yellow brocade. She floated gracefully in the air, her garment swirling around her, like a willow tree fluttering in the wind.

Any man who looked at her would surely feel his heart pounding with desire and would be virtually intoxicated with her beauty. Her skin seemed delicate enough to be punctured by even a slight wind. Her face was immaculately beautiful, as if all other beautiful things in the world would be like dirt in front of her. Her beauty was the kind that caused her to be the focus of all gazes, wherever she went.

However, at the moment, she was grinding her teeth in apparent anger.... Her beauty seemed to contain the desire to kill, and her face was serious. She did not seem coquettish and seductive; her face was nearly half filled with coldness.

As she moved forward, the area around her swirled with countless flower petals which swirled like a vortex. They danced about her, some of them coming to fall on her shoulders; the entire scene was incredibly picturesque.

This was none other than Zhixiang!

After the Five Poisons Tribe was exterminated, it seemed as if she had gone off on her own. In actuality, for this the entire time, she had been keeping tabs on Meng Hao's Tribe from off in the distance. She didn't

want him to reach an untimely end. If that happened, she would be much less confident about her chances of success in the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane.

She had watched Meng Hao deliver the Crow Divinity Tribe to the Black Lands, and had also sensed the Spirit Severing Cultivator's Divine Clone pursuing him. At that point, Zhixiang knew that she had no choice but to take action.

She didn't really want to, but considering that Meng Hao had called her out, her hand had been forced. She had no choice but to reveal herself. Despite her irritation at Meng Hao, she had no other options.

"Your excellency, who might you be?" asked the translucent figure with narrowed eyes. This was the second time it had actually opened its mouth. Its voice was ancient and archaic.

"I'm the badass bitch who's gonna kick your ass!" she said. Her voice sounded like the singing of a lark. Unfortunately, her wording... was quite the opposite.

The eyes of the translucent figure flickered coldly. It took a step forward and then raised its right hand and pointed its finger.

"You trifling clone!" spat Zhixiang grumpily. "You see a badass bitch and you don't hightail your ass out of here immediately?!" Even though she was cursing, it was the kind that didn't make one mad, but actually was somewhat enjoyable.

Even as she spoke, she waved her sleeve, causing the flower petals circulating around her to suddenly fly toward the semi-transparent figure.

Off in the distance, Meng Hao was flying through the air in a wisp of green smoke. He suddenly heard an enormous boom coming from behind him. At the same time, Zhixiang's voice suddenly echoed in his ear.

"I spent a lot of effort building up this little bit of Immortal power, you bastard. Now it's all wasted! Meng Hao... if you stand me up on the day that the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane opens, then you're dead!"

Meng Hao's expression was the same as usual, almost as if he hadn't

heard anything. He utilized the Bloodburst Flash to suddenly shoot off into the distance.

He didn't care how Zhixiang did it. Even if another Spirit Severing Patriarch emerged from the Black Lands and she had to pay a further price, she would still have to stop that person to give him a chance to flee. Once he escaped from the Southern region and disappeared into the Apocalypse and the boundless sea, finding him would be like looking for a needle in a haystack.

Any Spirit Severing Patriarch would think twice about coming out after him alone; after all, once they left the Black Lands, the disputes and fighting that could break out in their absence would be too much of a cause for hesitation.

Meng Hao had thought through all of this thoroughly. He employed all the speed he could muster to shoot off into the distance.

Time passed by. Meng Hao wasn't sure what Zhixiang did to intercept any enemies. However, for an entire month, he didn't encounter any pursuit. By this point, having employed the fastest speed he could manage, he had already crossed half of the Southern region.

Even more violet rain fell. At this point, no sea was visible, but the aroma of seawater could be detected. The violet rain was causing everything to erode. No plants could be seen on the ground below. Life force was being exterminated and spiritual energy had faded; not a bit was left.

Occasionally, he saw bandit Tribes below. Eventually, Meng Hao caught sight of South Cleaving Pass.

He stopped there for a moment, looking at the pass with a soft sigh. He didn't stay for very long, and during that time, the Cultivators that remained in the region didn't even notice him.

His body flickered as he shot off toward the north at top speed.

During his traveling, his Cultivation base continued to weaken. The Five-Colored Sky was faded. He was now no longer at the peak of the mid

Nascent Soul stage, but rather, the early Nascent Soul stage.

According to Meng Hao's calculations , it wouldn't be long before the five elements dissipated, whereupon his Cultivation base would return to the Perfect Gold Core stage.

What he needed to do next was to gain enlightenment regarding the sea of violet rain, and how to fuse it with the blood totem. Then, he would have his own Water-type totem, and would be able to tread... the path of the Five-Colored Nascent Soul!

At that time, he would truly be able to make a meteoric rise!

Meng Hao took a deep breath, hunching over as he shot forward at top speed. Three months passed. His Cultivation base was now completely back to the Perfect Cold Core stage. He finally left the Western Desert South region and was in the Central Region. Here, the only thing visible in all directions, was a boundless, endless...

Violet Sea!

Chapter 518: Sinking to the Heart of the Violet Sea

The sky was dark, and violet rain fell in buckets. The only thing Meng Hao could see in all directions was a vast sea.

Waves undulated across its surface, pushed along by a cold wind. His hair drifted up and his clothes rippled as he floated in mid-air looking out soundlessly at the sea.

It seemed as if all life in the entire world was completely gone and buried. The only thing left behind was his loneliness. It floated in his heart for a moment before he shook his head, causing it to fade away.

He proceeded on at top speed. The parrot followed, occasionally letting out an arrogant squawk.

“La lala la la, I’m a seagull...!” The parrot suddenly dove into the water, only to shoot up into the air again off into the distance. It seemed extremely happy.

The vast sea seemed endless. Meng Hao continued on for a few more months until he was deep into what had once been the Western Desert Central region. Here, he could see the very tips of what had once been tall mountains, but were now islands.

There were no Cultivators and no neo-demons. There were only... occasional floating corpses.

Everything was deathly still.

Another seven days passed. Up ahead of Meng Hao appeared a rather familiar-looking mountain peak that was now an island. Meng Hao stopped in mid-air. After examining it for a long moment, he realized that he recognized this particular mountain.

He had passed it when traveling with the Crow Divinity Tribe. As of now, the mountain itself was buried under the sea. All that was visible now was about sixty meters of its top which made up the island.

“This place should do.” He didn’t proceed any further north. Continuing on would only mean fewer islands, and deeper waters. The current water level was what had been mid-air in the past.

He landed on the mountain-island and sat down cross-legged. He took a deep breath and looked out at the sea around him. As far as he was concerned, this was the perfect place to practice secluded meditation. It was very safe.

Because of the exterminating power of the violet rain, it was an Apocalypse to Western Desert Cultivators. To Meng Hao, though, it offered no inconvenience. In fact, once he gained enlightenment and produced a violet rain totem, this place would be like his own personal sea.

After some time passed, Meng Hao closed his eyes. There was no longer any five-colored glow about him. He was completely of the great circle of the Gold Core stage. His five elements tattoos glittered brightly as he began to meditate.

The parrot flew around, occasionally flying off into the distance, occasionally returning. No matter where it went, it seemed capable of finding things to amuse and entertain itself.

At the moment, it was pretending to be a seagull, squawking and crying out in delight. The meat jelly wasn’t willing to be outdone. A pop rang out as it also turned into a seagull and then rolled its eyes superciliously at the parrot.

It was at this point that the two buffoons began to have a contest....

Time passed. Months went by. Meng Hao’s Cultivation base continued to remain at its peak. Suddenly, his eyes opened, and a brilliant glow could be seen within his pupils.

He looked down at the blood totem tattoo on his right index finger, and as he did, an expression of determination appeared on his face.

“My final totem!

“Blood represents life, and fights back against all forms of death. This is

the part of the Water-type totem tattoo which exemplifies life.

“The violet rain represents death, and destroys all life. This is the part of the Water-type totem tattoo which exemplifies death.

“Life and death oppose each other but also exist in a cycle. Without life, how could there be death? And without death... what could serve as a contrast to life!?”

“The fusion of life and death. The blending of blood and the violet rain. That will be Meng Hao’s... great circle Water-type totem!”

As he murmured to himself, his eyes radiated an incredible light. It was currently night, and the rain was falling as usual. However, as he sat there in the rain, his eyes glowed with a light like that of lightning.

“If I truly want to gain enlightenment regarding the violet rain totem that represents death, then I can’t just sit here looking at the sea. I need to immerse myself in it, so that I can personally experience...

“What death is!

“In that way, when there is no distinction between myself and the Violet Sea, when our wills are congruous, then I will have the chance to understand it. When I can control its power, then I can brand myself with a totem tattoo classified as part of the Violet Sea!” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Meng Hao felt absolutely no hesitation. That was Meng Hao’s personality. When he made a decision, he would not easily change his mind.

That was especially true after beginning his path of cultivation. He had never looked back, but instead, continued forward at all times. If one gets in a rut, or hesitates to make a decision, then death is not far off.

Eyes glittering, Meng Hao stood up and looked at the competing parrot and meat jelly. Then he strode forward and jumped directly into the Violet Sea.

As soon as his body touched the violet seawater, an intense aura of death completely surrounded him.

Meng Hao's body trembled as he managed to cross his legs. After sinking down more than thirty meters, he opened his eyes and stopped moving.

He had already reached the limit of what he could endure. If he sank any further, the death will would become too intense. To this sea, he was something alive, and therefore something it was diametrically opposed to.

Meng Hao was incapable of fighting against the entire Violet Sea.

Even sinking down thirty meters was something that if others heard about they would react to with complete disbelief. The Violet Sea was a place that Cultivators simply couldn't enter. Even sinking six meters into the sea for a short period would be like plunging into flames of destruction, let alone thirty meters.

To an ordinary Cultivator who sank down thirty meters, it would only take about ten breaths of time before their life force vanished. The aura of death here was qualified to destroy all life.

As for Meng Hao, the fact that he could sit there cross-legged for much longer than ten breaths worth of time had a lot to do with his Perfection. The realm of Perfection made it so that he did not absorb power from Heaven and Earth. He was his own cycle. His ability to survive far exceeded that of others.

Even still, after twenty breaths worth of time, Meng Hao's body began to shake. The will of death congealed around him, growing thicker and thicker. This collision between life and death turned into an extermination, a power that would thoroughly extinguish and bury him.

It was like ice water being poured onto a red-hot branding iron. The two were incompatible. Ice and fire opposed to each other created a force... either the ice water would turn into steam, or the branding iron would experience a complete end.

This was extermination!

After thirty breaths of time, the power of extermination was so intense that Meng Hao was forced to open his eyes and shoot up out of the sea.

After flying up into the air, he returned to the mountain-island, his face pale. He coughed up a mouthful of blood. The collision between his life force and the death aura had transformed into an extermination that Meng Hao found difficult to endure.

However, his eyes were now shining brightly.

“Now I understand. The Violet Sea Apocalypse does not inherently contain the power of extermination. Its primary will is that of death. When it encounters life force, extermination erupts. That extermination is not inherently created by the Violet Sea, but rather when it is combined with life force.

“The opposition of life and death transform into the power of extermination.... That will be the true power that the great circle of the Water-type totem will be able to unleash when it is completed!

“It requires time for life and death to create such extermination.

“The life within my blood totem tattoo needs to coexist with the death of the violet rainwater, not extermination. To truly gain enlightenment, I need to negate the power of extermination. In that way, I can truly understand the will of death!”

Meng Hao took a deep breath and then sat back down cross-legged. After three days, he was fully recovered. When he opened his eyes, they shone brightly. After sitting in contemplation for a moment, he once again strode forward and dropped into the seawater. He returned to the same position thirty meters down where he crossed his legs and experienced the extermination that came with the seawater.

Time passed. A year went by in the blink of an eye.

During that year, Meng Hao did not see any Cultivators or any other form of life. It felt as if he was the only person alive in the world.

Negating the power of extermination was not easy. Even being sustained because of the realm of Perfection, it was very difficult for him. He would not use his blood totem unless it was absolutely necessary. If he did, then the gap between life and death within the Violet Sea would swell, allowing

the power of extermination to rush in and threaten to wipe him away.

“I cannot use life to be enlightened regarding death. In order to understand death, I must truly die!” Meng Hao could now descend almost one hundred meters into the Violet Sea, and stay there for the space of 170 breaths before speeding back up to the surface.

He had made a lot of progress during this year, but he was still far from thoroughly understanding the Violet Rain.

“This death is not just some blind perishing, though. I have to go about it methodically. I need to slowly decrease my life force under the power of the extermination. Then, make a complete turnabout. By surviving only my own aura of death, and thus not being influenced by the exterminating will, then I can truly experience the Violet Sea’s death aura.” After having reached this new enlightenment, Meng Hao rested for a few days, then once again entered into the Violet Sea to meditate cross-legged.

More time passed. One year. Two years. Three years....

Ten years.

Meng Hao was now cross-legged more than six hundred meters beneath the surface of the Violet Sea, completely motionless, as if he were dead. An aura of death circulated around him. Occasionally, the power of extermination would explode out, but it was quite subdued, obviously much, much weaker than it had been ten years ago.

A month passed. Meng Hao’s eyes suddenly opened. The power of extermination around him suddenly grew incredibly intense. Before it could explode out, he shot up out of the Violet Sea.

“Still not enough....” he murmured. “When I’m able to sit on the seafloor permanently, then I will be able to begin to comprehend the truth of the Violet Sea!” During the ten year period, his Cultivation base had not experienced much change at all. However, his whole body and aura had experienced earthshaking transformation.

He was more tall and slender, and within his scholarly disposition was a bit more of something Demonic and bit less Confucian. His life force was

reduced, and his deathly aura increased.

His skin was bright and clear, his features were more handsome, even Demonic.

After ten years, the violet rain was still falling, but the sea had not grown much deeper. The islands still existed.... By this time, the Western Desert South region had also become part of the sea. The entirety of the great lands of the Western Desert were now covered by seawater. Any Cultivators who had been unable to enter the Black Lands, were now nothing more than skeletons buried by the Violet Sea.

As of now, they were much like the Bridge Slaves in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. They were like specters who would occasionally appear on the surface of the waters. Occasionally entire Tribes would appear, floating about, taking away any life force. They were like emissaries of the Violet Sea.

Meng Hao had encountered such specters several times throughout the ten years.

In fact, this moment in which he burst out from within the Violet Sea, he saw a group of several hundred specters off in the distance, drifting across the surface of the sea with vacant looks on their faces. As soon as Meng Hao appeared, they suddenly stopped moving and looked over.

Chapter 519: Within the Sea, Time is Forgotten

The specters looked at Meng Hao, and he looked back. They appeared to hesitate, as if they were confused about something.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as normal. However, he looked closely at the specters, paying attention to see how they would react.

After a moment, a towering death aura rose up from them. Their bodies flashed into motion as they shot toward Meng Hao.

He frowned, then sighed lightly. As the specters neared, he pointed out with his right hand, causing a bloody light to explode out. Within this bloody light was an intense life force which shot forward. In the blink of an eye, it slammed into the specters.

When that happened, an exterminating will exploded out that caused everything to shake. A sound like a thunderclap echoed out as the specters' bodies collapsed into pieces. They were now dead in soul as in body.

This exterminating will was created when the will of life touched an aura of death.

Ten years ago, Meng Hao could never have done this. Now, though, after ten years of enlightenment, although he could not completely reverse his own life force into an aura of death, he did understand the method with which to produce extermination.

"If these Violet Sea specters can sense my life force, then there's no need to even mention the sea itself." He shook his head. During the past ten years, along with his increase in enlightenment, he had also come to find that when encountering these specters, they always looked puzzled for a moment. It showed that he was at least making progress.

"Such a phenomenon also seems to indicate that I've indeed picked the correct path." He looked up into the sky, lost in thought. He had no idea where the parrot and meat jelly had gone off to. In the past ten years they

had frolicked and played to their hearts content.

They would often disappear without a trace for half a year or more. Considering their usual vices, Meng Hao wasn't worried for their safety. There was nothing in the area that had fur or feathers, so no matter what stories they made up, they actually couldn't accomplish much.

Meng Hao rested for a few more days before once again sinking down into the Violet Sea.

It turned out Meng Hao was so focused on his cultivation that he actually miscalculated regarding the parrot and meat jelly....

While it was true that there was nothing in the area that had fur or feathers, well, the Black Lands was another story.... The parrot and meat jelly had gotten tired of the ocean years ago, and had secretly left and flown back to the Black Lands.

After entering, they immediately caused a violent commotion that eventually became a legend.

Time passed, another ten years.

Meng Hao had already spent more than twenty years trying to understand the violet rain. By now, he could submerge nearly three thousand meters and sit there cross-legged for several months.

His life force was currently incredibly weak. Were it anyone else, such a lack of life force would mean they weren't alive at all. Meng Hao was different, though. Although his life force was weak, his thick death aura actually became something like a different type of life.

Such life was similar to that of the specters, except that it possessed a fleshly body, and a soul.

The reason Meng Hao could endure for so long underneath the sea was that as his life force grew weaker, the power of extermination in the seawater was reduced. The will to expel him from his position within the water was also weakened.

Another ten years passed. When Meng Hao had spent an entire half of a

sixty-year cycle trying to gain enlightenment of the violet rain. At long last, he could sink all the way to the very bottom of the sea.

He could now step foot onto what had once been... the great lands of the Western Desert!

On the seafloor, Meng Hao could feel pervasive, indescribable auras of death surrounding him in all directions. The auras were incredibly thick, and were even accompanied by numerous specters.

When these specters saw Meng Hao, though, they completely ignored him, and would simply pass on, sometimes drifting directly through his body.

The life force in Meng Hao's body had already been suppressed almost completely. The only thing left was a tiny sliver upon which his entire life hung. His body was now filled with an abundant aura of death, causing his skin to turn an ashen white, almost the exact same color as a corpse.

He sat cross-legged on the seafloor, on what had once been the surface of the Western Desert. This time, year after year passed.

To understand the violet rain, one must become the violet rain. Only in such a manner could enlightenment be gained. After thirty years of attempts, Meng Hao was finally able to achieve some success.

That sliver of life force that sustained the fire of his life was now surrounded by an aura of death. However, it was not exterminated. The surrounding will of extermination was now incredibly weak.

Meng Hao was now finally able to understand what it felt like to die within the violet rain.

He did not move. He sat there cross-legged, making no attempt to leave the Violet Sea. Another ten years passed.

Meng Hao's process of understanding how to form his Water-type totem had already lasted forty years. To a mortal, forty years is half a lifetime. To Cultivators, though, forty years... could not be considered short... but neither could it be considered very long.

After forty years, the rainfall in the Western Desert was no longer a downpour. It was now showing signs of letting up. The rain itself would not last for ten thousand years. According to the records kept in the Western Desert, the rain would last for a hundred years at the most.

Unfortunately, even though the rain would cease to fall after a hundred years, the spiritual energy would not be restored. The Violet Sea would still be like a restricted area for Cultivators. It would be possible to fly in mid-air above the waters, but... it was impossible to step a single foot into the sea.

Furthermore, because of the death of the vast numbers of Western Desert Cultivators who hadn't been able to enter the Black Lands, there were countless specters that filled the Violet Sea. As they flew about, any living thing they encountered would cause them to feel extreme grievance. They would instantly attack in an effort to exterminate the life force.

Even still, these specters were actually something that Cultivators could use. Because they were congealed out of an aura of death, they could be sealed. Some of the more powerful of the specters could even be refined into Death Aura Crystals. Such crystals could be used when practicing cultivation to stimulate the latent power of the body.

During that forty year period, many great upheavals rocked the Black Lands. The one thing that didn't change, however, was that the Heavenly Court Alliance still held sway as the most powerful force in the Black Lands.

In addition to the Heavenly Court Alliance, six other powerful forces gradually rose up. These were of course the great Tribes who had Spirit Severing Patriarchs.

Actually, one of them, the sixth, did not have a Spirit Severing Patriarch. The name of this force was the Golden Crow Black Dragon Clan.

This Clan was a combination of the Crow Divinity Tribe and the Black Dragon Tribe. In terms of the power structure, the Golden Crow Clan was the primary power, the Black Dragon Tribe the secondary, and the Church of the Golden light was tertiary. Together, they formed a powerful Clan.

Although they had no Spirit Severing Patriarch, they did have 800,000 neo-demons. As such, the Golden Crow Black Dragon Clan possessed such fearsome power that no one dared to look down upon them.

That was especially the case when it came to their spell formation. Over the course of forty years, many people spied upon them, but all were forced to dispel of any thoughts of trying to take the Clan out.

The Clan also had the Thorn Rampart vine. Any enemy under the Spirit Severing stage would be completely incapable of doing anything against it.

If a Spirit Severing expert arrived, it might be able to handle the Thorn Rampart, but 800,000 frenzied neo-demons was something that no Tribe would dare to test out.

Because of this, there was a balance in the Black Lands.... Because of that balance, the Golden Crow Black Dragon Clan was able to not only exist, but rise to a position of power.

There is probably no need to even mention how their totemic Sacred Ancients grew. With the Outlander Beast acting as a guard, the Golden Crow Black Dragon Clan was a force that everyone was forced to take seriously.

This was even more the case when some of the neo-demons from the horde of 800,000 gradually grew to the point of becoming totemic Sacred Ancients!

Thirty years ago, Big Hairy reached level 11 and became a totemic Sacred Ancient! On that day, all neo-demons in the Black Lands could sense a powerful Demonic Qi which spread out thickly in all directions from the Golden Crow Clan.

After another ten years, the red crocodile and the enormous lizard successively became totemic Sacred Ancients.

As for the crows, mosquitos and some of the various other neo-demons, they grew like bamboo shoots after a spring rain. All of them reached level 11 and became totemic Sacred Ancients!

Under their guardianship, the Golden Crow Black Dragon Clan truly was

worthy to be called powerful. They became one of the six greatest powers in the Black Lands underneath the Heavenly Court Alliance!

Ten years ago, the parrot and the meat jelly used some unknown method to escape the detection of Spirit Severing Divine Sense and re-enter the Black Lands. They instantly began to sow chaos. Vast numbers of neo-demons met with disaster. With the exception of the Golden Crow Black Dragon Clan, neo-demons from any Tribe who sensed the aura of the parrot and meat jelly would instantly wail mournfully and then flee in the opposite direction.

No matter what any Dragoneer did to try to control them, they were powerless to block them in any way. Their neo-demons would quickly flee, and the lonely Dragoneer would be left hovering alone in mid-air, trembling.

“The Bane of Dragoneers” was a name that quickly rose to prominence in the Black Lands.

During that forty year period of time, the Southern Domain remained on guard against the Black Lands. However, disciples often came from the various Sects of the Southern Domain to have dealings with the six great powers. On the surface, things seemed peaceful. In reality, both sides were being vigilant regarding the other.

The Sect with whom the Golden Crow Black Dragon Clan had the most dealings with... was the Violet Fate Sect!

The reason for this was that legends began to spread of what had happened forty years ago. The Western Desert Cultivators soon learned that the totemic Sacred Ancient who led the Crow Divinity Tribe out of the North, Meng Hao... was once a disciple of the Violet Fate Sect!

He was Grandmaster Pill Cauldron of the Southern Domain, a person completely illustrious and famous.

As soon as word of this began to spread, it caused a huge stir. After all, everyone who had seen Meng Hao combine the five elements outside Blackgate Fort had been thoroughly shaken.

However, as time passed, the stories about Meng Hao soon came to be legends of the past. No one had seen or heard from Meng Hao for forty years. All they knew was that he had disappeared into the depths of what had once been the Western Desert. As the Violet Sea spread because of the violet rain, many people came to believe that Meng Hao had already perished.

As for the reason why he did not enter the Black Lands, but instead chose to travel out into the Violet Sea, it gradually came to be accepted that it was because of the Ji Clan from the Eastern Lands!

The enmity between Meng Hao and the Ji Clan quickly became common knowledge.

During the forty years, the lands of South Heaven changed quite a bit. The Meng Hao who so many people were beginning to forget, was currently sitting at the bottom of the Violet Sea, attempting to gain enlightenment regarding the will of death. Meanwhile, also at the bottom of the sea, far away from Meng Hao in what had once been the Western Desert North region, in the location of what had once been the home of the Crow Divinity Tribe, another young man in a black robe sat cross-legged on the ocean floor. Occasionally he would open his eyes, and they would glow with a red light.

If you looked closely at this young man, you would see that his appearance... was very similar to that of Meng Hao's. The difference was that he seemed much, much more cold and sinister.

He wore a black robe, and on his forehead could be seen a mark that looked like a bat. As he sat there cross-legged, he actually looked very much... like a black-colored bat!

"Seven spirits managed to slip through to the holy barriers of the Heavens. They transformed into seven ancient true spirits.... After tens of thousands of years passed, their spirit wills ascended, and their spirit bodies transformed into seven Immortal Murdering Swords. Meng Hao, by what right of virtue do you possess four of them!?!?"

"The true spirits are not visible in the world. We discarnate spirits are

the real power. By recapturing the spirit bodies, we can then have the ability to tread the path of the true spirit!” The eyes of the black-robed youth glittered. His left eye actually had no eyeball, but instead, was a vortex. Within the vortex was a corpse which was half human and half beast. This was the exact same bizarre corpse from which Meng Hao had acquired the Immortal Murdering Sword years ago within the Crow Divinity Tribe’s Holy Land.

As of now, that corpse had become nothing more than nourishment for this black-robed youth. Perhaps it was by consuming that corpse... that the Black Bat was able to transmogrify and change its shape!

*

1. The Black Bat disappeared in chapter 477. It was the bat Meng Hao won in his early days in the Crow Scout Tribe, that had a wooden sword stuck inside of it.

Chapter 520: Endless Cold Knows No Years

40 years flashed by. There were still people who remembered Meng Hao, but most people only recalled a scene in which someone brought 800,000 neo-demons through Blackgate Fort.

As far as what Meng Hao looked like, most people barely remembered.

As time passed, Meng Hao was slowly being forgotten.

In truth, it was the same even with him. Not even his shadow was seen upon the Western Desert Violet Sea. He had been submerged at the bottom of the sea for years now.

He sat cross-legged on what had once been the land of the Western Desert. This time, it lasted for a very long time.

He didn't move, nor did he breathe. There seemed to be no signs of life coming from him whatsoever. He sat in the darkness of the bottom of the sea, secluded in meditation.

The surrounding will of extermination was increasingly reduced. Even if you looked for it closely, it was difficult to detect its existence. At the same time, the scant life force remaining in Meng Hao's body slowly lessened. There was only one tiny strand that kept his life from being snuffed out.

It was in exactly this fashion that twenty more years passed.

From the time Meng Hao had begun his attempt to understand the Violet Sea, a full sixty year cycle had passed. More and more people in the outside world were forgetting about him. Even in the Golden Crow Black Dragon Clan, many people who joined the Clan or were born during that time took the stories of Meng Hao to be nothing but exaggerated legends. The exception were the people who had actually associated with Meng Hao years ago.

Slowly, friction began to develop between the members of the Black Dragon Tribe and the Golden Crow Tribe. However, Xu Bai was able to

forcefully suppress this trend, and smooth out the conflicts.

It was understandable considering that the two Tribes did not have a common origin. They had been forced together because of the pressures of the outside world. The Golden Crow Tribe occupied a position of leadership above the Black Dragon Tribe. Although things seemed as peaceful as the waters of a windless sea, in reality, the wild hearts of the Black Dragon Tribe were awakening.

More years passed. One day, Meng Hao sat there cross-legged and motionless in the depths of the seas. Suddenly, his eyes snapped open.

As soon as they did, they began to shine with a brilliant light. After a long time, his expression began to weaken.

“So many years....” he murmured softly to himself, looking around at the world of the pitch black seafloor.

“Unfortunately I... still haven’t thoroughly grasped the meaning of the Violet Sea’s death will. The will of extermination is weak, but still there. Until it completely vanishes, I will be separated from the Violet Sea, incapable of fusing together with it.

“Although there is only a tiny bit of life force left in me, it is still there. As such, the extermination power will not disappear.

“Don’t tell me, that I really... have to die?!” He shook his head as he looked out thoughtfully at the blackness around him. Occasionally, specters would appear. During the more than sixty years that had passed, more and more specters had begun to awaken and roam about in the seawater.

They would float past Meng Hao without making even the slightest hint of an attack against him. It was as if they couldn’t see him, or perhaps, in their judgment, Meng Hao was like them, completely lacking any life force whatsoever.

As Meng Hao looked at the black sea water, an image coalesced in his mind. It was the vague image of his father and mother from when he was a child. He saw himself as a boy, reading books in front of the window. He

felt the disappointment of failing over and over again in the preliminary rounds of the imperial examinations. And then there was the point on Mount Daqing where his entire life changed.

The Reliance Sect. The Blood Immortal Legacy. The Violet Fate Sect. The Black Lands... all the way down to the great lands of the Western Desert. All of these things flashed through Meng Hao's mind. It was endless. Endless unforgettable memories. It was now almost one hundred years since he had encountered Xu Qing on Mount Daqing.

A hundred years of time had flowed by. It had passed by so quickly that Meng Hao barely had time to recall all the memories. Just like that, the entire life of a mortal passed gone by.

Gradually, Meng Hao's life seemed to coalesce in front of him. He saw many figures. It didn't matter whether they were enemies or friends, the Karma threads which invisibly connected him to all these people started to become visible.

After a while, Meng Hao smiled. Within that smile, determination suddenly shined out.

He had picked this path, and would unflinchingly continue on down it to the end. When risks are taken, the results can be death, or incredible rewards!

Meng Hao closed his eyes. In that instant, he unhesitatingly crushed that last tiny strand of life force.

There can be no growth without destruction! Without death, how can there be new life?!

When the strand of life force vanished, Meng Hao's body seemed to fill with a soundless roar. His life force disappeared, completely gone. The flame of life inside of him had been snuffed out. As of now, he was completely... dead!

This was true death, a state of existence without any life force, without any consciousness, without any aura or ability to perceive anything. It was as if he were buried deep in the bottom of the Violet Sea.

The instant in which death occurred, the will of extermination which had been blocking him from fusing with the Violet Sea, suddenly vanished. It completely disappeared without a trace.

The removal of this blockage seemed to indicate that he had received approval. He... was just like the Violet Sea, a will of death.

Without the extermination cutting him off, Meng Hao's body was enveloped by the dense death aura of the Western Desert Violet Sea. It poured into him, swirling around within him, boring through him. It began to circulate, moving about in cyclical fashion.

Meng Hao possessed no consciousness. It was as if he had been cleanly severed away from the world, as if he had nothing to do with the world any more. He had forgotten it; it had forgotten him.

The only thing that remembered Meng Hao was the dense death will of the Violet Sea. It continued to congeal around him, to pour into his body. Finally one day, his pale flesh became completely gray and filled with an aura of death. He was now... one with the Violet Sea.

His internal organs, his body parts, all of it was fused with the Violet Sea. He had become the Violet Sea.

However, the Violet Sea had not become him yet.

Time passed.

One year. Five years. Ten years.... Eventually thirty years passed. As of now, around ninety years had passed since Meng Hao began to seek enlightenment of the violet rain.

Recently in the skies above the Western Desert, the violet rain which had fallen unceasingly for nearly a hundred years now seemed to be on the verge of ceasing. The signs grew more and more apparent. A year passed and the Violet Rain... finally stopped.

The sky was still overcast, but the rainwater ceased to fall. It was not a complete end; occasionally some rain would fall here and there. Generally speaking, though, the violet rainfall had passed.

When the violet rain stopped falling, there was something different about the Violet Sea of the Western Desert. In that moment, all of the specters which had been floating about above and below the sea suddenly stopped. Everything became silent. Their faces became even more blank than before, as if they were listening respectfully to something.

That period of listening lasted for three months.

After the three months, everything returned to normal. However, there was something... different about this Violet Sea, something that no one could sense.

It was as if within the sea, each swell of the waves contained a will.

That will belonged to Meng Hao!

Meng Hao, however, was not aware of it. He was not sure of when exactly he had awoken. He didn't remember who he was, nor did he possess any of his memories. All he remembered was that he had awoken, and become the Violet Sea.

He was the Violet Sea.

The Violet Sea... was also him.

Confused, he looked around. He didn't remember any time having passed. He saw the rain stop falling, until not even a drop could be seen. He also saw a young, black-robed man sitting cross-legged in the depths of the sea.

The instant he saw the young man, the young man also sensed Meng Hao, and a look of disbelief and astonishment filled his face. His body began to tremble as if from cold. Although Meng Hao didn't understand why, the young man suddenly transformed into a black colored bat and then began to flee in terror.

Every time Meng Hao shifted his attention to him, he would tremble with indescribable terror and flee at top speed.

Meng Hao truly did not understand. He looked away and began to examine the world around him again, somewhat in a daze. Soon,

Cultivators began to appear above the sea, arrived to hunt the specters.

Meng Hao saw all of this very clearly. He also saw some of the Cultivators fall into the sea, whereupon they lost their lives.

Meng Hao watched everything with confusion. More and more Cultivators arrived. They were careful not to touch the seawater. By using their divine abilities and magical techniques, they were able to find some of the mountain-islands that had not been completely submerged. They began to construct cities around the peaks, above the seawater.

They called them cities, but they were really more like outposts.

Soon, a total of ten such outposts were constructed above the Western Desert Violet Sea.

Meng Hao observed them. At one point, a strand of will rose up, and huge waves rolled across the surface of the sea to suddenly submerge one of the outposts that was being constructed.

The rise of the outposts caused even more Cultivators to come to the great Western Desert Sea to carefully hunt specters....

After observation, Meng Hao gradually came to feel bored. He grew silent, and time once again began to pass... although he didn't know how much.

With no one disturbing him, and no unforeseen occurrences, Meng Hao could exist like this for ten thousand years. Then the Violet Sea would vanish, and his consciousness would return to his body. Finally he would be reborn.

Meng Hao didn't know that what he was experiencing, although it seemed as if it were enlightenment, was actually something that in ancient times was called... Demonic Transmigration!

The fleshly body was abandoned, as well as the Cultivation base. Consciousness was shattered and then reawakened in a new form of life. Everything was forgotten as one became a Greater Demon of Heaven and Earth.

Everything about the past was completely cleaved away.

Within the sea, time is forgotten. Endless coldness, knows no years.

Meng Hao saw many people. One of them was an old man wearing a long white robe. His body emanated a medicinal aroma, and he had the bearing of a transcendent being. On one day of one particular year, he appeared above the Violet Sea.

He stared down blankly at the waters, and Meng Hao stared blankly up at him. There was something familiar about this man....

He floated there silently in mid-air, looking down at the sea. Three months passed. Finally, the man let out a soft sigh.

“Apprentice, you... are in the midst of Demonic Transmigration....” He shook his head, then turned and left, clearly filled with complex emotions.

Meng Hao’s corpse sat on the sea floor, cross-legged. In that moment, he trembled a bit. He now felt even more confused.

Chapter 521: When the Tear Fell Into the Sea

After that, Meng Hao saw many familiar people appear, none of whom could he quite seem to remember.

Xu Bai came, as did Chen Fan and Fatty. Even... Big Hairy.

By now, Big Hairy was a totemic Sacred Ancient. However, he was only level 11 not level 12. Nor had his Cultivation base reached that legendary realm of Heavenly Neo-demons similar to the Spirit Severing stage.

Instead, he was at the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage. In the great lands of the Western Desert, there are a total of 12 levels of neo-demon growth. According to historical records, the peak was generally considered to be level 11 neo-demons who were similar to the Spirit Severing stage. Level 12 neo-demons, also called totems, were comparable to the Dao Seeking stage. Neo-demons like that had only existed during the golden age of the Western Desert. The true power of a totemic Sacred Ancient had almost everything to do with the faith that was exercised in it.

However, what goes up must come down. That was all in the past. After the Apocalypse hit the Western Desert, even great Tribes with Spirit Severing Patriarchs could not compare to how they had been before, during the heyday of the Western Desert. Therefore, level 11 Heavenly Neo-demons were similar to the great circle of the Nascent Soul Stage. Level 12 were similar to Spirit Severing, and possessed the power to bestow totems. Most Western Desert Cultivators were not even aware of this; only Tribal Greatfathers and High Priests understood the matter thoroughly.

It was the same with Meng Hao in his role as totemic Sacred Ancient. With more Tribe members, there was more faith power, which allowed him to grow stronger.

When the Western Desert Apocalypse came, life force was exterminated. Neo-demons were affected, and even more so, totemic Sacred Ancients. All totemic Sacred Ancients were weakened severely. Thankfully, Meng Hao

had nourished Big Hairy and the others using Demonic Qi. Because of this, Big Hairy and the other totemic Sacred Ancients of the Golden Crow Black Dragon Clan developed the ability to bestow totems earlier than usual.

They were able to do so at level 11!

Big Hairy stayed for quite some time in the Violet Sea. He let out yips and calls as he looked for Meng Hao. He ended up with nothing, and left sadly.

One day, another old man came. His face was grim, and his Cultivation base was not clear. Meng Hao could see that he was surrounded by incredible killing intent as well as an ancient, archaic aura. The intensity of it caused Meng Hao's Cultivation base to tremble.

The man looked at the sea for a long time before frowning. In the end, he gave a cold laugh and then left.

That man was none other than the tenth patriarch of the Wang Clan!

Many people came. One day it was a woman in a red garment. Although she was incredibly beautiful, her face was filled with a frown. Her gaze swept about and then she looked down at the Violet Sea. She happened to be directly above the position in which Meng Hao was sitting cross-legged at the bottom of the sea.

"I've been waiting for you for years only to find out that you're here, in the midst of Demonic Transmigration!?!? Instead of working hard at being a Cultivator you decide to become a Demon? What the hell?

"Are you crazy, you moron?! Are you a man or not? First you take advantage of me, and then just go on your merry way? How irresponsible could you be? I, I, I... What the hell am I gonna do in ten years? What the hell is a lone badass bitch gonna do by herself in the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane!?!?" There was nothing the red-robed woman could do other than grind her teeth. A few days later, she left angrily, clearly incredibly frustrated.

A few more days passed, whereupon a woman came who wore a long green garment. She was pretty, and emanated a medicinal aura. She

hovered in mid-air for a long time as she looked out at the sea.

“Meng Hao, where are you exactly...?” she said softly. A very long time passed, she sighed and prepared to leave.

Before making her way off into the distance, she looked at the Violet Sea and then threw a medicinal pill down into the waters. This was a medicinal pill that she had personally concocted, and it represented her personal Dao of Alchemy, which had reached its peak.

The medicinal pill fell into the water and dissolved.

Suddenly, Meng Hao felt something tugging at his heart. A tremor ran through his corpse, which was still sitting cross-legged on the seafloor.

Another dim morning, a white-robed woman flew out across the sea from the direction of the Black Lands. She seemed neither angry nor happy, but rather, cold. She hovered quietly in mid-air, looking around at the sea. After a long moment passed, she slowly looked down at the violet seawater.

What she didn't know was that she was actually looking at Meng Hao himself.

Meng Hao couldn't quite grasp that the woman he was looking at was... Xu Qing.

Being separated from someone is not the most helpless feeling in the world. Even worse is when you are directly in front of the person you miss, but can't actually see them.

For the first time, Meng Hao's emotions trembled. That tremor ran through the entire Violet Sea. Moments ago it had been calm, but now, huge waves rolled across its surface.

Xu Qing stared blankly down at the sea. For an entire year.

During that year, she did not leave, but instead passed the time on a mountain-island. Every day, she looked out at the sea. Every day, Meng Hao looked back at her.

During that year, Meng Hao continuously tried to remember who she

was....

Xu Qing wasn't aware of it, but in order to prevent her from being disturbed, Meng Hao made the area surrounding the island a zone in which life was not permitted. No Western Desert Cultivator could step foot into that area.

It became a world that belonged only to Meng Hao and Xu Qing.

A year later, a jade slip that Xu Qing possessed began to glow brightly. It seemed to be a summons. The glow flickered with increasing frequency, causing her to rise to her feet. She looked quietly out at the sea before turning to leave.

The instant that she turned, a single teardrop rolled out from the corner of her eye and fell down into the sea.

The teardrop merged into the seawater.

Chu Yuyan left behind a medicinal pill.

Xu Qing left behind a single teardrop.

The medicinal pill caused Meng Hao to tremble. The tear, however, dropped into the sea and then caused the Western Desert Violet Sea to suddenly explode with unprecedented tsunami waves.

"Who was she...?" Meng Hao asked himself. As he asked himself this question, the tsunami waves grew even more shocking. They rolled across the entire Western Desert Violet Sea, causing all the Cultivators in the Black lands to tremble.

"Why am I in such pain...?"

"What have I forgotten...?"

"Who was that woman...?"

"Who were all those people...?" As Meng Hao murmured to himself, storm winds raged and huge waves battered the surface of the sea. Roaring filled the air.

Even as he asked himself these questions, Meng Hao let out a soundless,

frenzied roar. As the teardrop moved down, the seawater parted to make way for it, creating something almost like a path.

The teardrop proceeded unobstructed. It was as if it were being guided down into the depths of the Violet Sea. It continued down into the blackness toward where Meng Hao's corpse sat cross-legged.

The teardrop neared Meng Hao and then landed onto his pale, bloodless lips. Then, it seeped into his mouth and transformed into a deep bitterness.

The bitter tear spread out within Meng Hao's mouth, causing his corpse to suddenly move. An indescribable aura suddenly exploded out from him.

As it did, the tsunami waves on the sea grew even more astonishing!

After a long, long time passed, Meng Hao's eyes suddenly... opened!

When his eyes opened, a roaring sound filled his mind. Countless memories, countless images, poured out, filling his mind, restoring him.

"Death is not the end of life, but rather, the beginning.... I am Meng Hao!" After a long moment passed, he looked quietly out at the black seafloor. However, what he saw with his eyes was actually the sky above the surface of the ocean.

He was awake! He was enlightened!

In the instant of his enlightenment, he realized that ten years had passed since that teardrop fell. As for how much time had passed since he began his process of understanding the Violet Sea, a full... one hundred and fifty years had passed!

Without that teardrop, Meng Hao would not have awakened. He would have continued his Demonic Transmigration. Ten thousand years later, he would have awoken. When that happened, the world would have had one less Cultivator. The legacy of the Demon Sealers would have been severed. At the same time, a new Greater Demon of Heaven and Earth would have appeared!

The instant he woke up, the great waves on the surface of the Violet Sea

calmed. All of the specters sank down into the seawater, vanishing from the world above.

The entire Violet Sea became deathly quiet.

Down in the depths of the Violet Sea, Meng Hao's life force once again burned vigorously. After a few days passed, he had already surpassed his previous pinnacle. Before, such intense life force would have provoked an incredible reaction from the will of extermination in the violet Sea. He would have been completely and thoroughly exterminated.

But now, the Violet Sea did nothing to get rid of him.

That was because Meng Hao was the Violet Sea. And in many ways, the Violet Sea... was Meng Hao!

He slowly lifted up his right hand. As he did, the entire Violet Sea quietly sank down a full thirty meters.

The majestic Western Desert Violet Sea sank down thirty meters, making more of the island-mountains visible.

This scene caused all of the Cultivators in the Black Lands to be completely shocked. One group of people after another came out to investigate. However no one could figure out or even guess why the sea had suddenly sunk by thirty meters.

The real reason was because that was how much seawater was needed to congeal a violet character for water on the back of Meng Hao's hand.

This mark signified that Meng Hao could control the power of death of the Violet Sea. This was his... Water-type totem tattoo!

As he looked down at his hand, Meng Hao waved it, causing the seawater that surrounded him to part, creating an opening three hundred meters wide. Within that opening, no water existed.

At the same time, a bloody light sparkled on his index finger. This light represented the life force of the blood totem as it magically made its appearance.

Under Meng Hao's control, a ghost image of the blood totem slowly

appeared on the back of his right hand. Slowly it began to fuse with the Violet Sea totem, which represented death.

As they fused, as the ghost images sprang up, Meng Hao's body suddenly shook.

"Blood represents life!

"The Violet Sea represents death!

"When life and death collide, that is extermination. When life and death mix together, it is the source of all life.... This is my fifth element Water!

"It represents life, and also represents death. It is a source of extermination, and also a source of life!

"My Water-type totem will form my first Nascent Soul. Its color is a combination of violet and blood. It... is my fifth element, Water, my Blood-Violet Nascent Soul!" His eyes shone with a strange light as he suddenly clenched his right fist. The Water-type totem tattoo disappeared. It didn't dissipate, but rather sank down into Meng Hao's body, branding itself onto his Perfect Gold Core.

At the same time, Meng Hao's eyes flickered with determination. As of this moment, he suddenly looked, not like a Cultivator, but like an alchemist!

As of this moment, he was Grandmaster Pill Cauldron!

"My body is the pill furnace...." he murmured. His blood began to circulate rapidly. Tremors ran through his flesh, making it seem as if he truly had become a great furnace of Heaven and Earth.

Inside of him, there was no flame, but rather... his life force!

Using his life to concoct pills, and using alchemy to concoct a Nascent Soul, he would create his own Five Colored Nascent Soul!

"My heart is the pill formula!" He placed his hands onto his knees and closed his eyes. Within his heart existed a method that had never been used before, and probably never would again, to begin his Cultivation base breakthrough. This was a way to acquire a Perfect Nascent Soul even

though he had never been told the true method for forming such a Nascent Soul.

This was Meng Hao's pill formula!

"Concoct a Five-Colored Nascent Soul! The first step is to make not one but five Nascent Souls!" Meng Hao's body filled with a roaring sound as he used pill concocting techniques to begin to refine his own body.

After fusing the Water-type totem onto his Perfect Gold Core, Meng Hao used his own body as the pill furnace and his heart as the pill formula, to be able to concoct a Nascent Soul.

This was something that had never occurred in the Cultivation world before Meng Hao. It was his own path, his own way of practicing cultivation. It was a road that would reach the peak of perfection!

Time passed. Suddenly, cracking sounds could be heard from his Perfect Gold Core. Fissures appeared. Moments later, his Perfect Gold Core suddenly exploded, transforming into a primordial Qi vortex.

Suddenly, a Blood Violet glow could be seen!

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Within the Qi vortex, Meng Hao's body radiated Blood-Violet light. The light spread out of the vortex and then began to congeal together. Soon, a vague outline became visible.

The shape of the outline swirled continuously. The Violet Sea surged around Meng Hao, also turning into a vortex, which grew larger and larger until the entire Western Desert Violet Sea was affected! Roaring filled the air!

All of the Cultivators who happened to be on the Violet Sea, regardless of where they were, were instantly filled with astonishment. In their shock, they had no way to even guess what was causing this phenomenon.

Meng Hao's eyes were closed at the moment. The Blood-Violet light continued to radiate out intensely. The interlocking beams of light that were forming the outline, began to grow more and more clear. Soon it was obvious that the outline....

Astonishingly, it was congealing into the shape of a small person.

This person looked exactly like Meng Hao, only much, much smaller. It was about seven inches tall, its body completely transparent and emanating a Blood-Violet glow! An incredible aura was also detectable!

The intensity of this aura far exceeded that possessed by virtually any other Nascent Soul Cultivator. It was even comparable to the Flawless Nascent Souls of Cultivators from great Sects!

Upon its appearance, the Nascent Soul's expression was one of confusion. However, it quickly came to its senses and stretched out its arms and legs. Meng Hao's heart began to pound as the power of an early Nascent Soul Cultivation base suddenly exploded out within him!!

Back at Blackgate Fort, he had temporarily possessed a similar, but unstable, Cultivation base. This time, it was permanent, and completely of his own!

Furthermore, although this was still the early Nascent Soul stage, in

terms of aura, the power was even more intense!

This was a Blood-Violet Nascent Soul!!

As soon as the Nascent Soul appeared, it flew out from Meng Hao's body to float in the air in front of him. Its eyes glittered as it sat cross-legged in mid-air, its body radiating Blood-Violet light up into the sky.

When looking at the Cultivation world of South Heaven as a whole, all Nascent Soul Cultivators generally cultivated a single Nascent Soul. That single Nascent Soul would become the focus of their path of cultivation.

Only a few almighty practitioners possessed special techniques or incredible Cultivation bases that made a single Nascent Soul insufficient, and would therefore refine a second Nascent Soul.

People like that were the strongest among the strong. Each and every one of them were people who left indelible marks on the pages of history.

As of this moment, Meng Hao was taking his first steps down just such a path!

The appearance of his Blood-Violet Nascent Soul caused a red glow to suddenly appear in Meng Hao's eyes. He took a deep breath, then closed his eyes. By now, his Perfect Gold Core was completely shattered and had turned into a vortex that spun constantly and emanated a primordial aura.

Suddenly, Meng Hao's Metal-type totem tattoo began to flicker and then slowly fade away. It sunk down into his body, transforming into a golden light which then fused into the primordial vortex.

"Metal-type power from the spirit of the Golden Crow, an unbreakable metal," murmured Meng Hao, "Using my pill concocting methods, I will use this to concoct Meng Hao's... second Nascent Soul!" Using his body as the pill furnace and his heart as the pill formula, he once again began to concoct a Nascent Soul.

Moments later, a rumbling sound emanated out from his body. Thankfully, Meng Hao was at the bottom of a sea. Were he not, the sound would have echoed out far into the distance. Despite being on the seafloor, it still caused huge waves to suddenly explode out in all directions.

At the same time, the primordial vortex within Meng Hao emanated an intense golden light, which radiated out through his skin, making him look like a statue of gold.

Next, an outline became visible within that golden light. It grew clearer and clearer as it transformed into a small person that looked exactly like the Blood-Violet Nascent Soul!

It was seven inches tall, completely transparent, and had a blank expression on its face. It looked exactly like the Blood-Violet Nascent Soul, except that this second Nascent Soul emanated a golden glow!

Its bearing was one of righteousness and utter holiness. After the space of a few breaths, the tiny golden figure's eyes suddenly flashed with clearness. It stretched its body, causing golden light to explode out along with incredible power. Meng Hao's Cultivation base suddenly exploded with power.

It shot upward, climbing up to the peak of the early Nascent Soul stage, just a tiny step away from the mid Nascent Soul stage!

The tiny golden figure was the second of Meng Hao's Nascent Souls, a five elements Metal Nascent Soul!

The Nascent Soul flickered as it shot out from within Meng Hao. It flew out just like the Blood-Violet Nascent Soul, except in a different direction, where it then stopped and then faced the first Nascent Soul.

An incredible aura rippled out in all directions. Meng Hao's Cultivation base undulated with incredible intensity. He closed his eyes and took a deep breath as the Wood-type totem tattoo on his forehead began to fade away.

"Metal and Water have been concocted into Nascent Souls," he murmured to himself. "Now it's time for Wood.... The Greenwood Tree from the Ninth Sea will become my third Nascent Soul.... Wood Nascent Soul! With this Nascent Soul, my progress down the path of the Five-Colored Nascent Soul will be almost complete!" Meng Hao focused all of his mind and heart on the Qi vortex inside of him. Using his Spiritual Sense like his own hands, he again began to concoct a Nascent Soul.

It only took moments before the primordial Qi vortex within him to begin to shine with a green light!

It seemed as if lightning were dancing about within it. Incredible roaring sounds emanated out that seemed to contain life itself within them. It became life force, an overwhelming life force that seemed to stem from the beginning of all creation. At the same time... a beam of green light shot out from within the primordial vortex.

The beam of light swirled around to form an outline of four limbs and a head. Facial features emerged. The eyes suddenly snapped open and began to shine with a blinding green light!

Meng Hao's Wood Nascent Soul suddenly appeared!

The moment that the Wood Nascent Soul appeared, Meng Hao's Cultivation base shot up, breaking out from the early Nascent Soul Stage and entering fully into the mid Nascent Soul stage!

Three Nascent Souls. If any outsider could look upon this scene, that person would definitely be flabbergasted, filled with incredible disbelief. From ancient times until now, Cultivators who possessed three Nascent Souls were as rare as phoenix feathers and qilin horns. Perhaps only ten people had ever done so, and that was ten thousand years in the past.

Right now, Meng Hao had successfully concocted a third Nascent Soul. However... in terms of the path of concocting a Five-Colored Nascent Soul, the first step wasn't even fully complete! From this, it could be seen that Meng Hao's Nascent Soul concocting method was truly something completely new!

All of this, with the exception of Meng Hao's acquisition of the various five elements totem tattoos, was almost completely because of his position as a Grandmaster of the Dao of Alchemy. Only with such an identity could he be qualified to use pill concocting techniques to concoct a Nascent Soul!

Most importantly... was Meng Hao's overall base. He had reached the great circle of Qi Condensation. He had ten Perfect Dao Pillars. He had completed the great circle of the Perfect Gold Core. With a base like that,

he was completely unique in all the lands of South Heaven.

Such a base was the reason that a primordial vortex spun about inside of him. It sustained him as he concocted one Nascent soul after another. Were anyone else in this situation, without such a foundation, they would be completely incapable of doing this.

He was now about to enter a place that throughout the history of the great lands of South Heaven, only a few Nascent Soul experts had ever entered. Throughout countless years and among endless Chosen and heroes, this was the most Nascent Souls anyone had ever possessed. Four Nascent Souls.

Throughout innumerable years, only three people had ever possessed four Nascent Souls!

As of now, that number would be increased to four!

“East Pill Everburning Flame,” murmured Meng Hao, “which is just like the eternity of my Dao of alchemy and my everburning heart. I will congeal the fire of the five elements of Heaven and Earth. This fire represents my Dao of alchemy, and the determination with which I practice cultivation!

“This fire will be used to concoct my fourth Nascent Soul. Fire Nascent Soul!” His voice was soft, but filled with unhesitating decisiveness that could chop nails and sever iron. At the same time as he had spoken, the Wood Nascent Soul flew out to sit cross-legged in the air with the Water and Metal Nascent Souls. Three Nascent Souls circled through the air around Meng Hao.

Suddenly, a yellow light began to shine out from Meng Hao’s Fire-type totem tattoo as it slowly vanished. It also merged into the primordial vortex.

A sea of fire appeared within Meng Hao, completely enveloping the primordial vortex. It spread out from within him to fill the entire area.

He was completely surrounded by a sea of fire. Within the flames, the Qi vortex spun as a band of fire shot out. It quickly transformed into a small

person, seven inches tall. This was Meng Hao's five elements Fire Nascent Soul.

As soon as it appeared, the flames in the area fell in on themselves, rippling back into Meng Hao and congealing onto the body of the Fire Nascent Soul. It was at this point that the Nascent Soul's eyes opened.

When that happened, Meng Hao's Cultivation base exploded upward, climbing all the way to the peak of the mid Nascent Soul stage.

Back at Blackgate Fort, when he first combined the five elements, his Cultivation base had climbed up to the peak of the mid Nascent Soul stage. Now, with only four Nascent Souls, he had already reached the same level he had before when combining the five elements.

Meng Hao took a deep breath. His eyes glittered as the Fire Nascent Soul flew out to join the other three Nascent Souls that floated around his head. They were now formed into a four-sided spell formation.

The exact center of that spell formation was none other than Meng Hao.

"The essence of the power of the Frost Soil Demon Emperor was the Frost soil, which existed even before primordial times, at the beginning of everything. That essence... will form my fifth Nascent Soul. Earth Nascent Soul!" He took a deep breath. Filled with unprecedented confidence, he closed his eyes once more. His final totem tattoo vanished and then merged into the Qi vortex within him.

Time passed. Moments later, an intensely cold aura began to emanate out from Meng Hao to fill the area. Cracking sounds could be heard as the Violet Sea around him was frozen!

Meng Hao's Cultivation base exploded up again. Now, he was no longer at the peak of the mid Nascent Soul stage, but rather, had broken through into... the late Nascent Soul stage.

His hair whipped about and his clothing rippled. At the same time, a intense howling sound could be heard coming from within him. A seven-inch-tall person floated up out of the top of his head. Its expression was one of solemnity, and it radiated a frigid aura, just like that of Frost soil.

This was... Meng Hao's five elements Earth Nascent Soul!!

The five elements Earth Nascent Soul floated out. As of now, Meng Hao was surrounded by five Nascent Souls. Metal. Wood. Water. Fire. Earth. His five elements Nascent Souls were finally complete!

The first step of the Five-Colored Nascent Soul was now finished.

As of this moment, Meng Hao had reached an unprecedented point along the path of the Nascent Soul stage in the lands of South Heaven.

There was no one more powerful than him!

Chapter 522: Five-Colored Nascent Soul

Chapter 523: Title at the end!

His Spiritual Sense increased several times over. 300 meters. 3,000 meters. 15,000 meters.... Soon, it was 27,000 meters! However, if he focused all of the Divine Sense into one line, instead of spreading it out in all directions, that distance would be multiplied by ten! 1

This was no longer Spiritual Sense. No Spiritual Sense could reach this point. The only thing that could was... Divine Sense!

This was a speciality of Nascent Soul Cultivators. Divine Sense!

An ordinary Cultivator of the late Nascent Soul stage possessed Divine Sense that had a limit of 21,000 meters. The line of demarcation with the Spirit Severing Stage was 30,000.

Only Spirit Severing Cultivators had Divine Sense with a range of 30,000!

Right now, though, Meng Hao's Divine Sense already could reach 27,000 meters!

Meng Hao looked up at the five Nascent Souls hovering around his head. Right now, the primordial Qi vortex formed from his Perfect Gold Core was greatly reduced. However, from the look of it, it seemed sufficient to actually concoct a sixth Nascent Soul!

Meng Hao looked thoughtfully at the five elements Nascent Souls, and felt the boundlessness of his late Nascent Soul stage Cultivation base. He took a deep breath. He had practiced cultivation for less than two hundred years. He had started out as an insignificant Cultivator in the State of Zhao. The path which he had traveled led down to this very moment in which he was a late Nascent Soul stage expert. All of the memories along the way seemed almost like a fantasy.

His five elements Nascent Souls were assembled. The first step was complete. Now, the second step was about to be taken. That second step was combining the five elements!

Once combined, he would be a Five-Colored Paragon!

However, a flash of hesitation appeared in Meng Hao's eyes, and he frowned.

"The thirteen level of Qi Condensation formed a great circle. My Perfect Foundation, my Perfect Gold Core, my entire path... consisted of reaching the pinnacle of each stage. All of that made it so that I could exceed anyone else in the same stage!

"Therefore, I now have my five elements Nascent Souls!

"Nascent Souls of the five elements and five colors can be broken down as follows. Three elements are Cracked. Four elements are Flawless. Five elements are Perfect.... Logically speaking, I should be in the realm of Perfection.

"Divine Sense with a range of 27,000 meters seems to exceed other Nascent Soul eccentrics by far. However, I wonder what the true range of the Divine Sense of a Perfect Nascent Soul really is?" This was what was causing Meng Hao to hesitate. He looked at the five elements Nascent Souls, lost in thought.

The fact that his five elements Nascent Souls were successfully concocted caused him to be both extremely happy, but at the same time, thoughtful. Divine sense with a range of 27,000 already proved that his choice of paths was correct. Correct, and yet... there seemed to be some difference between this path, and the Perfect Nascent Soul of legend.

Meng Hao didn't know exactly how powerful the legendary Perfect Nascent Soul was, but considering he was familiar with the Perfect Foundation and Perfect Gold Core, it was possible to come up with a general, theoretical answer to the question.

"A Perfect Nascent Soul requires all of the five elements. The result is one Nascent Soul with five elements and five colors. I, however, chose to concoct five different Nascent Souls based off of the different totems. When I combine the five elements, I should be able to achieve a Perfect Nascent Soul!

"However... I still have the feeling....

“I can’t know for sure, but bet the true range of a Perfect Nascent Soul is 29,999 meters!” Meng Hao’s eyes shone with a strange light. The method he had created to concoct a Nascent Soul became the path of the five elements Nascent Soul. This method did not become a new technique for creating a Perfect Nascent Soul. Actually, it appeared to exceed that path.

“My Divine Sense has reached 27,000 meters after successfully producing the five elements Nascent Souls, which is still slightly less than a Perfect Nascent Soul. Well then... I’ll just have to add another Nascent Soul to close the gap!” Meng Hao’s eyes shone with determination as he sat there cross-legged on the seafloor. He lifted his right hand up, within which appeared, shockingly, a medicinal pill!

This medicinal pill was something he had acquired from the bag of holding of the member of the Ji Clan he had killed all those years ago.... It was one of the three great medicinal pills, a One Color Soul Procurement Pill!! 2

This pill was incredibly rare, something miraculous from ancient times. After consuming it, there was a high likelihood to increase the quality of a Nascent Soul. By adding an extra color, it was like adding an extra level of power to the five elements.

“I already have all of the five elements. Perhaps consuming this pill will do nothing. On the other hand, perhaps a sixth element will appear that I’m unaware of!” Meng Hao was silent for a moment before his expression filled with determination. He had to try at least once. Not trying wasn’t an alternative he could accept.

Without hesitation, he produced the copper mirror. He had a lot of Spirit Stones in his bag of holding, wealth he had accumulated over the years of leading the Crow Divinity Tribe.

With no trace of irresoluteness, he duplicated the medicinal pills. It took a vast amount of Spirit Stones to produce only a single copy. Now he had two One Color Soul Procurement Pills, one of which he immediately popped into his mouth.

The moment it entered his mouth, a roaring filled his body. The

medicinal pill dissolved, instantly transforming into something that seemed like a unique type of Divine Sense. It swept through him as if it were searching for something.

Moments later, the power of the medicinal pill vanished along with that unique Divine Sense. Apparently it hadn't found what it was looking for.

Meng Hao frowned and opened his eyes, lost in thought. The pill's ineffectiveness showed that his five elements really were of the great circle. There was no base for the pill to be able to randomly create a new element.

"The three great ancient miraculous pills couldn't possibly be so useless, could they?" he thought. Disregarding the loss of Spirit Stones, he produced another duplicate and then consumed it. He experienced the same feeling as before, but in the end, nothing happened. However, the power of the bizarre Divine Sense seemed to overlap with the power from before, making it even more powerful.

Meng Hao consumed another One Color Soul Procurement Pill, just to make sure that wasn't passing up an opportunity that he would regret later. He had already decided that he would consume at least ten of the pills. If he didn't succeed at that point, then he would give up and combine the five elements he already had.

It was merely a guess on his part that Divine Sense with a range of 27,000 meters was a different from the Divine Sense of a Perfect Nascent Soul. For all he knew, a Perfect Nascent Soul really did have Divine Sense with a range of only 27,000 meters.

Based on this line of reasoning, he continued to consume One Color Soul Procurement Pills. After consuming the ninth pill, the strange Divine Sense once again appeared. It was at this point that Meng Hao suddenly felt a stab of pain on his forehead.

The pain came suddenly, as if it had been hiding within his body all along, undetectable. After consuming the ninth One Color Soul Procurement Pill, the overlapping layers of fearsome Divine sense were finally able to detect it.

When the stab of pain appeared, Meng Hao's mind trembled. As soon as he felt the pain, he immediately duplicated another One Color Soul Procurement Pill. Even in ancient times, few people would ever have been able to possess so many of these kind of medicinal pills.

In fact throughout history down until this day, no one ever had!

Only Meng Hao would be able to consume them in such a manner. Of course, it also indicated that his accumulation of Spirit Stones in his bag of holding was rapidly growing smaller and smaller.

It wouldn't be long before Meng Hao was flat broke.

Although that pained Meng Hao, he didn't care too much. The pain he felt in his forehead gave him hope that the One Color Soul Procurement Pill had found the traces of the sixth element it was looking for.

The instant in which he consumed the tenth One Color Soul Procurement Pill, the combined power all ten pills congealed into a terrifying Divine Sense. It swept throughout Meng Hao's body until finally... it found the power of a sixth element that it needed, right there on his forehead.

Meng Hao's own Divine Sense focused on the same spot where the power of the One Color Soul Procurement Pills was focused. A rumbling sound filled Meng Hao's mind.

What he was looking at was none other than... a roc!!

Perhaps it was more correct to say that it was a strand of wind. A wind shaped like a roc, white in color, clearly visible within Meng Hao's Divine Sense. Suddenly, he thought back to what happened that year outside of the Rebirth Cave in the Southern Domain. A woman in the Rebirth Cave had given Meng Hao the power of a roc. 3

After that, Meng Hao had never been able to find that bit of roc power, no matter how he checked. But now, under the overlapping power of ten One Color Soul Procurement Pills, the wind of the roc suddenly was revealed.

"This roc wind is my Wind-type totem! It will be my sixth Nascent Soul,

the Wind Nascent Soul!” He instantly rotated his Cultivation base. The five Nascent Souls rotating around his head began to perform incantation gestures. Fueled by the power of the five elements, Meng Hao’s body became the pill furnace as he suddenly began to concoct a Nascent Soul!

The Qi vortex formed from his Perfect Gold Core swirled rapidly and began to emit a gravitational force. Along with the power of the Soul Procurement Pill and the conjuring power of the five elements Nascent Souls, the power of the roc in Meng Hao’s forehead, the power that had been concealed there for years and years, was finally forced out and sucked toward his dantian region.

The moment the roc wind entered his dantian, a rumbling roar filled Meng Hao’s body. The Qi vortex there roared as it spun faster and faster.

“Time to concoct my Wind Nascent Soul!” Meng Hao’s eyes snapped open. A pounding sound filled his body as the Qi vortex suddenly shrunk down on itself and transformed in a white, seven-inch-tall person!

It looked exactly like Meng Hao. This was Meng Hao’s sixth Nascent Soul... Wind Nascent Soul!

As soon as it appeared, Meng Hao’s Cultivation base suddenly rocketed up, pushing him from the late Nascent Soul stage higher and higher until he was now at the peak of the stage. His distance from the great circle was...

Only a single step!!

At the same time, Meng Hao’s Divine Sense expanded madly. 27,300 meters. 27,900 meters. 28,000 meters....

Finally, when it reached 29,700 meters, it began to slow down. Eventually, it stopped at... 29,999 meters!

Meng Hao lifted his head and stood. As he rose to his feet, the Wind Nascent Soul emerged from the top of his head to join the other Nascent Souls. Light shone out from them to form a star with six points!

Perfect Nascent Soul!

Meng Hao was bursting with excitement from having created his own path of the perfect Nascent Soul, of being the first person from ancient times until now who possessed six Nascent Souls. He was the first person... to create his own path of the Perfect Nascent Soul, to combine six Nascent Souls together. Even at this very moment, however, Meng Hao's face suddenly flickered.

It was at this point that suddenly, the effects of Time within his body were multiplied by six. Time disappeared, causing his longevity to rapidly disappear. He suddenly realized that his longevity would run out in only one hundred years!

"This...." A bright glow began to shine in his eyes.

"Because I have six Nascent Souls, it's like I have six lives, six animas.... Therefore, my longevity must be divided into six parts.... As such, one year for me is like six years!

"That is the price of the Perfect Nascent Soul!"

It was also at this same moment that the Resurrection Lily inside of Meng Hao seemed to think that now was the perfect opportunity to make a move. It suddenly rose up with unyielding explosiveness.

Chapter 523: Sixth Nascent Soul!

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1. A relatively lengthy explanation is needed here. Er Gen uses ancient Chinese measurements that you have probably read about in other translations. He uses "zhang" which is about 3.3 meters and "li" which is half a kilometer. I convert these units to meters and kilometers and then round them to the nearest appropriate unit to make the distances easier to picture. I know that some of the "ancient Chinese flavor" is lost because of that, but honestly speaking, I think it leads to a better, smoother and faster reading experience. In this particular passage, Er Gen actually switches between the two, and ALSO switches between talking about distance and what is essentially the area of a circle. He

actually describes the “area” of Meng Hao’s Divine sense, based on the range of 9,000 “zhang,” as being 70 “li,” assumably 70 square li. Honestly, the math is confusing, especially when you throw in the vagueness of Chinese and then the conversion between the two units. I know there may be some discrepancies with previous descriptions of the range of Spiritual Sense. That may have to do with the fact that the word Er Gen used for “area” is kind of vague and could be interpreted in different ways. Later, I will go back to check the raws and clarify those areas.

2. He aquired the One Color Soul Procurement Pill in chapter 323.
3. Meng Hao was given the power of the roc in chapter 313.

Chapter 524: Title at the end!

In this moment, the clouds in the sky above the Violet Sea were churning. There was no more violet rain, but the sky was still dark and overcast. Suddenly, bolts of lightning could be seen approaching from off in the distance.

As the lighting neared, astonishingly, countless Tribulation clouds began to roil into being. More and more Tribulation clouds could be seen, which caused the Violet Sea to be whipped into a frenzy. A massive aura of death began to emanate off of it.

The aura seemed as if it were preparing to fight back against the Tribulation Lightning. Instantly, an archaic madness seemed to be rising up!

The Cultivators in the ten outposts that had been built up over the past years all looked up into the sky with expressions of astonishment.

“Is that... Tribulation Lightning?”

“Don’t tell me someone is transcending Tribulation? How could that be possible? Only Immortals can transcend Tribulation. How could there be someone in the great Western desert who could transcend Tribulation?!”

“This isn’t someone transcending Tribulation. Obviously a precious treasure is appearing in the world!!”

Such scenes played out in all of the ten outposts. However... the Tribulation Lightning over the Violet Sea was actually only detectable by the people actually in the area of the Violet Sea. Cultivators in the Black Lands seemed to be cut off and unable to detect it, even Spirit Severing Cultivators.

It was at this moment that in the second outpost, inside of a lofty building, a bare-chested, middle-aged man was embracing a beautiful female Cultivator. As they chatted and laughed, he occasionally caressed her body with his hands. Her coy reaction caused his desire to grow stronger and stronger.

Behind the man, seven old men sat cross-legged. Their eyes were closed and they did not speak, as if they didn't even notice the obscene sounds that could be heard in the room. The seven old men had incredible Cultivation bases. Four were in the mid-Nascent Soul stage, two were in the late Nascent Soul stage, and one was of the great circle!

Cultivators like these were the most powerful you could find under the Spirit Severing stage. This was especially so in an age when it was not a simple thing to reach the Spirit Severing Stage; Cultivators of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage could completely rock the world.

Right now, though, it was clear that these seven men were nothing more than a retinue!

There was only one type of person who could make Cultivators of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage to act as a retinue. That would be... a Spirit Severing Patriarch! The middle-aged man's Cultivation base was only at the early Nascent Soul stage, not the Spirit Severing stage. That meant that his man's status was shockingly high!

This man was the son of Spirit Severing Patriarch Huyan Yunming of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, one of the three powers of the Heavenly Court Alliance! Huyan Qing! He had left the Black Lands three months ago to go sightseeing in the ten outposts and chase after women. 1

Just as Huyan Qing was about to throw himself on the female Cultivator, a bolt of red lightning suddenly shot through the air and then headed off into the distance. Before it disappeared, an enormous, intense pressure could be felt. Instantly, the seven old men all opened their eyes. The red-robed old man of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage slowly lifted his head and looked off into the distance, frowning.

A tremor ran through Huyan Qing and he suddenly looked up.

"Miracle Lightning? Don't tell me some precious treasure has suddenly appeared? Or maybe some neo-demon is transforming?" Huyan Qing laughed heartily. Suddenly, he leaped up into the air, holding the shocked woman in one arm as he flicked his sleeve with the other. Instantly, four black-robed bodyguards appeared bearing a luxurious sedan chair on their

shoulders.

Huyan Qing immediately entered the sedan chair, taking the woman with him.

“Sir Wu, let’s go take a look, alright?” His laughter mixed with the gasp of the female Cultivator as she saw the sumptuous interior of the sedan chair.

The man who Huyan Qing referred to as Sir Wu was the old man of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage. He frowned and let out a quiet sigh. Slowly, he stood up and, along with the other six old men, escorted the sedan chair off.

Huyan Qing’s procession headed off in the direction the lightning had flown, which was of course the location where Meng Hao stood at the bottom of the sea. Currently, Meng Hao’s expression was grim as he looked at the six Nascent Souls flying around the level of his head. He frowned.

“Longevity of one hundred years.... Not even two hundred. Well, I’m already at the peak of the late Nascent Soul stage. I guess I have to reach Spirit Severing within a hundred years!

“Now, as for this Resurrection Lily....” A cold smile suddenly twisted his lips. He had long since predicted that the Resurrection Lily would not let a crucial moment in his cultivation pass without trying to make a move.

He knew that it would appear!

Originally he thought it would attempt to possess him when the Heavenly Tribulation hit. However, apparently it thought right now was the best opportunity.

“For you to appear right now is actually quite convenient! If Heavenly Tribulation really does come, you could cause me quite a bit of frustration.” Smiling coldly, he sat down cross-legged. Ignoring the Resurrection Lily’s explosive rise, he lifted his hand and pointed at one of the Nascent Souls.

Immediately, the Metal Nascent Soul floated down. Its face was covered

with a cold smile just like Meng Hao's as it sank down into the top of his head. It sank down to appear in the empty space in his dantian region that his Gold Core had previously occupied.

"This time, I'll give you a chance to... have a full on fight!" As Meng Hao closed his eyes, majestic Cultivation base power exploded out from the Metal Nascent Soul to crush down onto the Resurrection Lily.

The Resurrection Lily seemed to go mad and it let out a soundless roar. Shockingly, directly behind Meng Hao appeared the image of a blindingly bright four-colored Resurrection Lily, swaying back and forth ferociously.

It was in this moment that the Resurrection Lily seized control of Meng Hao's legs. Meng Hao lost all feeling in them as the struggle for control over his body erupted. The feeling quickly spread into his arms.

The four-colored Resurrection Lily swayed back and forth in a very bizarre fashion. It seemed as if it had been preparing for many years to make this counterattack against Meng Hao. When it made its move, it would attack with complete ruthlessness.

"I have to give you some credit," said Meng Hao coolly. "You're much better this time than you were before." After all this time, he was very familiar with the Resurrection Lily, and knew that it was sentient.

Even as he spoke, the Wood Nascent Soul began to emanate a green light as it sank into the top of Meng Hao's head. It quickly reached his dantian region, whereupon Meng Hao unhesitatingly superimposed it over the Metal Nascent Soul. The two... combined into one!

As soon as the two Nascent Souls combined into one, a roaring sound filled Meng Hao's mind. He instantly felt his Cultivation base... rising up rapidly!!

He was still in the late Nascent Soul stage. Despite not having made a breakthrough, he could sense that his battle prowess... had exploded upward by double or more!

At the moment, Meng Hao wasn't surprised. That was because... this was the power of a Perfect Nascent Soul, a power that placed him above

anyone else in the same stage!

However, in unison with his sudden increase in battle prowess, Meng Hao could tell that the corrosive effect on his longevity, which previously was limited to a multiple of six, was now even greater.

The Resurrection Lily let out another soundless roar as its struggling increased in intensity. Whereas before, it had occupied a position of incredible superiority, it was now forced to defend relentlessly against Meng Hao. It did not want to allow Meng Hao to retake the parts of his body that it had already possessed.

“This is merely a combination of two Nascent Souls....” said Meng Hao, his eyes glittering. Suddenly, the Water Nascent Soul floated down, emanating a red glow as it sank into the top of his head. Moments later it appeared in his dantian region where it superimposed over the Metal and Wood Nascent Souls. They fused together, three Nascent Souls combining into one.

BOOOOMMM!!!

Meng Hao could clearly sense his battle prowess climbing up with incredible intensity from the foundation of the early combination of two Nascent Souls.

Originally, he had possessed the power equivalent to only a single Nascent Soul. As of this moment, though, his power was equivalent to four peak late stage Nascent Souls! In addition, the wasting away of his longevity was also increased.

This was not an increase in Cultivation base, but rather, battle prowess. It was natural strength, arisen from the ability to use spiritual power. This increase could be likened to water in a bottle. The bottle might not get bigger, but more water could be forced inside, creating a pressure that exceeded anything normal!

The Resurrection Lily was emitting a piercing howl. The sound of it could not be heard by any outsider, only Meng Hao, who could hear it quite clearly. The Resurrection Lily was completely incapable of standing up to the power of Meng Hao's three combined elements. It instantly lost

control of Meng Hao's arms, and was forced to retreat back to its position within Meng Hao's possessed legs.

"I don't need to expend much effort to suppress you," said Meng Hao coolly. "After all, this is a direct conflict, and you aren't even close to being a match for me! What makes you think you're qualified to even TRY to possess me!?"

"You are me, but I... am not you!" A sea of flames erupted from the Fire Nascent Soul as it floated down and merged into his body. It then appeared in his dantian region, where it overlapped and then combined with the Metal, Wood, and Water Nascent Souls.

Shocking rumbling sounds caused Meng Hao's entire body to shake. Blue veins popped up all over as blood rushed through them at high speed. His body suddenly began to expand. It appeared as if he were taller. Although he was still slender, it seemed as if every bit of his flesh and blood was virtually bursting with terrifying power.

His battle prowess... doubled once again!!

In this moment, he now possessed the same power as eight Nascent Souls at the peak of the late stage. The power of four combined elements exploded out, causing the Resurrection Lily to writhe and let out a miserable shriek. It was easily pushed back once again by suppressive power, losing control over Meng Hao's legs and being forced into his most remote extremities.

However, even in the moment in which it retreated back as far as it could, an aura rose up from the Resurrection Lily that caused Meng Hao's pupils to constrict.

The aura grew more and more powerful, and even seemed to contain some remnants of the One Color Soul Procurement Pill. Suddenly, the four-colored Resurrection Lily which Meng Hao had suppressed to the limit began to glow... and then develop...

A fifth color!!

When the fifth color appeared, Meng Hao's mind and heart trembled.

But then, his eyes glowed with pleasant surprise. He knew that this Resurrection Lily was incomplete, and could never grow to the point where it could bloom with seven colors and reach Immortal Ascension. Three colors was its limit. It had acquired four colors by means of a miracle. But now... it actually developed a fifth color. 2

This fifth color obviously had something to do with Meng Hao's Nascent Soul concocting and the One Color Soul Procurement Pill, as well as his place in the realm of Perfection. Because of all of these different things, the Resurrection Lily was suddenly able to make a meteoric rise.

When the fifth flower petal appeared on the Resurrection Lily, it let out a fierce howl and then erupted out from its position of retreat. It expanded out, clearly wanting to take control of Meng Hao's entire body in possession. It wanted to control Meng Hao and make him a true host that it could control!

Meng Hao could feel the madness of the Resurrection Lily, and it caused him to smile. He wanted it to grow more powerful, because he had long since decided to use this Resurrection Lily at the critical moment when his time came in the future to reach Immortal Ascension!

Even as the Resurrection Lily exploded out with power, Meng Hao lifted his head up. The Earth Nascent Soul suddenly erupted with shocking coldness. It merged in through Meng Hao's forehead, appearing moments later in his dantian region. Five elements overlapped. Five elements... combined!

Chapter 524: Five Colored Resurrection Lily!

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1. Huyan Yunming's name in Chinese is 呼延云铭 hū yán yún míng. Huyan is a surname. Yun means cloud. Ming means "carve" or "inscription." Huyan Qing's name in Chinese is 呼延庆 Hūyán qìng. Qing means "celebrate".
2. The Resurrection Lily got its fourth color in chapter 205.

Chapter 525: Title at the end!

The moment in which the five elements combined, Meng Hao's Cultivation base did not change, but his battle prowess instantly doubled again. At first, he started with power equivalent to one peak late Nascent Soul. Now, he had power equivalent to sixteen!

Such terrifying battle prowess far exceeded the scope of the late Nascent Soul stage. Even someone of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage would crumble like dried weeds before Meng Hao's power of sixteen peak late Nascent Souls.

That was the fearsomeness and incredible power of the realm of Perfection!

However, for Meng Hao, such terrifying power came at the price of longevity. To maintain his grip on such power meant that his longevity was no longer one hundred years, but rather, six!

After all, he was not truly in possession of a Perfect Nascent Soul. He had acquired it by alternative methods.... But actually, not even a true Perfect Nascent Soul could come close to this unbelievably fearsome power.

On this new path of the Nascent Soul that Meng Hao had forged, he possessed Perfect battle prowess that far exceeded even the extraordinary power of the Perfect Nascent Soul. Because he had been operating only on speculation and not research, he hadn't been clear about what the end result would be. But having sensed the battle prowess that existed within him, he now realized that his path was incredibly astonishing.

Battle power erupted out and his aura was swift and fierce as he fought back against the five-petaled Resurrection Lily. His body was the battlefield upon which the two forces slammed into each other.

As soon as they collided, the Resurrection Lily let out a miserable howl. It didn't matter that it had suddenly sprouted a fifth petal. Under the power of Meng Hao's fearsome battle prowess, it was... incapable of withstanding even a single blow.

Intangible explosions rippled out as the Resurrection Lily collapsed under Meng Hao's attack. It had been beaten back repeatedly, and had retreated completely from its former position of superiority. Now, all it could do was hide in Meng Hao's extremities, give up any notions of rising up, and hope Meng Hao did not attack any further.

Meng Hao took a deep breath as he looked up at the sixth Nascent Soul hovering near his head, the Wind Nascent Soul.

After a moment, his eyes gleamed with determination.

"Since I decided to be powerful, I might as well acquire the pinnacle of power!" Without hesitation, he lifted his right hand up and pointed at the Wind Nascent Soul. Instantly, it flickered and moved with incredible speed. It wasn't minor teleportation; it actually exceeded that. It immediately appeared inside of Meng Hao where it fused with the other Nascent Souls.

BOOMMMM!!!

The great circle of six elements! Six-Colored Nascent Soul!

Incredible battle prowess rocketed up, once again double. A fearsome aura equivalent to thirty-two peak late Nascent Souls emanated out, causing the Violet Sea to tremble. Everything shook. This was... Six-Colored Paragon!

Meng Hao could sweep across all Nascent Soul Cultivators. He was only a short way away from the Spirit Severing stage, and yet in all the lands of South Heaven, he was definitely... the number one person under the Spirit Severing stage!

If his Cultivation base could break through the late Nascent Soul stage to the great circle, then with his battle prowess of thirty-two times normal, then facing up against Spirit Severing Cultivators... he would not be so weak. He could be considered powerful enough to defend himself.

That might seem of little note, but Spirit Severing... was a stage of Cultivation that could be considered a major area of demarcation. Qi Condensation, Foundation Establishment, Core Formation, Nascent Soul.

These stages were actually still called the stages of... mortals!

By using incredible power, momentum was built up... all for the purpose of breaking through to a new type of life. Spirit Severing!

Spirit Severing, Dao Seeking, and Immortal Ascension were three stages that were called the stages of... Immortals!

The difference between mortals and Immortals was such that for someone in the mortal realm to actually be able to fight back against an almighty member of the Immortal realm would cause an incredible commotion in the entirety of South Heaven if word of it were to spread.

Normally something like that would only be possible with the aid of precious treasures. Only relying on one's body would make it impossible!

As of this moment, it was possible for Meng Hao.

When he reached the Six-Colored great circle, the Resurrection Lily inside of him began to tremble. Before it could tremble for too long, though, Meng Hao battered at it with all of the battle prowess of his Cultivation base.

Indescribable, shocking booming filled Meng Hao, like towers of thunder. The Resurrection Lily let out an unprecedented scream. All its defenses crumbled, incapable of standing up against Meng Hao's battle prowess and Divine Sense, which bore down into its very core.

It screamed and trembled, terrified. It possessed consciousness of its own, and in its memory, it couldn't recall ever feeling this hopeless. Originally, it should have been in a position above all other living things. Meng Hao was nothing but a host body for it. As of now, though, it was actually being possessed. It... was becoming a part of Meng Hao.

There was nothing it could do. Meng Hao's battle prowess of thirty two peak late Nascent Souls made it so that the Resurrection Lily could only watch in shock as Divine Sense was driven into its core. At this moment, its life or death was completely in Meng Hao's hands.

Meng Hao did not exterminate the Resurrection Lily, though. Instead, he branded its consciousness with a seal of his own.

“This seal is not indelible. A hundred years from now, if I can’t figure out a way to make a sixth petal appear, then I’ll exterminate you.

“If a sixth petal does appear, the seal will dissipate, and then you’ll have another chance to try to possess me. Then, you will be qualified... to try to fight me again!” Meng Hao’s cold words echoed out within the seal that he had placed on the Resurrection Lily’s consciousness. It trembled, in awe of Meng Hao but also filled with fierceness and lack of reconciliation. Suppressing its wild heart, it slowly calmed down.

Actually, what Meng Hao wanted was just that: the Resurrection Lily’s wild heart.

Having suppressed the Resurrection Lily, Meng Hao sat down cross-legged to study his expanding Cultivation base. As of now, he could clearly sense that his longevity, if it remained as it was now, would only last for three more years, perhaps a bit more.

“It’s too bad I don’t have a seventh Nascent Soul. It would leave me with only one year of longevity, but with a seventh Nascent Soul, I wonder... if I would be able to battle the Spirit Severing stage?” A bright gleam appeared in his eyes.

Suddenly, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a wooden box.

Looking at the box made him think of his Master, Pill Demon. The box had been given to him by Pill Demon, and it contained a medicinal pill which could not only suppress the the Resurrection Lily, but also help him achieve Cultivation base breakthroughs. It could also add to his longevity.

Throughout all the years, Meng Hao had never consumed even one. Now, however, he unhesitatingly took the pill out, made some copies, and put one in his mouth. He sat there cross-legged, meditating as the medicinal pill dissolved. His Cultivation base grew more stable, and his life force more vigorous. The power of growth appeared, fusing into his Six-Colored Nascent Soul, causing his longevity to instantly be replenished.

Moments later, after the pill had been fully absorbed, he made some more copies and then began to consume them. Several days passed, after

which, he opened his eyes from meditation. They glowed with a shocking brightness; his life force was now restored to what appeared to be roughly half of a sixty-year cycle.

His bag of holding was now devoid of Spirit Stones, and he had consumed many medicinal pills. However, he had actually managed to add almost one thousand years to his longevity. Unfortunately, the effectiveness of the medicinal pills was growing continuously weaker. In the end, they stopped working at all. That was generally how such longevity-increasing medicinal pills worked.

After all, life could not go past one thousand years. That rule could never be changed, and mortal power could never fight against it!

“It might seem like thirty years, but if I keep the six Nascent Souls dispersed under normal situations and only combine them under special circumstances, then my problem with the longevity will be resolved.” Now that Meng Hao didn’t have to worry about the longevity, he gave a long sigh. If only he had a seventh Nascent Soul... that would be far better.

Meng Hao stood up. As he did, popping sounds could be heard coming from within his body. He was now a full three heads taller than before. His shoulders were wider, but his body was even more slender.

His muscles hadn’t grown, but he was now clearly stronger and tougher. All of his blood and flesh was filled with shocking power. Blue veins bulged out, and every beat of his heart sent hot blood pumping throughout his body.

His physical body had also experienced an unprecedented increase in its toughness.

At the moment, he looked strange and bizarre, radiating an indescribably imposing bearing and force of attraction. He looked like something beyond the mortal world, something unprecedentedly mighty.

Suddenly, cracking sounds could be heard coming from his right hand. Meng Hao looked down to see the diaphanous Fang Clan glove exploding into tiny pieces.

The power of Meng Hao's own fist now exceeded that of the glove.

He quickly gathered up the pieces of the glove and put them into his bag of holding.

"Well then, this will now count as one my Divine Abilities. Six Animas Soul Transformations! Under normal circumstances, I will only reveal the power of the First Anima!" His eyes glittered, and the Six-Colored Nascent Soul within him trembled. Ghost images appeared; within the space of a few breaths, they broke apart, transforming once again into six different Nascent Souls. They sat cross-legged in Meng Hao's dantian region, meditating and cultivating.

Meng Hao's aura suddenly dropped down. His Cultivation base was once again at the peak of the late Nascent Soul stage. His body also changed. He was no longer so tall and mighty. He returned to his previous height, and the power in his flesh and blood returned to normal. His entire person now emanated the scholarly aura that it usually did.

After studying his Cultivation base for a moment to ensure that his method was correct and that the problem with the longevity had been solved, he looked up at the Violet Sea. There was no need for him to send out Divine Sense; the entire Violet Sea was his eyes. He could see the tempest growing in the sky above the Violet Sea. Lightning danced and Tribulation clouds surged.

His body flickered. Sounds like explosions could be heard in all directions as the Violet Sea around him turned into a huge vortex around. His body transformed into a beam of light that shot up from the depths of the Violet Sea toward the surface.

As he moved up, the vortex grew larger, causing the surface of the sea to roll with massive waves. It was as if the entire Violet Sea were letting out a cry that rose to the Heavens, welcoming Meng Hao as he rose up!

This was the first time in the more than one hundred years since Meng Hao descended to the depths of the seafloor... that he finally emerged in the outside world!

BOOM!

The Violet Sea roared as massive waves rolled out in all directions. Meng Hao stood there on the surface of the water, looking up at the Tribulation clouds up in the sky.

Boundless lightning crackled and boomed. It was as if upon finding Meng Hao, the Heavenly Tribulation was roaring at him.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he coolly said, "Heavenly Tribulation... I haven't seen you for ages!"

Chapter 525: Heavenly Tribulation, I Haven't Seen You For Ages!

Chapter 526: Title at the end!

“Up to this point, my life consisted of two parts,” Meng Hao murmured.

“The first part was beneath Mount Daqing, along the path of the Imperial examinations.... When I stood on top of Mount Daqing, wrote down my dream and stuffed it into that gourd bottle, then tossed it into the river below, I had no idea...

“That that very moment represented the beginning of the second part of my life.

“That second part was cultivation!” Meng Hao stood on the surface of the Violet Sea, wearing a spotless green robe. He did not sink down even a bit into the seawater. Instead, he looked up at the boundless lightning dancing about up above like red serpents. They interlocked, forming Tribulation Clouds.

“This past hundred years or more of cultivation allowed me to experience death and escape. I have experienced things that the old me would never have been able to experience, walked paths that before, I could never have walked to the end of.

“As for Heavenly Tribulation... I’ve experienced that too, more than once.

“This time, I will not be nervous like I was when I experienced the Heavenly Tribulation of the Perfect Foundation. I won’t take it as seriously as the year I faced the Perfect Gold Core Heavenly Tribulation. I’ve been waiting for today’s Heavenly Tribulation... for a long time.” A slight smile suddenly broke out on his face. Even as he murmured the words, a massive rumbling sound roared out from within the Tribulation clouds. At the same time, a red lightning bolt shot down toward Meng Hao.

As it neared, even more lightning bolts fused into it. By the time it was about thirty or so meters from Meng Hao’s head, it was as wide as a person’s arm. As it roared toward him, it carried with it the awe-inspiring power of Heavenly Tribulation, a detached desire to destroy.

Meng Hao looked up at the incoming Tribulation Lightning. Then, he lifted his right arm and waved it toward the sky. Instantly, life force collided with death will, transforming into a power of extermination that shot toward the lightning bolt.

A shocking boom filled the Heaven and the sea. The arm's-width sized lightning bolt instantly collapsed into countless arcs of electricity that scattered about into the air above Meng Hao.

"Before, Heavenly Tribulation like this would have destroyed me in both body and soul. Now, however... it doesn't even qualify to make me enter my Second Anima." Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he stood there motionless. He then... looked back up at the Heavenly Tribulation.

Meng Hao's behavior seemed to infuriate the Heavenly Tribulation. The lightning and thunder crashed about in the sky. One red lightning bolt after another began to form together and then fall down. This time, there were four bolts that descended. An earsplitting roar filled the air as the area for thirty meters around Meng Hao was transformed into a lake of lightning.

Each of the four red beams of lighting contained enough power to eradicate some of the late Nascent Soul stage. As they fell down, Meng Hao simply stood there and waved his sleeve, allowing the four lightning bolts to strike.

Red lightning danced around Meng Hao, spreading out across the Violet Sea, filling everything for several hundred meters in each direction.

As for Meng Hao, he simply stood there in the middle of the lightning, his entire body glowing with electrical light. The light quickly faded. In the space of only a few breaths it was completely gone. Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever, without even the slightest bit of change.

Currently, he was in the First Anima of the Six Animas Soul Transformations, with the full power of a peak late Nascent soul. Meng Hao had long since decided that this would be his normal state.

Although the lightning surrounding him was incredibly powerful and

out of the ordinary, it still was incapable of hurting him, despite the fact that he was only in the First Anima.

Meng Hao gently shook his arms and legs, feeling the power of lightning that had fused into his physical body. He had experienced this feeling in previous encounters with Heavenly Tribulation, so he wasn't surprised. He looked up, his eyes shining with a bright light.

Simultaneously, an enormous sound like an enraged roar filled the sky. Eight lightning bolts merged together in the air up above. The Tribulation Clouds seethed and then began to pull back. Thunder boomed as the eight lightning bolts began to fall.

These eight lightning bolts were bright red, almost like blood. Then fell down with intense destructive power, causing enormous pressure to bear down on Meng Hao. The pressure didn't cause Meng Hao to fall back, though. Instead, he began to laugh. A Demonic-looking glow radiated from his eyes.

"Now it's getting interesting. Second Anima!"

Of the six Nascent Souls inside Meng Hao, two overlapped and fused together. In the same moment, popping sounds could be heard from within Meng Hao as it swelled out. He grew half a head taller, and in the blink of an eye, he looked bigger than before.

His majestic aura exploded out, doubling. Now he possessed the battle prowess of two peak late Nascent Souls. Waves kicked up in the Violet Sea around him, sweeping out in all directions. It was as if a whirlwind had erupted out because of Meng Hao entering his Second Anima.

Laughing, Meng Hao did not retreat, but actually shot up into the air to attack the eight lightning bolts!

This was not passively reacting to the enemy, but taking the initiative to attack head on!

A huge boom echoed out as the eight lightning bolts slammed into him. An explosion of lightning burst out for hundreds of meters in every direction. Meng Hao was the center of it all, meeting the full force of the

Tribulation lightning head on. He rocketed forward, completely unharmed by the eight lightning bolts. They didn't even qualify to cause blood to ooze out from his mouth.

The Heavenly Tribulation seemed as if it possessed intelligence, and was currently furious. The sound of thunder filled the air. This time, eighteen red lightning bolts appeared. They looked like eighteen ferocious red dragons as they crackled through the air toward Meng Hao.

"Third Anima!" Meng Hao's eyes were now surging with an intense desire to fight.

His body grew again. He was now more than a full head taller and his body more cut and rough. Only a scrap of the aura of a scholar was left, and now, his aura was much more Demonic .

He flew up, performing an incantation gesture with his right hand as the eighteen lightning bolts fell. Suddenly, a multicolored light spread out, distorting the air as it slammed into the eighteen lightning bolts.

A huge boom caused everything to shake. Meng Hao laughed as the area for nearly three thousand meters became a maelstrom of lighting. However, it was powerless to obstruct his path. He continued to shoot upwards, his voice echoing out: "Fourth Anima!"

Instantly, roaring filled his body as it expanded again. He was now even more brutally powerful, two heads taller than before, his shoulders wide, his frame slender. The scholar's aura was completely gone, and the Demonic air was growing more intense.

He gave off the feeling of a Demonic monster; even though he was currently smiling, Meng Hao now looked evil.

Four Nascent Souls were overlapped and combined, equipping Meng Hao with the power of eight peak late Nascent Souls. He continued to shoot through mid-air toward the Tribulation clouds in the sky.

Even as Meng Hao increased his speed, the Tribulation clouds roiled. More than twenty bolts of lightning shot down, causing everything to shake, even the sea below. They continuously slammed into Meng Hao,

but were incapable of affecting him in any way. His right hand suddenly made a grasping motion in front of him, and an azure Immortal's Sword appeared there. His left hand slapped his bag of holding, and an alcohol flagon appeared.

He took a drink, then waved the sword, causing an azure beam of light to flicker out. Bolts of Tribulation Lightning exploded as they hit Meng Hao, causing countless sparks of electricity to fly about flickering into the air. More than a few fused into Meng Hao's body. Gradually, a will of lightning was building up inside of him.

Suddenly, the Tribulation Lightning being formed was no longer just red. More colors were added, a total of seven. They formed into a Seven-Colored Tribulation Lightning. It was one single bolt that seemed capable of ripping the air into pieces, a fierce Seven-Colored Dragon that pounced toward Meng Hao.

"Fifth Anima!"

Shocking popping sounds rang out from his body. He was now two and a half heads taller. His body was far more powerful, and the aura of his battle prowess exploded up. He now possessed power equivalent to sixteen peak late Nascent Souls. The sky and land dimmed, and the clouds seethed.

Meng Hao's body brimmed with incredible power. His hair whipped about and his eyes shone with a strange glow. As the Seven-Colored Heavenly lightning neared, the azure Immortal's Sword in his hand suddenly shot forward into it.

The Devil Spear magically appeared in his hand like a fierce dragon. Majestic black mist burst out, along with countless ferocious faces. It followed the azure Immortal's Sword toward the seven-colored Tribulation Lightning.

When the two forces slammed into each other, a huge boom could be heard. The seven-colored Tribulation Lightning exploded. The azure Immortal's Sword was sent spinning. The Devil Spear in Meng Hao's hand trembled and then exploded with a bang, transforming into a mist that

surged out. The mist seethed, then formed back again into the Devil Spear.

The shattered remnants of the seven colored Tribulation lightning became a seven-colored rain of lightning. It fell down in all directions, many of which fused into Meng Hao's body. The lightning that was building up inside of him was growing thicker and thicker.

A tremor ran through him, and blood oozed out of his mouth. He hovered there in mid-air, looking up. Suddenly, the Tribulation clouds began to shrink in on themselves. Seven-colored light spread out as the clouds rapidly began to transform into seven-colored clouds. Furthermore, from within the Tribulation clouds suddenly emerged a...

Gigantic finger formed from seven-colored lightning!!

The enormous finger was fully three thousand meters long and complexly composed of flickering, seven-colored lightning. Anyone who saw it would be completely astonished. As soon as it appeared, the enormous finger emitted a destructive pressure that bore down on Meng Hao as if it wished to squash him like an insect.

Even as the finger neared, Meng Hao's eyes narrowed and he cried, "Sixth Anima!"

All six Nascent Souls within him were now overlapped and combined. Six colors combined!

Boom!

He instantly grew taller, and his body more valiant. His shoulders were wide, his frame slender. There was now no scholar's aura whatsoever. The only thing he possessed... was breathtaking Demonic evil!

Beneath him, the Violet Sea roared. The vortex spun, sending crashing waves out. In his Sixth Anima, Meng Hao possessed more over thirty times the power of a peak late Nascent Soul. He now fully deserved to be referred to as the most powerful person under Spirit Severing in the lands of South Heaven!

Meng Hao kicked down violently into the air. A bang rang out as ripples appeared, and he shot up straight toward the seven-colored finger.

His right hand clenched violently into a fist. As the finger neared, a fierce glow appeared in his eyes. Then, he...

Punched!

Chapter 526: The Sixth Anima Rocks Heavenly Tribulation

Chapter 527: Title at the end!

It wasn't even worth describing how Meng Hao compared to the enormous finger if you looked at them from off in the distance. He really did look like a bug.

But who would care about that!?

When Meng Hao's fist struck the finger, an enormous boom shook the Heavens and the Violet Sea. Giant waves rolled out across the surface of the waters. Of course, only Meng Hao was there to see it; if anyone else did, it would probably be the most shocking thing they would ever see in their life.

As the explosive bang rang out, blood sprayed from Meng Hao's mouth. Although he was sent shooting backward, his laughter continued to echo in the area.

As he laughed, he looked up at the seven-colored finger and watched as it collapsed into countless pieces. A seven-colored lake of lightning was formed, composed of endless seven-colored arcs of electricity. Many of them bored into Meng Hao's body. Even as Meng Hao laughed, the Tribulation lightning...

Was completely destroyed!

Amidst the lingering echo, the Tribulation clouds up above were thinning, and seemed to be on the verge of dissipating. Apparently, this Heavenly Tribulation was quite simple for Meng Hao to overcome.

In truth, it was not. It was actually much more intense than the previous Tribulations. However, Meng Hao's feeling regarding it... was influenced by the fact that his more than one hundred years of secluded meditation ended with him rising to what was virtually the peak of the mortal realm in South Heaven!

Meng Hao wiped the blood from his mouth. In the Sixth Anima, he was at his strongest. He hovered for a moment in mid-air and then once again kicked down with his foot. A bang could be heard as he flew up toward the

dissipating Tribulation clouds.

Meng Hao knew that when the Tribulation clouds were spreading out like this, their destructive power was actually growing stronger. They seemed to be dissipating but actually... if he wasn't careful, he would surely perish.

In the moment in which Meng Hao charged in attack, a roaring sound suddenly could be heard from the thin Tribulation clouds. Suddenly, all the clouds rapidly contracted to form... a shocking, enormous fist!

The fist was formed completely of Tribulation clouds, within which swirled innumerable lightning bolts. Seven colors swirled about. This was no longer just lightning... it was the direct power of Tribulation clouds!!

All the Tribulation clouds had formed together into a Heavenly Tribulation, here to exterminate everything in existence.

Meng Hao rocketed through mid air, looking at the seething Tribulation clouds that had formed into an enormous fist. He could clearly sense the complete will of destruction therein.

His eyes glowed brightly as his left hand suddenly gestured down toward the sea beneath him.

“Violet Sea!”

The Violet Sea was him, and he was the Violet Sea!

Even as the words left his mouth, the entirety of the Violet Sea that was the Western Desert Apocalypse suddenly began to move. A huge vortex spun, causing massive waves to surge across the surface of the waters.

In the center of the vortex, which was directly beneath Meng Hao, a gigantic column of water suddenly rose up. It was thousands of meters wide and surrounded Meng Hao, making him its center as it shot into the air.

As the column of water shot into the air, the rest of the surface of the Violet Sea sank down. At the same time, the index finger of Meng Hao's right hand pointed down.

“Specters!”

The specters of all the neo-demons and Cultivators who had died in the Apocalypse now existed parasitically within the Violet Sea. Right now, they responded to Meng Hao’s summons, instantly surging in from all directions. They shot into the column of seawater, filling it, forming a soul of the column!

Except, that soul was fragmented. The true soul... was Meng Hao!

Boom!

The column of seawater, thousands of meters wide, shot out past Meng Hao, magically transforming into a gigantic arm!

Further up in the direction of the sky, the arm ended in a fist.

A violet fist and a violet arm. This was like... the arm of the Violet Sea!

If there had been any eyewitnesses observing from a distance, they would have felt an unprecedented level of shock, and would have had the image forever engraved in their minds.

What they would have seen was Tribulation clouds transformed into a fist, representing the Will of Heaven. Another fist stretched out from within the sea, representing the heart of the Apocalypse. One of these two enormous fists was descending from up above. The other rose up from the middle of the sea. There in mid-air... they slammed into each other.

The boom rang out in all directions, shaking Heaven and Earth, causing the Violet Sea to vibrate. This scene was indescribably shocking, so monstrous it was impossible to describe.

Transcending Tribulation in this fashion was unprecedented!

Before Meng Hao, no one had ever done anything like this, and after this day there would not likely be someone else who did!

The will of the Violet Sea had transformed into an arm that exterminated Heavenly Tribulation. The arm contained the pinnacle of the power of extermination, a power like that belonging to an enormous Greater Demon. If Meng Hao had not engaged in Demonic

Transmigration before, he would never have been able to do this.

Suddenly, the Tribulation Clouds emitted shocking, explosive claps of thunder. The lightning inside of the clouds exploded out, transforming into a roar that could be heard clearly even in the ten outpost cities on the surface of the sea.

Countless lightning bolts slammed into the power of extermination, and were then transformed into innumerable sparks of electricity. The electricity merged into the Violet Sea, causing large numbers of specters to vanish. Some of the electricity also merged into Meng Hao's body and spread out to fill it.

Finally, after the last bit of lightning dissipated, no more fist was visible. The lightning vanished. Since it was incapable of destroying Meng Hao, it seemed the Heavenly Tribulation chose to retreat.

As for the Violet Sea arm that Meng Hao was in, it lost its spirit, lost its will, and collapsed back down into the sea. A huge boom could be heard as the water spread back out into the sea, causing it to rise up once again.

Meng Hao hovered in mid-air, lightning sparking constantly through his body. He coughed up a big mouthful of blood and then shot back down toward the sea. Just when he was about to splash directly into the waters, he stopped to stand on its surface. Lightning danced about on his body. His face was pale as he looked up into the sky; the disappearing Tribulation clouds suddenly stopped in place.

It seemed that the Heavenly Tribulation had a bit of power left after all, and wanted to make one final strike of lightning!

Meng Hao's eyes narrowed and his Cultivation base began to rotate. Sharp pains stabbed out in his body and he coughed up some more blood. However, when he coughed up the blood, his mind suddenly trembled.

The reason was that within the blood he had just coughed up could be seen vast quantities of electric sparks. He could only imagine that right now he must look almost like a... human-shaped lightning bolt.

"Thunder. Lightning..." Meng Hao's mind shook, ignoring the

Tribulation clouds overhead, and everything else. His mind suddenly seemed to be filled with primordial chaos as an incredible, even astonishing, idea took form.

“Lightning is a manifestation of power, something that could form a totem tattoo.... In that case... it could also make... a Nascent Soul!! My seventh Nascent Soul.... Lightning Nascent Soul!

“If I can really form a seventh Nascent Soul, then when I entered the Seventh Anima, I would be able to wield battle prowess equivalent to sixty-four peak late Nascent Souls!

“No, that’s not right. It wouldn’t be a peak late Nascent Soul, it would be of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage!” Meng Hao was panting. Without hesitation, he produced all his remaining One Color Soul Procurement Pills from his bag of holding. Leaving only one as a backup, he placed the remainder into his mouth.

The instant the medicinal pills entered his mouth, he felt that special Divine Sense sweeping through his body. Suddenly, he experienced pain everywhere in his body.

As the pain appeared, strands of lightning were forced out of him. This lightning contained the power of Heavenly Tribulation both from the current Tribulation, as well as remnants left behind from the Perfect Gold Core and Perfect Foundation Tribulations. All of the lightning was forced out and then sucked into his dantian region.

In the blink of an eye, all of the sparks of electricity began to merge together. Meng Hao immediately sat down cross-legged on the surface of the sea. He ignored the Tribulation clouds up above and focused completely on meditation. More and more lightning sparks began to coalesce in his dantian.

All of the lightning in the entire area stopped moving and then was sucked toward Meng Hao. Lightning in both the air and the sea writhed and glowed as it bore into Meng Hao’s body and came to his dantian.

Using his body as the pill furnace, his will as the pill formula, and his life as the flame, he began to concoct!

The process was quick. In the blink of an eye, a roaring sound filled Meng Hao's mind as the lightning in his dantian region coalesced into a gigantic ball. The ball began to writhe and then shattered into pieces. A small, seven-inch tall person appeared!

The person looked exactly like Meng Hao in all respects. This was Meng Hao's seventh Nascent Soul, that by a random chance he had been able to concoct.... Lightning Nascent Soul!

As soon as the tiny person appeared, Meng Hao's Cultivation base exploded upward. This was no longer the peak of the late Nascent Soul stage. He had now broken through into... the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage!

His hair whipped about him as he rose up to the pinnacle of Nascent Soul power!

At the same time, the thin Tribulation Clouds up in the sky seemed to have been thoroughly provoked. No one ever dared to have a Cultivation base breakthrough in the middle of Heavenly Tribulation! On top of that, who had ever dared to absorb the power of the Tribulation itself?!

All of this caused the Tribulation clouds to disperse and then transform... into a human-shaped lightning bolt!

The lightning bolt wasn't complete, and was in fact a bit blurry, its features unclear. However, it still emanated a terrifying and shocking pressure. Instantly, it shot toward Meng Hao.

"Seventh Anima!" Meng Hao's eyes shone with a destructive light as the Lightning Nascent Soul overlapped and then combined with the other Nascent Souls to push Meng Hao into the Seventh Anima.

Boom!!

Meng Hao's body was already incredibly powerful. But now, it changed again. He was again taller, even more valiant. He was now not Demonically evil, but rather, more like an Immortal Devil!

His long hair whipped about and his body radiated a fearsome aura of destruction. Now that he had entered the Seventh Anima, he exploded

with... the power of sixty four great circle Nascent Souls.

As of this moment, Meng Hao... was not just the number one figure under the Spirit Severing stage. Right now, if he ran into a Spirit Severing Cultivator... he might lose in the end, but he could still offer up a fight!

Chapter 527: Seventh Anima!!

Chapter 528: I Saw the Nightmare

In the Seventh Anima, Meng Hao's power was completely unprecedented. His body was mighty, fearsome, and shocking. With wide shoulders and slender frame, he was almost three meters tall. It made him look completely like an Immortal Devil.

A fearsome aura erupted out from him, transforming into an invisible whirlpool that swept about, shaking everything. The Violet Sea churned and the sky dimmed.

The Tribulation clouds disappeared, having given birth to the human-shaped lightning bolt, which shot through mid-air toward Meng Hao. Meng Hao looked up at it, his hair whipping about. His appearance seemed to contain a force of attraction that no living thing could resist. He suddenly stamped his foot.

Boom!

The entire Violet Sea jumped up as a huge crater appeared in the water beneath Meng Hao, nearly three thousand meters wide. Seawater surged out in all directions as Meng Hao shot up.

His expression was cold, his eyes icy. In this moment, he was experiencing a completely unheard type of power as the battle prowess of sixty four great circle Nascent Souls coursed through him.

Such power could not even be compared to sixty four peak late Nascent Souls. As of now, he was thoroughly up above everything else... definitely rated as... the number one person under the Spirit Severing stage, among all Sects, all Clans, and all Chosen in the great lands of South Heaven.

In fact... you could say that he was halfway to Spirit Severing!

"Seven Animas combined. Seven Nascent Souls combined...." His expression was cold as he shot forward in attack. As he closed in on the human-shaped lightning bolt, he did not employ any Divine Abilities nor any magical techniques. It seemed as if every movement he made was with a deliberate and calculated. As they neared each other, Meng Hao

lifted his hand and pointed a finger.

The pointing of the finger caused a huge roaring sound to be heard. The human-shaped lightning bolt looked as if it were being slammed by an incredible force. It was sent tumbling backward twenty or twenty-five meters, where it then exploded. Moments later, it reformed about thirty meters away, even more blurry than before.

At the same time, countless lightning bolts exploded on Meng Hao's body, writhing about on his skin. Meng Hao suddenly laughed.

"That's all you've got?" he said, killing intent glittering in his eyes. In the Seventh Anima, he had the power of sixty four great circle Nascent Souls; he was so powerful that this type of electricity couldn't possibly hurt him.

Even as he spoke, the human-shaped lightning bolt reappeared off in the distance. Meng Hao began to move forward, and a rumbling sound could be heard as his body disappeared. When it reappeared, it was directly in front of the human-shaped lightning bolt. The speed with which he moved was incredible; it happened literally in the blink of an eye.

Meng Hao's eyes were cold as he clenched his right hand into a fist and then slammed into the chest of the human-shaped figure.

BAM!

The human-shaped lightning bolt's body began to explode. Before it completely shattered into pieces, however, its hand shot out claw-like to scrape viciously at Meng Hao's chest.

The sound that was emitted sounded like metal crashing against metal. Meng Hao's clothing was torn to shreds, and the claw ripped his skin. However, it couldn't penetrate any further than that. All it could do was scratch him.

The human-shaped lightning bolt stared in shock. A booming could be heard as it completely exploded. Innumerable flashes of lightning roiled out. Thirty meters away, they once again congealed together.

Meng Hao didn't even glance at this injury. To him, such a flesh wound was inconsequential. His body flickered and then disappeared. Moments

later, he reappeared in the air above the human-shaped lightning bolt.

“Time to end this!” he said coolly as he hovered there in mid-air. He raised his hand up and then chopped it down.

Violet Qi Guillotine!

This was a simple magical technique which coalesced Violet Qi into an enormous curved blade, hundreds of meters long. As it chopped down, the human-shaped lightning bolt felt a sense of deadly crisis. Instantly, its body exploded out with the glow of lightning. The light then coalesced into an enormous lightning globe.

The instant the lightning globe appeared, the Violet Qi Guillotine sliced into it. In that moment, popping sounds could be heard from the lightning sphere, seemingly the roar of countless bolts of lightning. However... it was incapable of preventing itself from being chopped apart.

During the space of a few breaths, rumbling booms filled the air as the gigantic lightning sphere collapsed into pieces. Within was revealed the human-shaped lightning bolt, which was now so blurry it was almost transparent. Before it could even move, the Violet Qi Guillotine was upon it, slashing onto its body. A boom could be heard as the figure was cut directly in half!

Rumbling sounds echoed about as the human-shaped lightning bolt, having been cut in half, collapsed into pieces, transforming into a lightning-like glow that spread out in all directions and then faded.

By the time the human-shaped lightning bolt vanished, the Tribulation clouds up had long since dissipated, and the sky was now back to normal.

Meng Hao now returned from the Seventh Anima back to the First Anima. His face was a bit pale, and he looked extremely tired.

“The Seventh Anima really does a number on my body and longevity. I can’t stay in it for too long without injuring myself.” He descended down to the surface of the Violet Sea where he sat cross-legged to breathe deeply and restore his body.

“Compared to the Seventh Anima, the Sixth Anima is a bit less draining.

The less Nascent Souls I combine, the less waste there is, and the more I can ignore it.

“So, these are my Seven Animas Soul Transformations!” His eyes shined with a bright light. Everything that had happened, the struggle with the Resurrection Lily, the battle against the Heavenly Tribulation, the creation of the Seven Animas Soul Transformations, were all testimony to the fact that he had stepped foot onto the path of a truly powerful expert.

“From now on, my travels in the great lands of South Heaven will be as boundless as the sea and sky. Meng Hao can go... anywhere he wants!” He looked up and toward the East, the direction of the Eastern Lands and the Great Tang.

His dream in the past had always been to travel to the Great Tang of the Eastern Lands, and he had never forgotten that.

At the moment, he was finally qualified to cross the Milky Way Sea and visit that very place.

Meng Hao’s heart suddenly quivered. His Divine Sense sank into the blood-colored mask and coalesced near the mastiff. He was pleasantly surprised to find that along with his own rise in Cultivation base, the mastiff was almost awake.

In fact, Meng Hao could tell that it wouldn’t be long before it would be able to leave the world of the blood-colored mask, and exist in the lands of South Heaven.

Meng Hao retracted his Divine Sense. Smiling, he took a deep breath and then closed his eyes to continue adjusting his Cultivation base. During the process of pacifying the Heavenly Tribulation, he actually had sustained some internal injuries.

For the past hundred years or more, the skies above the Western Desert had been dark and overcast. Now, perhaps because of the Heavenly Tribulation, they were now sunny and bright, for the first time in a very long time.

Light pierced through the clouds to fall onto the Violet Sea and down

into its waters. The result was a scene of indescribable beauty. Meng Hao sat in the middle of all of it on the surface of the sea. His body was no longer fearsomely powerful. Instead, the air of a scholar once again emanated out from him. He sat there peacefully, his eyes closed.

In this moment, the entire world seemed beautiful and calm. Only the gently undulating waves could be seen moving....

Unfortunately, a few days later, some uninvited guests disturbed the tranquility.

There was a sedan chair carried by four black-robed men who looked somewhat distorted, as if they existed halfway between being illusory and real. The sedan chair's curtains had long since been opened, and within could be seen a middle-aged man dressed in expensive clothing.

He was currently drinking some fine alcohol. Laying next to him was a withered corpse. The corpse was naked and looked old, as if it had just been dug out of a grave. If you looked closely, though, you could see that the desiccated corpse had once been a beautiful woman.

As of now, her life force had long since vanished. A fatal wound could be seen, a dark bruise on her neck. Her neck itself was twisted at an odd angle, making the entire picture a ghastly sight.

The person who had killed her was currently leaning up against her corpse, drinking fine alcohol and gently caressing her.

"How strange," said the man. "The Miracle Lightning was obviously gathering in this area. It's gone now, though, as of a few days ago. How come there doesn't seem to be anything at all in the area?" This middle-aged man was none other than the man who had left the second outpost city that day, Huyan Qing. He was the only son of Spirit Severing Patriarch Huyan Yunming of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, one of the three major powers of the Heavenly Court Alliance!

Surrounding the sedan chair were seven old men, who followed along silently. Among the seven, the strongest was an old man named Wu, who was shockingly of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage. A Cultivation base like that would make him an incredible power in any area. Even

Spirit Severing Patriarchs would pay close attention to such a figure, and spare no effort to enlist their services.

Having heard the Huyan Qing's words, the old men instantly began to chuckle and offer up words of encouragement.

"Young Master, there's no need to be anxious. There are no living people in this part of the sea. If a precious treasure really did appear in the area, then it will belong to nobody except you."

"That's right. Besides, when we arrived, we checked the area and even set up spell formations. We could tell from a distance that the undulations of the Tribulation Lightning had vanished, and that was when we entered. We are certainly the first people to enter the area to investigate."

The only person who didn't speak was Sir Wu. He frowned as he looked around. He wasn't sure why, but after entering this area, he seemed to have the jitters. It was as if this was an area of grave danger, as if some terrifying presence were lurking about.

The feeling was indistinct and mysterious. However, Sir Wu couldn't stop thinking about it. Even as the group was proceeding along as normal, they all suddenly stopped.

All eyes came to fall on a young man off in the distance. He wore a green robe, and was sitting cross-legged on the surface of the water, meditating.

He looked like the type of person who would bring harm to neither humans nor animals. He seemed clean and peaceful, and exuded the air of a scholar as he sat there cross-legged and unmoving.

It was impossible to clearly see the level of his Cultivation base. At first glance it was of the early Nascent Soul stage, but upon closer inspection it seemed to be of the mid Nascent Soul stage. After that, it jumped to the late Nascent Soul stage; for a moment it even seemed as if it might be at the great circle!

The sight of it instantly caused Sir Wu to be on guard. In fact, looking at Meng Hao caused him to feel as if a needle were pricking the back of his neck. The feeling caused his eyes to glow.

For some reason, he had the feeling that there was something not quite right about this person.

The other six Nascent Soul Cultivators were all surprised and wore serious expressions. For a strange Cultivator to suddenly appear in a bizarre place like this was something that would obviously cause them to be cautious.

*

Note from Er Gen: I really like the title of this chapter. There is absolutely no hipster or “fake” feeling about it. It makes me think of a Korean movie I saw once.

The name of that movie was I Saw the Devil.

I originally planned to call the chapter I Saw Meng Hao but... in the end I called it I Saw the Nightmare.

Chapter 529: Seeking Death Repeatedly

Despite their caution, their end judgement was that even if this person had a high Cultivation base, they were seven in number, one of whom was of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, two were of the late Nascent Soul stage, and four were of the mid stage. Such a force could be referred to as ultimately powerful.

If that weren't the case, why else would Huyan Yunming send them to escort his only son in the outside world?

Even still, all of them felt as if something were off, although they couldn't place the reason.

"Hey hey, so there's someone out here meditating!" said Huyan Qing with a scornful laugh. He leaned up against the corpse of the woman as he looked out at Meng Hao. "Look up at me and tell me your name. Also, take out your bag of holding. Presumably, whatever precious treasure caused the Miracle Lightning will be on your person!"

He couldn't see Meng Hao's Cultivation base, but in his entire life, he never actually looked at anyone's Cultivation base. That was because he didn't need to. It wasn't necessary. His father was a Spirit Severing Patriarch. That was enough in and of itself.

Throughout his life, it didn't matter who he was dealing with, he never cared about that person's Cultivation base. Because of the stage his father was in, anyone who dared to provoke him would end up dead in body and spirit.

That point had been proven countless times. It also caused Huyan Qing to grow quite comfortable with such lofty arrogance.

However, even as the words left his mouth, Sir Wu's face flickered and his body quivered. He suddenly realized why he had such an odd feeling.

"This young man... is sitting cross-legged on the Violet Sea itself!!"

Sir Wu gasped, and his mind trembled. Earlier, he had felt something was off, but had overlooked the Violet Sea. Now, all of a sudden, he

realized that this man was sitting directly on top of a thick aura of death. Even he himself feared touching the sea and would not continue to do so for any length of time.

At the same time, the faces of the other six Nascent Soul Cultivators also fell. Their eyes went wide as they realized how fearsome and bizarre Meng Hao was.

In the same moment in which the seven of them came to the same realization, Meng Hao's eyes snapped open. He looked over the group of people, his gaze eventually coming to fall upon Huyan Qing.

With the exception of Sir Wu, the seven Nascent Soul Cultivators all felt their minds shaking. Meng Hao's gaze was like a stabbing sword that pierced into their minds and transformed into roaring.

Even Sir Wu had a look of intense concentration.

"The great circle of the Nascent Soul Stage!"

"He's of the great circle!" All of the other six Nascent Soul Cultivators had the same reaction when they realized the level of Meng Hao's Cultivation base. Deep in their hearts they all breathed sighs of relief.

The intrepidity of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage... was something that they didn't fear. Sir Wu was also of the great circle. Furthermore, they were backed by the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe and Patriarch Huyan.

As soon as Meng Hao's gaze fell onto Huyan Qing, a roaring filled the man's brain, and his body began to tremble. The wine cup in his hand dropped to the floor, spilling alcohol all over him in the process. The hand that had been stroking the corpse suddenly began to shake.

Meng Hao retracted his gaze, ignoring the group. He coolly said one sentence: "What you're looking for isn't here. Go away."

Meng Hao had sensed this group long before they had arrived. Their goal in coming was clear, and the piercing gaze he had given them moments ago was merely a threat and a warning. Having finished speaking, Meng Hao closed his eyes again.

Now that Meng Hao had retracted his gaze, Huyan Qing came to his senses. He took a deep breath, and after a final quiver, his eyes went wide and he glared hatefully at Meng Hao. "Such gall!!" he cried.

Facing an intimidating threat like Meng Hao, some people would retreat to avoid any difficulties. Others, however, due to their background, would be unable to accept such a threat being levied against them. People like that, with low Cultivation bases but incredible arrogance and haughtiness, would only have their pride wounded.

Huyan Qing was just such a person. The shame just now was fueling his anger. He could not accept being threatened to the extent that he actually felt fear. He was the only son of Patriarch Huyan. He was a noble Chosen of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe. Virtually no one in the entire Black Lands would dare to provoke him. No matter where he went, he was a blazing sun that everyone respected.

And yet here today, in this place, he had been threatened by the gaze of a Cultivator. Huyan Qing's dignity had been threatened!

From the time he was small until now, there had never been even one Cultivator who dared to act aggressively toward him. Meng Hao's actions might seem normal to any other person, but to Huyan Qing, it was wild arrogance!

For years, he had existed in a position far above others. No one had ever dared to level such a gaze against him, nor to cause his mind to tremble. In his mind, he had just been humiliated in a way that he couldn't accept.

"Kill him! Kill him for me this instant!" he roared, rising to his feet, his face twisted with rage as he glared at Meng Hao. "No one has ever dared to act in such a way in front of me. You're DEAD!"

Sir Wu's face sank, and inwardly, he was cursing. He had known all along that Huyan Qing never thought things through, and on top of that, was arrogant and despotic. However, he had never imagined that he could possibly be this idiotic.

There was really no good reason for Huyan Qing to make such a demand. Just now, this man had merely looked at them and then spoken

some non-threatening words. Considering he was of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, his vague words were not out of the ordinary.

Sir Wu was just about to speak up when, suddenly, the eyes of the four black-robed men near Huyan Qing suddenly filled with killing intent. Instantly, the men vanished. When they reappeared, they had Meng Hao surrounded. Within the hand of each black-robed man was a gleaming flying sword. Filled with killing intent, the men charged at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao sighed softly. He hadn't desired to do any killing today. He was like a tree who wanted peace, except the wind wouldn't stop blowing.

"Well in that case, I guess you won't be leaving," said Meng Hao coolly. His eyes opened, although he completely ignoring the incoming flying swords.

The moment his eyes opened, and indescribable killing intent rose up to the Heavens. It exploded out with shocking intensity, causing the clouds to churn and everything to dim. He was like some sort of primordial beast, climbing up out from the depths.

The killing intent was thick, and invisible, but as it emanated out, the faces of the four black-robed instantly fell. They were vicious Cultivators who would kill without batting an eyelid. Over the years, they had killed many, many people. Normally speaking, they were cold and detached. However, facing such indescribable killing intent such as Meng Hao's caused their faces to fall.

Compared to Meng Hao, their tiny collections of killing intent were like fireflies, whereas Meng Hao... was the bright moon!

What they didn't know was that this was actually only ten percent of Meng Hao's killing intent.

Bang!

Four flying swords exploded into fragments that then transformed into ash. The bodies of the black-robed men began to shake, and then blood sprayed from their mouths. Their minds felt like paste, as if some massive power were crushing down onto them. They tumbled backward, but before

they could fall back more than thirty meters, their heads suddenly exploded.

Their mangled bodies fell down into the Violet Sea, sinking down beneath the waves, never to be seen again.

A deathly silence filled the air. Huyan Qing's eyes went wide and filled with disbelief. The seven Nascent Soul Cultivators' faces were filled with unprecedentedly serious looks. Swishing sounds could be heard as six of them instantly moved to surround Huyan Qing. Sir Wu appeared in front of all of them, his face grim as he looked at Meng Hao.

"Fellow Daoist," said Sir Wu, clasping his hands, "we are from the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe of the Heavenly Court Alliance in the Black Lands. Everything before was a misunderstanding, Fellow Daoist. Please forgive us."

Meng Hao looked at him coldly, then looked at the people behind him. Having heard that they were from the Heavenly Court Alliance in the Black Lands, he suddenly thought of the Golden Crow Clan. He then slowly nodded his head. "Since it was just a misunderstanding, we can let the matter drop. Please take your leave posthaste."

Sir Wu heaved an inward sigh of relief. Even though he was of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, the pressure he felt pressing down from Meng Hao was incredible. He had no desire whatsoever to fight him.

However, even as Sir Wu was about to clasp hands and fall back, Huyan Qing's eyes suddenly filled with a savage light.

"So, it turns out this guy puts on a strong front but is actually a weakling!" Huyan Qing had been incredibly shocked and even filled with fear when Meng Hao killed his four black-robed guards. However, seeing that he was willing to compromise after hearing that they were from the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, his heart filled with evil thoughts.

"I said before to kill him!" he said, his voice grim. "All of you, get out there and kill him!" He laughed coldly. "Sir Wu, you promised my father that you would keep me safe during our journeys. You even promised to help me with my cultivation. This guy's Cultivation base is obviously

incredible, and I've taken a liking to it. Kill him for me, and before he dies, I'll consume it!"

His eyes radiated an intense light as he lifted his hand and held out a command medallion. "I order all of you. Kill him!"

Meng Hao's expression never changed. He watched calmly as the scene unfolded. After the medallion appeared, the faces of Sir Wu and the six other old men instantly fell. Moments later, four of the group performed minor teleportations as they approached him. They figured that it didn't matter that they weren't a match for Meng Hao. All they had to do was pin him down. The person to do the actual killing would naturally be Sir Wu.

"Oh well," sighed Sir Wu. "I guess this guy is just unlucky!" Clenching his teeth, he turned toward Meng Hao. Suddenly, his great circle Nascent Soul Cultivation base exploded with power.

"You're dead!!" Huyan Qing began to laugh maniacally.

As the four mid Nascent Soul Cultivators neared, Meng Hao's eyes glittered with the desire to kill. The killing intent that exploded out from him this time was thirty percent! His voice cool, he said, "Looking to die?"

The killing intent roared out, causing the faces of the four mid Nascent Soul stage old men to fill with astonishment. Suddenly, Meng Hao vanished like a ghost. When he reappeared, he was behind one of the mid Nascent Soul stage Cultivators. His expression was cool, and his hair whipped about as he lifted up his right hand and tapped the man.

Death aura and life force mingled, transforming into a fearsome power of extermination. The Nascent Soul Cultivator was absolutely powerless to resist, and instantly exploded.

Chapter 530: Slaughter!

From the very beginning, Meng Hao had kept his Cultivation base in the First Anima, which possessed the battle prowess of one great circle Nascent Soul. However, because of his incredible foundation, his battle prowess actually far exceeded anyone in the same stage as him.

His attack exploded with the power of extermination.

The exterminating power stemmed from Meng Hao's Violet Sea and blood totems. They combined to form a powerful Water-type totem that contained both life and death. In Meng Hao's hands, it formed an essence that could send a life back to the dust.

The mid Nascent Soul Cultivator's death happened incredibly quickly, literally in the blink of an eye. Everyone watching was instantly shaken mentally. Even Huyan Qing just stood there with that wicked smile of his plastered on his face.

Sir Wu took a deep breath. As he thought about, he realized that although he could kill a mid Nascent Soul stage Cultivator, it wouldn't be possible for him to do so as casually as Meng Hao just had.

"Now that we've attacked, we have to kill him!" thought Sir Wu, sighing inwardly. His eyes glittered with killing intent as he went on the attack, shooting toward Meng Hao. As he neared, his right hand lifted up in a clawing gesture. Instantly, the air around him transformed into a yellow river filled with roaring waters and yellow sand. It looked like a yellow dragon as it swept out in all directions. In the blink of an eye, it had enveloped the entire area. Shockingly, it then became a spell formation.

Within the spell formation, yellow sand roared up into the air. A raging wind screamed, transforming into a vortex. It was like a Wind Dragon and a Yellow Dragon, interlocked, pinning Meng Hao down inside.

At the same time, killing intent radiated out of Sir Wu's eyes. His body flickered as he entered the spell formation, his right hand flashing an incantation gesture. Countless green leaves magically appeared, each one of which contained destructive power. They swirled around, congealing

together rapidly to form one sharp sword after another.

Almost in the same moment that the spell formation finished forming, Sir Wu was closing in on Meng Hao. At this point, Meng Hao suddenly disappeared again. When he reappeared, he was next to another of the mid Nascent Soul stage Cultivators. He reached out in a seemingly leisurely fashion toward the shocked man, then tapped on his forehead.

BAM!

The power of extermination once again appeared. The old mid Nascent Soul stage Cultivator's body instantly exploded.

As he died, another Nascent Soul Cultivator suddenly appeared behind Meng Hao. Around his body rotated nine spinning awls which send out pulsing whimpers and were surrounded by a pulsating green aura that seemed to be filled with extremely toxic poison. The green aura blasted against Meng Hao's face.

Meng Hao's expression was calm as he completely ignored the poison weapons. He simply raised his hand and pointed.

Demon Sealing, Eighth Hex.

The single finger cast a powerful hex which caused the late Nascent Soul Cultivator's body to shake. He suddenly stopped moving, and was stuck there in midair. Having lost his connection to his magical items, they then fell down into the Violet Sea. The man's body hovered in the air motionless. Shock filled his face as he realized that even his Cultivation base was completely sealed.

"This...." He couldn't feel shocked for long, because Meng Hao passed him and flicked his sleeve. Roaring waves suddenly surged up from the Violet Sea below, completely submerging the old man.

Meanwhile, Sir Wu was closing in. Meng Hao turned, completely ignoring him. He waved his arm, causing a bloody glow to rise up into the sky. Shockingly, an enormous blood-colored face suddenly appeared.

This was the Blood Immortal divine ability. As of now, Meng Hao didn't need to wear the mask to unleash it. As of this point, the mask... could be

done without.

The battle power of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage gathered within the blood-colored mask. Sir Wu's face filled with shock as the face slammed into him with an enormous boom. The leaves surrounding him shattered into pieces, and he was sent tumbling backward, blood spraying from his mouth. Before he could emerge from within the sandstorm spell formation, Meng Hao teleported behind him, then lifted up his right hand and pointed.

Boom!

A jade slip appeared in front of Sir Wu. It emanated a soft glow which resisted Meng Hao's finger. However, it only lasted for the space of three breaths before it collapsed.

Sir Wu coughed up more blood. However, he used the three breaths worth of time to employ a blood escape technique to speed away. Even as the blood escape technique was unleashed, Meng Hao's cold voice could be heard in his ear.

"Blood?"

It was only a single word, but it caused a roaring to fill Sir Wu's body. Even in the midst of using his magical escape technique, he was injured again. His face fell. Disregarding the pain, he quickly retrieved a second jade slip from his bag of holding which he violently crushed between his fingers. Another protective shield spread out to surround him and defend against Meng Hao's second finger attack.

A popping sound rang out as the second shield shattered. Sir Wu was finally able to flee outside of the sandstorm spell formation. In that instant, he lifted his head up and roared. Hair disheveled, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing the spell formation's sandstorm to whip about and block the area between him and Meng Hao.

As soon as the sandstorm touched Meng Hao, he stopped moving, unable to continue forward. He looked up and saw Sir Wu on the other side, wiping the blood from the corner of his mouth and staring back tenaciously at him.

Sir Wu was filled with shock. Just now, their brief encounter in the spell formation caused him to realize just how valiant and fearsome Meng Hao was. If it weren't for the two life-saving jade slips bestowed upon him by Patriarch Huyan, he would certainly have perished just now.

"Guard the spell formation with all your power," he said through clenched teeth. "This man must die!"

The faces of the remaining three Nascent Soul Cultivators were pale. The scene they had just witnessed had left them completely shaken. Huyan Qing's eyes were wide with disbelief.

The sandstorm was filled with shocking killing intent as it closed in around Meng Hao. On the outside, Sir Wu's eyes filled with a strange glow. He flashed a double-handed incantation, causing the sandstorm to tighten around Meng Hao. The other three Nascent Soul Cultivators went all out with the power of their Cultivation bases to assist.

Meng Hao began to move forward. Booming sounds filled the air as the Wind Dragon and the Yellow Dragon inside of the spell formation roared and interlocked. Meng Hao's body trembled and he was forced backwards a few paces, his eyes shining with a strange light.

"Interesting," he said coolly. "It has some impressive sealing power." Outside the spell formation, Sir Wu smiled coldly. He performed an incantation with his right hand and then pointed forward.

"Eight Dragons Defense Expulsion!" Suddenly, a second Wind Dragon appeared within the spell formation, then a third, then a fourth. Three more Yellow Dragons also appeared.

In total, there were eight dragons cycling about. Their appearance caused the spell formation to be even more shocking than before. Each grain of sand in the storm was equipped with the power of an early Nascent Soul stage Cultivation base. The dense masses of sand suddenly began to congeal together, rapidly transforming into more than ten figures. More sand began to congeal, and more figures appeared.

This spell formation was Sir Wu's trump card. Considering how seriously he took Meng Hao, he didn't hesitate to use the spell formation's

true power.

This aspect was not actually a formation, but rather, the magical manifestation of a divine ability. In the past, he had relied on its intense power to kill three powerful experts of the same level as himself.

Seeing that Meng Hao was incapable of escaping from within the spell formation, Huyan Qing breathed a sigh of relief. He stood there in the sedan chair, laughing.

“Let’s see how you charge out now! Sir Wu’s Sandstorm Noose has been praised even by my father. You’re dead! No one has ever dared to provoke me. Since you did, since you dared to threaten me, you’re going to die!”

Meng Hao smiled a cold smile. As the spell formation rotated around him, four of the dragons emitted roars of shocking power. There were now over twenty congealed sand figures as well. Each of the figures possessed a Cultivation base of the mid Nascent Soul stage. Harboring no fear of death whatsoever, they immediately charged directly toward Meng Hao. They did not unleash divine abilities, but rather....

“BURST!” howled Sir Wu. This was the deadly function of the spell formation, the self-detonation of the divine ability!

Every detonation was completely equivalent to the self-detonation of a mid Nascent Soul stage Cultivator. The power of twenty mid Nascent Soul stage self-detonations was something that would strike fear into the heart of even someone of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage.

By relying on the power of this spell formation’s divine ability, Sir Wu had earned a high reputation in the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe. Throughout all the Black Lands, he was ranked as one of the most powerful experts under the Spirit Severing stage. Were that not the case, Patriarch Huyan would not have assigned him the job of protecting his only son.

Right now, his expression was calm and his heart proud as he looked coldly at Meng Hao within the spell formation.

“It doesn’t matter how shocking your Cultivation base is. Within my eight dragons spell formation, you can only curse your own bad luck.

There is no one else to blame.”

The other three old men outside the spell formation wore expressions of pleasant surprise, along with vicious, murderous intent. They smiled coldly as they looked at Meng Hao, who seemed to be trapped like a cornered beast within the spell formation.

Huyan Qing’s laughter became ear-splitting.

Within the spell formation, Meng Hao watched on as the twenty mid Nascent Soul figures began to self-detonate, then coolly said, “Interesting. I never imagined that after coming out of secluded meditation that I would run into someone so strong. It looks like you have the qualifications to make me enter my...

“Second Anima!”

Boom!

Meng Hao’s body instantly grew more powerful. He grew half a head taller, and his shoulders widened. His physical body grew stronger as he was filled with the battle prowess of two great circle Nascent Souls. When he looked up, his eyes shone brightly. Popping sounds could be heard coming from within his body as his aura climbed up. Instantly, the faces of the Cultivators outside of the spell formation filled with intense shock.

It was at this moment that the more than twenty mid Nascent Soul self-detonations exploded out. The power unleashed was shocking, but Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever. He moved forward through the explosions, which didn’t even cause him to tremble in the slightest. The sight caused Sir Wu to gasp. His pupils constricted; he was stupefied.

As for the three other old men, they were even more astonished and filled with disbelief.

“Just... just what level Cultivation base does he have?!?!”

Even as shock caused the four men’s hearts to tremble, Meng Hao shot up into the air. He flew with incredible speed toward Sir Wu. A boom could be heard as he burst out from within the spell formation. The eight dragons roared and tried to encircle him, but Meng Hao waved his hand

toward them. Instantly... eight enormous blood-red faces appeared. As soon as they appeared, they exploded, transforming into an attack that swept out in all directions.

Eight bloodcurdling howls could be heard as the dragons were shredded into pieces. The sandstorm spell formation shuddered three times, and then collapsed into fragments. Everyone on the outside of the spell formation was filled with shock. Meng Hao suddenly disappeared, then reappeared directly in front of shocked Sir Wu.

The collapse of the spell formation caused Sir Wu to cough up a mouthful of blood. However, he was an old hand at close-quarters combat. Without hesitation, he fell back, both hands flashing in an incantation gesture. Instantly, wind and sand surrounded him, forming a shield, along with a third jade slip, adding even more protective power.

Unfortunately... as soon as Meng Hao appeared, he pointed with his finger. The shield of wind and sand was ripped apart. The light from the jade slip lasted only for the space of a single breath before collapsing. Sir Wu let out a miserable, despairing cry as Meng Hao's finger tapped onto his forehead.

All it took was one tap.

Bam!

The power of extermination exploded out within Sir Wu. His body exploded out in all directions. It didn't matter that he was of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage. Meng Hao was currently equipped with twice that level of power. As for Sir Wu... how could he possibly fight back?!

Chapter 531: Karma Threads!

As of this moment, the three old men off to the side were shaking, and their faces were filled with dumbstruck despair. Fear inundated their hearts; this shadow of death which lurked over them far exceeded the mission they had been given by Patriarch Huyan.

Without the slightest hesitation, the three Nascent Soul Cultivators turned and used their most powerful escape arts to flee at top speed. They went all out. One of them, of the mid Nascent Soul stage, crushed a violet-colored jade slip between his fingers, causing a violet glow to surround his body and then propel him away with explosive speed.

Another mid Nascent Soul Cultivator, having witnessed the failure of Sir Wu's blood escape art, and how he was even injured by using it, didn't dare to use the same technique. Instead, he drew upon the life power of his own Nascent Soul, ignoring the fact that it began to wither as a result. He shot away at incredible speed off into the distance.

The final Cultivator had the highest Cultivation base of all, the late Nascent Soul stage. As he fled, he produced a crude Feng Shui compass from his bag of holding which he tossed out in front of him. It immediately emanated three glowing bands of light which stabbed into the air up ahead and then... ripped open a fissure!

Without looking back, he dove into the fissure, the only thing on his mind being escape.

He was already completely shaken and filled with ultimate dread by Meng Hao.

As for Huyan Qing, he was completely stunned by everything that had just happened. His body was shaking and his breath came in ragged pants. His scalp was numb, and his heart was filled with intense regret.

Seeing Sir Wu explode caused his face to drain of blood, and cold sweat to break out all over.

Meng Hao flicked his sleeve, sweeping away the gore that was all that

remained of Sir Wu. At the same time, he pointed out with his right index finger. Instantly, several drops of blood flew toward him from the mass of gore that was flying in the opposite direction. It congealed on his fingertip into a glittering drop of blood.

This blood was heart blood produced by the death of a great circle Nascent Soul Cultivator. Meng Hao looked at the blood for a moment and then flung his hand, causing it to split into three parts that shot toward the fleeing Cultivator who was surrounded by the violet Qi.

The drop of blood transformed into a streak of red as it shot through the air.

At the same time, Meng Hao made a grasping motion with his hand. The Devil Spear appeared along with an excited howling sound. Instantly, black mist roiled out, filled with ferocious faces. Strangely, once the faces saw Meng Hao standing there, they began to tremble and suddenly grew very quiet.

Meng Hao hefted the spear and then tossed it out into the air. Instantly, the ferocious faces within the mist once again began to howl as they shot toward the the Cultivator who was burning his Nascent Soul in order to flee.

Having done these things, Meng Hao looked over at the late Nascent Soul Cultivator who was now already halfway through the fissure in the air. The fissure itself seemed to be on the verge of closing. Meng Hao slapped his bag of holding, causing an emerald glow to appear. Suddenly, a very ordinary looking fishing rod appeared in his hands.

As soon as he held the fishing rod, Meng Hao's entire aura changed. It grew blurry, as if his body were somehow merging into the air around him. When Huyan Qing looked at him, he got a cold feeling, as if he were looking at some sort of predator that he was helpless to resist.

Except, this was not a predator. This was a crushing power from a life force that was levels above him, something that could wrest away his life at any moment.

It was impossible to perfectly describe the feeling in Huyan Qing's heart.

He was panting, and his body was trembling. The fear he was experiencing now far exceeded any fear he had felt before in his life.

It wasn't just him who was feeling such fear. The two fleeing mid Nascent Soul stage old men were also trembling, and could sense a pressure bearing down on them that far exceeded their own level. It quickly enveloped their entire hearts and minds.

Their bodies trembled, and their souls shook. Their Karma... was suddenly visible!

“What is this...?”

Most frightened of all was the late Nascent Soul Cultivator who had just passed through the fissure. Although he was on the other side of the fissure from nightmarish Meng Hao, in a different world, the trembling of his soul had reached an intense peak. It was as if some incredible, irresistible coldness were blasting across his body.

“What is this...?”

Meng Hao's expression was calm as he gripped the fishing rod. The world suddenly looked different, colorless. However, bright, colorful lights were visible on top of the heads of the people in front of him.

Meng Hao looked at Huyan Qing. On top of the man's head was a mass of bright, colorful threads, all grouped together. Shockingly, one of the threads was bright red, and incredibly thick. It was clearly different than the other threads.

At the moment, Huyan Qing's body was trembling violently. Meng Hao's gaze and aura were thousands of times more terrifying than they had been before. His look earlier had merely been a threat, but this time, Huyan Qing felt as if his soul were growing cold. It was as if his entire life, all his secrets, were clearly visible to Meng Hao.

It seemed to him that all Meng Hao had to do was wish it, and he would instantly die. He could also tell that such a death would not be an ordinary death, which filled him with indescribable fear.

It was as if... death was frightening enough as it was, but dying at Meng

Hao's hands would be infinitely more miserable and horrifying.

When Meng Hao looked at the other two fleeing mid Nascent Soul Cultivators, they experienced the exact same feeling as Huyan Qing.

Meng Hao could clearly see the brightly colorful threads attached to the tops of their heads. They too had an incredibly thick, red thread that was different from the others.

Those thick threads caused Meng Hao's face to flicker almost undetectably.

"So these are Karma threads," murmured Meng Hao. He looked at the trembling old man on the other side of the disappearing fissure.

He had even more threads attached to his head.

"What a pity," said Meng Hao, shaking his head. "Based on my understanding of Karma, I can't do what Ji Nineteen did, and sever the Karma.... However...." His eyes glinting fiercely, he waved the fishing rod out in front of him.

Instantly, a fishing line flew out. It moved so fast that it didn't seem to move at all. It instantly appeared in front of the trembling old late Nascent Soul Cultivator. The old man suddenly felt something infinitely terrifying. Others could not hear the bloodcurdling scream that came out from his mouth, but Meng Hao could.

Meng Hao saw the line wrap around the old man. When he pulled back on the line, the man's soul was ripped out of his body. His Nascent Soul rapidly withered, and his body turned pale white as he died.

As the fishing line returned to Meng Hao, he reached out and grabbed the soul, then crushed it!

As the soul dissipated, Meng Hao's mind filled with a roaring sound. All of a sudden, he realized that he had a much deeper comprehension of Karma now, although he wasn't sure he could explain exactly how.

When Huyan Qing saw everything that was happening, he could only scream with intense terror. The other two mid Nascent Soul Cultivators

were shaking as they fled madly.

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Note from Er Gen: Only 2,000 Chinese characters. This is the fourth update for today, and I'm worried that all of you are getting anxious, so I'm just going to post the chapter. I'm going to go eat and then take a chilly walk to clear my head. Then, I'll continue to write the rest of this content!

It's really cold today here in Mudangjiang prefecture. It snowed heavily and is... -3 celsius!

Chapter 532: The Death of Huyan Qing!

Next, however, the pursuing drops of blood caught up with their target. They stabbed through the Cultivator, then exploded along with the man's body.

As for the other Cultivator, despite the incredible speed with which he moved, he could not move faster than the Devil Spear. It whistled through the air and then stabbed into him. Instantly, black mist enveloped him. Excited, ferocious faces pounced, and a bloodcurdling scream filled the air. When it finally faded away, only a skeleton remained.

All of this takes some time to describe, but actually, from the time the three men began to flee until the moment they were all dead only took the space of about ten breaths.

Meng Hao put the fishing rod away, and then turned to look at Huyan Qing.

When Meng Hao's gaze fell onto him, Huyan Qing fell backward, trembling. He quickly bumped up against the back of the sedan chair.

"Early Nascent Soul Cultivation base," said Meng Hao coolly. "What a pity." This was actually the weakest early Nascent Soul Cultivation base that he had ever seen. "Alright, who's your father?" he continued, his expression the same as ever. He had long since matured to the point where he did not act impulsively. Naturally, he could tell that for this man to have such intrepid guards meant that he had a background beyond the ordinary.

Furthermore, the thick, red threads attached to the heads of these people led to a lot of questions. Furthermore, earlier, the man had made a comment indicating that his father had praised the spell formation of that great circle Nascent Soul Cultivator. He had revealed the information inadvertently in the midst of bragging arrogantly. However, Meng Hao easily put the pieces of information together. How could he not understand the underlying meaning?

Huyan Qing stared in shock. Originally, he had planned to roar out the

information about his father in an attempt to shock Meng Hao. Who could ever have imagined that Meng Hao would actually ask for the information of his own initiative?

“My....” Huyan Qing was perturbed and trembling. However, he still shouted out anyway: “My father is Huyan Yunming, Spirit Severing Patriarch of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, from the Heavenly Court Alliance in the Black Lands! If you dare to kill me, my father won’t let you go! It doesn’t matter where you’re from, or who you are, if you dare to hurt me, you’re dead beyond the shadow of a doubt!!” As he blathered on, the words came more smoothly. This was what he had originally planned to say to Meng Hao. The fact that Meng Hao had asked for the information of his own initiative had thrown his rhythm into a bit of chaos.

“I have no plans to kill you,” said Meng Hao with a chuckle. “You may leave.” Killing a few Nascent Soul Cultivators was a small matter, and as for this man, Meng Hao had no feud with him. It wouldn’t be worth it to kill him.

Besides, he was the heir of a Spirit Severing Patriarch. He would definitely be equipped with life-saving magical items. If Meng Hao really did try to kill him, it would not only be troublesome, but his own identity would also surely be detected. It was not as if Meng Hao had just entered the Cultivation world. He well knew that if Huyan Qing died, then Patriarch Huyan would track him down to kill him. Although he might be able to evade Patriarch Huyan, his identity could not be kept concealed.

When that happened, the whole Golden Crow Clan’s safety would be in danger, and Meng Hao could not allow that to happen.

That was the original reason why he had chosen to allow Sir Wu and the others to leave. Unfortunately, Huyan Qing didn’t know what was best for his own good and took advantage of his powerful bodyguards to attack Meng Hao. Meng Hao quickly slaughtered them, and now that Huyan Qing was left on his own, he would presumably be a bit more cool-headed.

Even he knew that some people were not to be provoked.

Meng Hao came to the conclusion that since he hadn’t killed the man,

he wouldn't harbor further resentment. Huyan Qing had obviously been completely shaken by the scene from earlier.

In addition, Meng Hao left a strand of Divine Sense on Huyan Qing. Once he returned to his father, Patriarch Huyan, the divine sense would be discovered and provide a complete explanation.

Only people of extraordinary intelligence can reach the point of becoming Spirit Severing Patriarchs. Meng Hao was confident that the man would accept the matter silently and not fly into a rage.

"You're not going to kill me?" asked Huyan Qing, staring in shock. All of a sudden, he got the feeling that the reason this person wasn't going to kill him had nothing to do with fear of his father, although he had no idea what the real reason was. Without hesitation, he clenched his teeth and shot away at top speed. As he did, he produced a jade slip which he quickly used to send a summons to other Heavenly Pursuit Tribe members in the area.

Meng Hao ignored Huyan Qing's departure. He once again crossed his legs and began to meditate quietly. He had already decided to wait here quietly before meeting up with Zhixiang to go to the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane.

As he meditated and inspected his seven Nascent Souls, a daring idea suddenly began to form in his mind.

"Right now I have seven Nascent Souls, and a Divine Sense with a range of 29,999 meters. 30,000 meters is the range of Spirit Severing.... I wonder if the possibility exists to form an eighth Nascent Soul? What about nine...? If that happened, and I had a breakthrough in Divine Sense, I would be comparable to the Spirit Severing stage.... Could it be possible that doing so would aid in my understanding of Spirit Severing?" Having reached this point in his train of thought, Meng Hao began to pant a little. His eyes suddenly began to shine brightly. After a moment, though, he realized that such a possibility wasn't very realistic.

"I really need to think about the matter more closely. After I give it a try, I'll have a much better idea of how feasible it is. The One Color Soul

Procurement Pill is quite interesting. Based on my understanding of the legends, it's only supposed to be effective once. However, it clearly worked twice for me." He had thought about this matter earlier, and had thought of a few possible explanations.

Actually, the foundation he had built up would most likely be a rare thing even in ancient times. He had reached the thirteenth level of Qi Condensation, had formed a perfect Foundation with ten Dao Pillars, reached the great circle of the Perfect Gold Core, and had successfully combined the five elements. Although you couldn't say it was completely unprecedented, it wasn't far off.

"Furthermore, the three great miraculous medicines are also rare. Even in ancient times, few people would have the chance to consume even one of them. As far as the One Color Soul Procurement Pill goes, consuming two wouldn't really be very much different than consuming one. Only by consuming a large number would the cumulative effects be seen. Ancient Cultivators would have no way to be so wasteful, so would naturally assume that it would only be effective if consumed once. That would of course be their understanding. Thus, the rise of the legends." Meng Hao continued to sit there, lost in thought.

Huyan Qing fled for several days without stopping. By now, he had received replies from several Heavenly Pursuit Tribe members, who were now speeding toward him. They should arrive within the amount of time it takes an incense stick to burn.

As of this point, Huyan Qing could finally breathe a sigh of relief. Now that he knew Meng Hao really was going to let him go, he thought back to Meng Hao's fearsomeness, and laughed bitterly. The grave terror that he had experienced had enlightened him quite a bit. He felt a touch of resentment, but recalling the terror that was Meng Hao, he breathed a sigh of relief.

"Might as well forget about it," he thought. "To tell the truth, it was me who provoked him. He might be willing to let me go, but if I keep acting the way I did before, eventually I will run into someone who WILL kill me. Even if my father gets revenge afterwards, that wouldn't help me at all....

This whole experience is going to be a major turning point in the life of Huyan Qing! From now on, I won't be like that ever again. I'm going to rise to prominence!"

His eyes filled with a stubborn glow as he made his decision. After he got back to the Tribe, he would immediately go into secluded meditation. He would change his arrogant personality, and would focus everything on increasing his Cultivation base. He would never allow himself to experience such terror again in the future.

However, even as Huyan Qing was murmuring to himself and making his decision, a cold laugh suddenly rang out from behind him.

His face flickered as he spun around. What he saw behind him was a black-robed youth. The instant Huyan Qing saw his face, and the killing intent in his eyes, he could only hoarsely stammer: "You... you said you were going to let me go!"

As soon as the words left his mouth, the black-robe youth grabbed Huayan Qing's neck and then crushed down viciously.

A cracking sound could be heard. Huyan Qing's eyes went wide and filled with an unyielding regret, as well as confusion. He didn't understand why he had been told he would be set free, only to be then tracked down and attacked like this.

He didn't understand why the life-saving treasures his father had given him didn't activate....

As his eyes grew dim, death neared and the lights began to fade. He suddenly realized that this person in front of him was different than the fearsome Cultivator from before.

He looked the same, but in truth, there were differences.

However, he could not give voice to any of those thoughts. A boom rang out as his body exploded into a haze of blood.

The black-robed youth smiled, and his eyes filled with a red glow. Just when he was about to make his way off, the Violet Sea beneath him suddenly surged with massive waves. He heard a distant roar of fury

coming from within the seawater.

“Dammit, this far away and he can still sense things!? So, he was in the midst of Demonic Transmigration earlier!” The youth’s face fell, and his heart began to pound. His body suddenly disappeared. However, in that moment in which he disappeared, three day’s journey away, Meng Hao sat cross-legged on the surface of the sea, his fury burning. He suddenly shot into the air, the power of a roc exploding out within him. He flew forward at incredible speed. Sonic booms split the air as he shot toward the black-robed youth.

“You dare to try to frame me!?!?”

Chapter 533: Chase and Kill!

Meng Hao's voice seemed to ring out from the Violet Sea itself. It roared like shocking thunder, causing the face of the black-robed youth to instantly fall. He turned and transformed into a streak of black that shot off into the distance.

"If I'd known he could detect me, I would have held off for longer," said the black-robed youth through gritted teeth. "Dammit... I wasted an opportunity! Now he knows about me earlier than expected!" His face flickered as he pushed forward with all possible speed.

This was none other than the human-form Black Bat Cultivator!

Years ago, he had been astonished by the will of Meng Hao's Demonic Transmigration and had fled. Later, after sensing that Meng Hao had returned, it cleverly did nothing to attract his attention.

It knew that relying only on its own power to wrest the true spirit sword away from Meng Hao would be difficult. Therefore, it had decided to make use of one person to get rid of another. The result was the death of Huyan Qing.

"Even though he detected me... my plan still worked. Patriarch Huyan will certainly sense his son's death!" The black-robed youth's eyes glittered as he pushed forward even faster.

Even as he fled, Meng Hao's face grew incredibly grim. The power of a roc exploded out around him, transforming into incredible speed. Sonic booms continued to echo out as he shot forward toward the location of the black-robed youth.

The reason why he was able to lock down such a specific location had to do with the Violet Sea, as well as... the strand of divine sense that he had left on Huyan Qing. It didn't matter that the black-robed youth was quite a distance away; he was still directly within Meng Hao's line of sight.

"Who is this person?" thought Meng Hao, his face dark. "Why does he look so much like me? It doesn't seem as if he's in disguise. That seems to

be his true appearance....” Meng Hao spent some more time to analyze the young man using the power of his locating technique. After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, his eyes widened.

“The Black Bat!”

Although the Black Bat had changed a lot from before, there was still a faint branding on it, placed there by Meng Hao years ago, and impossible to wipe away.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered with killing intent. Killing Huyan Qing was obviously a bald-faced attempt to frame him, and would be difficult to explain. It would all come down to how Patriarch Huyan chose to react.

Meng Hao’s face darkened, and his eyes filled with determination. He chose not to spend any more effort thinking about the situation with Huyan Qing. Instead, he focused all his killing intent on the black-robed youth.

The distance between the two of them grew shorter. Meng Hao’s speed seemed without limit. The black-robed youth was also incredibly fast, although he couldn’t possibly compare to Meng Hao.

“I’m going to have to change my plan....” he thought. “I can’t stay in the Western Desert any more. In any case, even though he discovered my plan to frame him, he still won’t be able to catch up to me for another day, no matter how fast he is. One day from now, I won’t be in the Western Desert any more!” In the middle of speeding along, the black-robed youth suddenly stopped in place. He looked around, a cold smile on his face as he calculated something on his right hand.

“It should be near here. I discovered the teleportation rift leading to the Milky Way Sea in this area all those years ago. Even if it moved a bit, it can’t be too far away.” His body turned into a flash as he began to search the surroundings.

After enough time passed for two incense sticks to burn, his eyes filled with a happy expression. He stopped in mid air to perform a double-handed incantation, then pointed straight out. Instantly, the air in front of him filled with ripples which spread out in layers to reveal a dim, gray rift.

The rift didn't seem to be anything remarkable. It was apparently sealed; despite being visible, it flickered as if it were unstable.

"Dammit, the rift is on the verge of dissipating. I need some time to stabilize it before entering.... If I remember correctly, there are three teleportation rifts like this in the Western Desert. The next closest one is about seven days away. There's not enough time...." The black-robed youth's face flickered and he ground his teeth. According to his calculations, Meng Hao wouldn't be able to catch up to him within a day. To repair this rift would take about ten hours.

His eyes flickering, the black-robed youth immediately sat cross-legged next to the rift. He spit out some blue-colored blood which he used to brand the rift. The blood transformed into magical symbols, which, when they landed on the rift, fused into it and began to repair it.

Meng Hao sped along above the surface of the Violet Sea. As soon as he sensed that his target had stopped moving, he couldn't help but frown.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he realized that the area around the black-robed youth contained the power of teleportation. Unless something happened, a teleportation portal would open up in the area very soon.

"Second Anima!"

Boom!

Two of Meng Hao's Nascent Souls merged together, causing his battle prowess to leap up, and his body to grow stronger. The power of two great circle Nascent Souls caused his speed to double.

Such speed, combined with the wind power of the roc, caused Meng Hao to move with dramatic speed.

"Third Anima!"

"Fourth Anima!"

"Fifth Anima!" Meng Hao roared through the air with shocking speed. He went faster, his body grew stronger, and his battle prowess neared its peak.

The combination of the five elements made so that the previous distance of three days between him and the black-robed youth was now reduced to only fourteen hours.

That wasn't good enough for Meng Hao, though. Every moment that passed was a moment in which his quarry might flee. Meng Hao's eyes glinted coldly with killing intent as he entered the Sixth Anima.

Roaring could be heard as Meng Hao's body expanded again. The battle prowess of thirty two great circle Nascent Souls surged through him, and his speed exploded, doubling yet again.

Cracking could be heard as the air around him shattered. The speed with which he was moving was indescribable. In the blink of an eye, he was tens of thousands of meters away. As of now, he was only about six hours away from his target.

"I can still go faster! Seventh Anima!" With the wave of an arm, he entered the Seventh Anima. Instantly, his appearance became that of an Immortal Devil. He now possessed the battle prowess of sixty-four great circle Nascent Souls. Yet again, his speed increased explosively.

The speed of the Seventh Anima neared that of the Spirit Severing stage. After only two hours passed, Meng Hao seemed to almost teleport across the Western Desert's Violet Sea. Suddenly, he appeared in the region of the black-robed youth.

By the time he arrived, the black-robed youth had only completed about twenty percent of the necessary repairs on the teleportation rift. Suddenly, he sensed something like a screaming wind. The Violet Sea down below roared and began to swirl into a vortex. An intense sense of deadly crisis suddenly filled the young man, and his heart began to race with fear. Not taking the time to even look behind him, he vanished as he shot off into the distance.

"Who's chasing me? Don't tell me it's Patriarch Huyan! Impossible! When I killed Huyan Qing, I used an ancient time restriction technique. Patriarch Huyan won't detect his son's death for another two days."

The black-robed youth's heart trembled and his face fell. A gale-force

wind screamed toward him from behind with shocking speed. Rumbling filled Heaven and Earth. Within the wind was a tall figure that looked like an Immortal Devil. He moved with shocking speed, and was on top of the black-robed youth in the blink of an eye. The hair on the body of the black-robed youth all stood on end as he looked over his shoulder. His eyes widened, and a grim face could be seen reflected in his pupils, along with an incoming fist.

Having seen Meng Hao's face, the black-robed youth screeched: "Impossible!!"

BAM!!

Meng Hao's fist slammed into the young man's belly. It was a punch delivered when in the Seventh Anima, backed by the battle prowess of sixty-four great circle Nascent Souls. The power exploded out through the body of the black-robed youth.

A massive roar lifted up into the air. Blood sprayed from the young man's mouth, and his body began to fall apart. His stomach completely caved in, transforming into a mass of mangled, bloody flesh. His entire person shot backward, and continuously coughed up multiple mouthfuls of blood. His expression was one of astonishment and utter disbelief, and his face was pale white.

The power he sensed in Meng Hao was one that could annihilate anything. It was an indescribably fearsome aura that caused him to tremble with incredible fear.

"What's impossible, bitch?!" said Meng Hao, his body flickering to appear in front of the black-robed youth. "You dare to frame me?!" His right hand clenched into a fist again.

BANG!

The black-robed youth let out a bloodcurdling shriek as he was once again sent tumbling backward. This time, his abdomen literally exploded, ripping off the bottom half of his body, wiping it away in a haze of blood.

The only thing left was his upper torso. Suddenly, his back ripped open,

and two huge bat wings unfurled. They virtually blurred as he shot away at high speed.

“Wanna run?” snorted Meng Hao, his eyes flickering with intense killing intent as he continued to stay within the Seventh Anima. The sound of the snort caused the Black Bat turned black-robed youth to cough up more blood. Suddenly, Meng Hao disappeared, only to directly appear behind him. His heart trembled as Meng Hao reached out to grab onto him.

The black-robed youth let out a miserable shriek. He didn’t turn, but rather contracted his wings in an attempt to block Meng Hao’s hand. Killing intent glittered in Meng Hao’s eyes as he casually grabbed both the wings and then pulled hard.

A bloodcurdling scream could be heard as the two wings were completely ripped off of his body. Blood showered from the young man’s mouth. He suddenly flashed, reappearing off in the distance. The bottom half of his body had been ripped off, along with his wings. He was in a dire situation. However, it was at this point that within his left eye suddenly appeared the image of a corpse.

“How can you be so powerful?” he said, his face pale. “This is impossible!!” Even as he spoke, he performed incantation gestures. Suddenly, a ghost image sprang up around him.

Meng Hao flicked his hand to toss away the two wings, then looked coldly at the black-robed youth.

“You backstabbing bastard,” said Meng Hao. “I helped you unseal yourself that year, giving you the power to recover. Despite all that, you still try to secretly harm me?!” With that, Meng Hao blasted forward. He moved so fast that you couldn’t even see him. The only thing that was visible was the black-robed youth tumbling backward again.

Chapter 534: Who's the Fisherman Now?!

It didn't matter that the Black Bat was something from ancient times. In front of Meng Hao's Seventh Anima, it was completely incapable of making a counterattack. As it retreated, its body suddenly broke up into countless pieces, transforming into thousands of bats.

The bats instantly scattered in all directions in retreat.

Meng Hao was currently consumed with the desire to kill. He gave a cold snort and then waved his right hand. The Devil Spear appeared in front of him. He slapped it, sending power from his Cultivation base exploding inside. The spear instantly exploded.

The resulting black mist expanded out, filled with innumerable vicious faces that shot toward the fleeing bats and began to consume them.

In the blink of an eye, countless miserable shrieks filled the air. After only a few breaths of time, there were only a few hundred bats left from the original group of thousands.

The remaining bats quickly reformed. A pop rang out as they transformed back into a physical form. This time, it did not look like the black-robed youth, but rather, the enormous Black Bat.

The Black Bat's eyes were filled with terror. The instant in which it appeared, it tried to flee, but Meng Hao shot forward, appeared directly in front of it. The Black Bat gave a cry of despair as Meng Hao lifted his hand up and pushed a finger down into its forehead. The power of extermination exploded out. It was like layered ripples of destruction that swept through the body of the Black Bat.

Booms rang out ceaselessly as the Black Bat screamed. Its body directly exploded into a haze of blood which spread out in all direction. Only the head remained, which Meng Hao grabbed and put into his bag of holding.

After the death occurred, the surroundings slowly grew quiet and peaceful.

Meanwhile, nearly a year's travel away in the Western Desert North

region, far down at the bottom of the sea, a corpse sat cross-legged.

Half of its body was human, the other half, beastly. This was the creature from which Meng Hao had acquired the third wooden sword in the Crow Divinity Holy Land all those years ago. It was also the same creature that the black-robed youth had absorbed into his left eye and then suppressed.

Now, however, the corpse looked different than before; it had conspicuous bat wings sticking out from its back. It sat there motionless on the seafloor, lifeless, filled with an aura of death that was much like the Violet Sea around it.

Suddenly, the empty eyes of the corpse began to glow with light. The glow grew more and more obvious as an aura of life suddenly rose up within its body. Cracking sounds could be heard as it suddenly moved its neck.

Its rotten lips suddenly curved into a cold smile.

“Petty Cultivator,” said the corpse in a grating voice. “He thinks he’s clever and shrewd, but compared to a spirit like me, he’s nothing. In the moment he was congratulating himself on his victory, I managed to slip out like a cicada shedding its skin.

“He’s definitely powerful, though. Thankfully, I was doubly prepared with an extremely realistic second body. Even the will of that body actually wasn’t aware that my true self was doubly prepared. Too bad it really was killed.

“However, that’s also a good thing. Because he thinks that I’ve perished, I can watch on secretly to see what conflicts develop between him and Patriarch Huyan.

“When the crane and the clam fight, it’s the fisherman who benefits. And I... am the fisherman!” The corpse’s smile grew even colder and grimmer.

This corpse was the true Black Bat. Even as it sat there at the bottom of the sea, Meng Hao was back at the location in which he had killed the black-robed youth, frowning.

Everything had happened too smoothly, almost like water being poured down a gutter. It was like nothing had even happened at all. The profundity of Meng Hao's Cultivation base made everything incredibly simple.

However, Meng Hao still felt as if something weren't right.

Muttering to himself, his eyes flickered as he pulled out the Ji Clan fishing rod. The instant he touched the rod, a strange light flickered in his eyes. He watched as the bits of flesh and blood which were scattered around, the remains of the Black Bat, suddenly stopped moving.

On each piece of flesh or blood, Karma threads could be seen. Shockingly, almost all of the Karma threads were heading in the same direction.

Meng Hao's eyes flashed in concentration. His will began to follow the Karma threads through the air until they sank into the Violet Sea. They continued onward north, to the seafloor, where he finally saw the corpse with its grim smile.

As soon as his gaze fell upon the corpse, its face flickered and it looked up in disbelief.

At the same time, Meng Hao's will vanished from the Karma threads. He returned to his normal state and put the fishing rod away, his face extremely dark.

"So, something WAS going on!" he said, looking toward the Western Desert North region, killing intent flickering in his eyes.

Back in north, the Black Bat's eyes shone with a mysterious light, and its expression was one of fear, then suspicious. Finally, it grew even grimmer than before.

"I musn't underestimate this guy. Just what method did he use to find me so easily? It gives me a very strange feeling." It rose to its feet thoughtfully, then shot up out from within the Violet Sea.

"It doesn't matter. I can't stay here any more. I need to go hide in the Milky Way Sea. This Meng Hao... is too bizarre!" Its body flickered as it

flew off into the distance.

A year's travel away, Meng Hao took a deep breath and then slowly sank back down into the Violet Sea. He sat down cross-legged on the seafloor, his eyes shining with an intense desire to kill.

"I might be far away, but... I still have ways to kill you!" He closed his eyes. In that instant, he sent his will out to combine with the Violet Sea.

As of now, Meng Hao was being incarnated into the Violet Sea in a way much similar to what had occurred when he was in the midst of Demonic Transmigration. This time, he was fundamentally awake, so he would not lose himself.

Because of that, however, he would be incapable of wielding the complete power of the Violet Sea.

The instant in which Meng Hao's will fused with the Violet Sea, the entire sea instantly churned with enormous waves, and roaring filled the air. In the Western Desert North region, the corpse was speeding along. All of a sudden, streaks of blood appeared on its body. Down below, the Violet Sea roared and transformed into a whirlpool. The corpse's face instantly fell.

At the same time, a powerful roaring voice could be heard coming from within the whirlpool.

"You want to frame Meng Hao and get away scot free? I don't think so." The voice became a roar like that of thunder, causing the corpse's face to fall even further. It took a deep breath. After pausing for a brief moment, it shot off as fast as possible.

As it fled, the water on the surface of the Violet Sea in the Western Desert North region began to congeal together. A gigantic hand suddenly began to stretch up out from the deep waters. The hand shot up toward the fleeing corpse.

The instant that the hand touched the corpse, the corpse opened its mouth to speak strange, complex words. The words transformed into a power that seemed to be of a different world, filled with ancient

archaicness.

BOOM!

The explosive power of the words caused ripples to surround the corpse. Within the ripples could be seen reflections of an ancient world that had existed an indefinite amount of years in the past. The view was indistinct, but a roaring sound filled the air nonetheless.

The Violet Sea hand collapsed. However, the corpse's aura had clearly been weakened.

Without hesitation, it shot away at top speed. However, even as it did, eight more enormous hands suddenly began to rise up out of the sea, stretching out toward the fleeing corpse to reach toward it.

Booms rose up into the sky and echoed out across the sea waters. The corpse, its face filled with astonishment, spit out some life Qi. It performed a double-handed incantation, causing an undulating power to appear, some type of magical technique Meng Hao had never seen before.

It was formed of numerous bizarre magical symbols, each one of which seemed to pulse with a unique power that the Violet Sea was incapable of resisting.

Down in the Violet Sea, Meng Hao gave a cold snort. Even as the Black Bat corpse, grew weaker and weaker, an enormous face suddenly began to bulge out of the surface of the sea.

The face was none other than Meng Hao's!

Meng Hao might have been submerged on the bottom of the seafloor, but his will was engaged in fierce battle with the Black Bat corpse.

Meanwhile, back in the Black Lands, in a mountain valley filled with peach blossoms, was the enormous temple gate of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe.

The valley was filled with birdsongs and the lovely fragrance of flowers. It was like a realm of Immortals. In one particular pavilion were two middle-aged men.

One was sitting in meditation, the other was standing. One wore a black robe, the other a white one.

However, their facial features were exactly alike.

The white-robed man sat cross-legged in meditation, unmoving. It seemed as if his will were eternally fused into the world. Unless some shocking event occurred that rocked the entire Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, he would remain there, unwaking.

He was completely immersed in secluded meditation, having spent years stabilizing himself after Severing his first Spirit and recovering the damage to his body.

Generally speaking, daily affairs were handled by his Divine Clone, who was of course the black-robed man who stood there across from him.

The black-robed man's face was extremely grim as he looked down at the shattered jade slip he held in his hand. His eyes radiated grief, and then... a towering viciousness.

"Someone dared to slay my only son.... He was a bit arrogant, and often handled himself poorly. But... he was my only son, the only son of Huyan Yunming! It doesn't matter what he did, no one is qualified to chide him, much less kill him!"

The white-robed man who sat there in meditation was none other than Huyan Qing's father, the only Spirit Severing Cultivator of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, Patriarch Huyan.

The black-robed man, the Divine Clone, was also the translucent figure that Huyan Yunming had sent after Meng Hao that year to rob him of the Demon Spirit.

"If someone cuts off the line of Huyan Yunming, then I will exterminate his entire Clan!" The black-robed man flicked his sleeve and disappeared. When he reappeared, he was in mid-air above the Black Lands. His body flickered, and he was then outside of Blackgate Fort. Shockingly, he used greater teleportation again, and was now in mid-air above the Violet Sea

His Divine Sense shot out, sweeping about the area, looking for the

location where Huyan Qing had been killed, as well as the person who killed him.

A few hours later, he found the location. As he floated there thoughtfully in mid-air, his face grew grimmer and grimmer. He waved his hand, causing Huyan Qing's life slip to transform into ash. As the bits of ash floated out to fill the area, they began to glow.

The softly glowing lights began to interlock, transforming into a screen. Visible on the screen was none other than the black-robed youth!

Chapter 535: Will of a True Spirit!

Patriarch Huyan looked down at the screen which was formed from the dust of the jade slip, and his eyes began to shine brightly. There was something about the person depicted that seemed familiar. He studied the face for a moment, whereupon his aura suddenly grew dark and cold.

“It’s him.... The totemic Sacred Ancient of the Golden Crow Tribe. He had a second Demon Spirit which I went after, only to be stopped by that strange woman. She left me with no choice but to flee.”

He thought for a moment before his eyes suddenly glittered and he suppressed the grief in his heart. He had suddenly noticed a few odd things.

“Before Qing’er died, none of the lifesaving treasures that I gave him activated. That’s the first strange thing.

“Furthermore, he clearly died a day ago. However, something was deliberately preventing me from detecting the death until now.

“This image is very clear, almost as if this person were deliberately making sure that Qing’er would remember his face.” After thinking for a moment, Patriarch Huyan began to perform an incantation with his right hand. After a long moment passed, he looked up and then vanished.

It wasn’t long before he reappeared in the location where Meng Hao had destroyed Sir Wu and the others. He looked around carefully for a while before his eyes began to glow with killing intent.

“Wu Huai died here, as well as the others... Clearly, they were killed by a Cultivator of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage. His battle prowess is beyond ordinary.

“However, Qing’er was killed in a different location.” Patriarch Huyan had lived for many years, and was as crafty as a fox. Were he not incredibly intelligent, he would never have been able to achieve the illustrious position of Tribal Patriarch. Based on the clues, he was immediately able to piece together what really happened.

It was obvious to him that the great circle Nascent Soul Cultivator had only killed the men in this location. Afterward, he had allowed Huyan Qing to leave.

“Let’s check the appearance of the person who killed Wu Huai and the others, and everything will be made completely clear.” Patriarch Huyan waved his sleeve, causing the air to ripple. Moments later, another screen appeared, upon which was visible the image of Meng Hao killing Wu Huai.

Although the image was not incredibly clear, Patriarch Huyan recognized Meng Hao at a glance. At the same time, he could see some differences between Meng Hao and the black-robed youth.

“So, it wasn’t the totemic Sacred Ancient of the Golden Crow Clan who killed Qing’er.” Now that he understood this, Patriarch Huyan turned and sent his Divine Sense shooting out in all directions across the Violet Sea.

Unfortunately, he was incapable of sensing Meng Hao down at the bottom of the sea, nor could he detect the fighting that was occurring a year’s travel away in the Western Desert North region. After searching the immediate area, Patriarch Huyan gave up. Face grim, he began to fly back to the Black Lands.

“Although this Meng Hao wasn’t the actual perpetrator, the fact that he was being framed by that strange person shows that the two of them have some sort of connection.

“If I can’t track down the true killer, then I need to find Meng Hao. I’ll use Soul Search on him to discover the identity of the killer. That is how to solve this problem!

“As for Meng Hao, there’s no need to go looking for him. I can force him to be a good boy and come out! Whether or not he lives through the Soul Search has nothing to do with me. He can only blame... his own bad luck!” Patriarch Huyan’s eyes flickered with killing intent. His plan to force Meng Hao to show his face was simple; he would simply put some pressure on the Golden Crow Clan.

With a cold harrumph, Patriarch Huyan turned; his body flickered as he

shot toward the Black Lands.

Meanwhile, booming roars filled air in the Western Desert North Region. Meng Hao's face rose up from the water. His eyes glowed with a bright light as he stared fixedly at the corpse which hovered in mid-air.

Soon, the somewhat indistinct face had completely emerged from the water. Beneath it was an enormous column of water that surged up toward the corpse, which was incapable of avoiding it. The column of water instantly enveloped the corpse.

There was a boom, and then popping sounds could be heard from inside the body. The corpse's eyes flickered brightly. It suddenly used some unknown technique to cause its body to shockingly be surrounded by eight glittering magical symbols that resisted the manifestation of the Violet Sea.

After the space of four or five breaths, the water cascaded back down into the sea. Trembling, the corpse spit out a large mouthful of life Qi. Its body was beginning to fall apart. One of its legs directly transformed into ash. Its expression was ferocious as it turned and shot off into the distance.

Meng Hao's will was locked onto the corpse. Were his true self here, then the corpse would have no hope whatsoever of getting away. At the moment, his will was fused with the Violet Sea. However, because he had not completed the Demonic Transmigration which would have resulted in him losing himself in the process, then the battle prowess he could wield was not sufficient to restrain the corpse.

"If you want to get away, you'll have to pay the price!" Meng Hao's face once again appeared on the surface of the water. The eyes of the face flickered, then closed, and suddenly the entire face disappeared. At the same time, drops of violet seawater began to rise up into the air.

Meng Hao's voice then rang out, filled with killing intent: "Blood Rising!"

Massive amounts of water shot up, covering the sky as it shot toward the corpse.

The corpse's eyes widened and it immediately began to perform an incantation gesture. Magical symbols poured out of its body, swirling out to meet the incoming seawater. Incredible booming echoed out. The corpse fell back, spitting out mouthfuls of life Qi. In the end, the seawater dispersed, and the corpse heaved a huge sigh. It was just about to continue fleeing off into the distance when suddenly, a gigantic fist shot out from within the sea. The previous mass of water had concealed its presence, so as it moved with incredible speed, the corpse was instantly overwhelmed.

Cracking sounds could be heard, and the corpse emitted a miserable shriek. As it tumbled backward, its other leg exploded, forcing it to flee with only half of a body.

Unfortunately, even as it made to leave, a huge wave appeared in front of it. The seawater then congealed together into an enormous head. The facial features of this head belonged to none other than Meng Hao. This was not just a face, but a full head, fully three thousand meters wide. It rose up out of the depths of the sea to block the path of the Black Bat corpse.

"Dammit!!" The heart of the Black Bat corpse was completely shaken, and its scalp was numb. It began to tremble as it turned and changed directions. It was now thoroughly in fear of Meng Hao. Back when it had planned to frame him, how could it possibly have imagined that even being doubly prepared, it would still be powerless to prevent Meng Hao from killing it.

In fact, Meng Hao wasn't even here in person. By merely fusing his will into the Violet Sea, he was still able to push the Black Bat into this difficult situation. Because of this, it felt incredible fear of Meng Hao.

Before it could even employ any divine abilities, a roaring sound could be heard as the sea suddenly began to churn. Two gigantic arms composed of vast quantities of seawater rose up from within a boundless whirlpool. The two arms moved with astonishing speed as they suddenly clapped their hands toward the Black Bat corpse.

Each of these speeding hands was several hundred meters long, and

kicked up a huge wind, along with mighty waves. It was as if the entire area was sealed. The Black Bat corpse was terror-stricken. The shadow of death seemed to loom up within its heart.

In this moment of grave crisis, the Black Bat corpse suddenly lifted its head back and let out a mournful shriek. “Bat Net True Spirit!!”

Suddenly, a black beam shot out of its forehead.

As soon as the beam appeared, everything began to tremble. The Violet Sea shook, and something like a ghost image of the entire world suddenly appeared. A power that seemed to stem from an otherworldly aura instantly shot out from the forehead of the Black Bat corpse.

Meanwhile... in the starry sky outside of Planet South Heaven was an enormous altar. The altar had been circling around South Heaven for innumerable years. This was Planet South Heaven’s most mysterious...

Immortality Bestowal Dais! 1

The vast collection of names carved into the Immortality Bestowal Dais suddenly began to flicker with glowing light. An archaic aura was awakening!

The rumble of an ancient voice, filled with countless years, suddenly could be heard. “The will of a true spirit. An actualized body in South Heaven.... So, a true spirit Immortal Murdering Sword must have appeared in the world! As to whether or not I am a false Immortal, I should be able to find out after receiving a stab from that sword!”

Meanwhile, back in the Western Desert, the Black Bat was letting out a miserable howl. The black beam emanating from its forehead gradually expanded, enveloping its entire head, seemingly growing weaker as it did.

At the same time the two arms of seawater grew closer. Two gigantic hands slapped down onto the Black Bat corpse.

A huge boom could be heard. An intense aftershock spread out, causing the two hands to collapse into pieces, along with the arms. The water cascaded back down into the sea. The head of Meng Hao, which appeared almost to be bleeding from its orifices, also shattered.

Simultaneously, the Black Bat corpse completely exploded, with the exception of its head. Its head continued to emit a black glow as it shot off like a meteor. A shrill, hateful shriek could be heard as it disappeared.

The instant it disappeared, the huge waves on the surface of the sea died down. Everything returned to normal. Meng Hao retracted his will from the Violet Sea. Back in the location where his true self sat cross-legged in meditation, a tremor suddenly ran through his body. His face was pale white as he retreated from the Seventh Anima to the First. His eyes snapped open.

“It’s too bad I couldn’t completely destroy that Demonic thing. If my true self had been there it would have been a different story.... That having been said, it was seriously injured. It’s going to take it quite a bit of time to recover. Next time we meet, I’ll definitely kill it!” His eyes shone with a bright light, and his jaw was set with determination.

“Just what power was it that it used at the end.... It was very strange.” Lost in thought, he looked down at his bag of holding. As of this moment, he could clearly sense that one of his Immortal Murdering Swords was filled with an intense, trembling yearning.

“Perhaps I can get some answers about these wooden swords from that Black Bat.” Meng Hao shot up and was about to emerge from the sea when suddenly, his eyes widened and he sank back down. Without hesitation, he fused his will into the Violet Sea, concealing himself.

It was at this moment that an ancient Divine Sense from far up in the Heavens suddenly began to sweep across the Western Desert. It seemed to be looking for something, but was thankfully obstructed by the Violet Sea. Because Meng Hao was currently merged with the Violet Sea and also concealed inside of it, the intrepid Divine Sense passed by and didn’t detect him. Instead, it began to move in the direction the Black Bat had fled in.

The power of the Divine Sense reminded Meng Hao of the eight Immortals he had seen outside the Realm of the Bridge Ruins that year!

“What was it looking for?” he thought, his eyes glittering. He did not

leave, but rather, sat there for several more days. During that time, the Divine Sense appeared three more times; clearly it was looking for something. However, after several more days passed, it completely vanished.

Meng Hao waited even longer. When he was sure that the Divine Sense was truly gone, he shot up out of the sea to stand on its surface. By this point, he had a vague sense that the Divine Sense from up in the Heavens had been looking for the Immortal Murdering Sword!

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1. This was mentioned previously as “Immortal Sealing Dais.” I’m changing it to the more accurate “Immortality Bestowal Dais.” Previous mentions were in Chapters 204, 319, 468 and 471.

Chapter 536: Everything had Changed!

Meng Hao slowly reached up to slap his bag of holding. Instantly, a head appeared in his hand. This was the head of the black-robed youth form of the Black Bat.

Although, at this point it actually didn't look much like a human, but rather, more like a bat. Its eyes were blank, but there was still a bit of terror and despair visible within them. Anyone who looked at it would definitely have an indescribable, violent reaction.

Meng Hao had intentionally kept the head for the purpose of resolving any unnecessary disputes. Huyan Qing's death had been perpetrated by the Black Bat with the specific intention of framing him. Meng Hao had no idea of knowing whether Patriarch Huyan would be able to sort through the clues. Therefore, he kept the head to be able to answer any questions.

His body turned, flickering as he headed toward one of the Western Desert Violet Sea's ten outpost cities that he had become aware of when his consciousness was merged with the sea.

The nearest one was the seventh outpost.

"All of the outposts are guarded by Black Lands Cultivators. Obviously, the only people who would have the resources to build such towering outposts as these would be backed by the Heavenly Court Alliance.

"I'll deliver the head up there. There will certainly be people who can then send it to Patriarch Huyan." Meng Hao moved along at top speed for three days. It was at that point that off in the distance he noticed a collection of what looked like airships floating above the water, roped together to form a crude outpost.

There were quite a few wooden structures built on top of them, and what appeared to be over a thousand Cultivators. The hubbub of voices and conversations echoed out across the waters, making the whole scene very lively.

There were a handful of Cultivators patrolling the perimeter with cold expressions. They wore black robes embroidered with decorations of butterflies flying within layers of clouds. These were of course the city guards.

Cultivators often engaged in trade here. The powers in the Black Lands planned to use these outposts as a foundation to build hundreds more such locations in the coming years.

There were of course spell formations protecting the outpost from Divine Sense. Unless Meng Hao went past the First Anima, he would have difficulty extending his Divine Sense inside.

Meng Hao neared the city at around noontime. His approach instantly attracted the attention of the Cultivators in the outpost, especially the city guards, whose eyes went wide. Meng Hao's great circle Nascent Soul Cultivation base instantly put them on guard. They did nothing to block his way, instead allowing him to enter the city unobstructed.

As soon as he entered the city, Meng Hao could feel the power of a spell formation sweep over him, much like Divine Sense. It covered his entire body, then suddenly paused, as if it were preparing to lock him down in place so that he couldn't move.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever. He had come for the Heavenly Court Alliance. If the people here were looking for him specifically, then it meant that in response to Huyan Qing's death, Patriarch Huyan had made advanced preparations. It would also mean that he knew Meng Hao's identity.

If nobody was specifically seeking him out, then that would provide some additional food for thought.

Even as Meng Hao arrived, two old men sat meditating in a particularly luxurious airship among the numerous airships that made up the outpost.

One of the men wore a long red robe, and was of the late Nascent Soul stage. The other old man next to him wore a black black gown, and had some brightly colored totem tattoos on his face. His eyes were closed, and he emanated the fluctuations of a Nascent Soul Cultivation base that was

nearing the great circle, but was still some distance away.

These two men were the most powerful experts dispatched to this location by the Heavenly Court Alliance.

As soon as Meng Hao stepped foot into the outpost, a flickering, glowing screen suddenly appeared in front of the two old men.

They both opened their eyes to look at the screen, whereupon they saw Meng Hao.

On the screen, Meng Hao was surrounded by pulsing red lights. The lights were not coming from Meng Hao, but rather, the outpost's spell formation. They were marking out his location!

"Level red on the wanted list.... This person...."

"It's him! That's the guy that Patriarch Huyan personally put onto the wanted list a few days ago." The eyes of the two old men widened as they looked at each other. Both of them had expressions of concentration and thoughtfulness.

"I remember that according to the information on the wanted list, if you notify Patriarch Huyan, you can acquire a magical item personally created by him! And if you capture this man alive, then Patriarch Huyan will owe a personal debt!"

The fires of anticipation burned within the eyes of the two men. They were clearly both thinking the same thing.

They looked at each other for a moment, and their faces filled with determination. As Cultivators, they did not fear danger. What they feared was lacking the courage to face danger. After all, great rewards... come only from facing great danger!

Earning a personal debt from a Spirit Severing Patriarch was definitely worth facing danger in this situation. Even though this Cultivator seemed to have a strange Cultivation base that was at the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, they had the cooperation of other Nascent Soul Cultivators, plus the spell formation. It was not an impossible task.

“Activate the spell formation!”

“All Nascent Soul Cultivators, the time has come to make our move!”

Almost at the same moment in which all the Nascent Soul Cultivators in the seventh outpost were receiving the message of the two old men, Meng Hao was walking through the crowds in the middle of the outpost. He looked around at all the hustle and bustle, somewhat in a trance. Now that he thought about it, he had just emerged from more than a hundred years of secluded meditation.

“More than a hundred years....” He sighed softly. Memories slowly flooded up like the tide. Suddenly, he recalled all the familiar faces he had seen when he was fused with the Violet Sea.

He thought about that teardrop.

Filled with melancholy, he walked through the outpost until he was nearing its far edge. It was at this point that he suddenly stopped in place and looked up. For the first time in more than a hundred years... a tremor of anger ran through his body.

Up ahead of him, hanging from a rack... were more than fifty people.

More than fifty people. Many were gasping and on the verge of death. Half, though, were actually dead. Their corpses hung there, exposed to the elements, surrounded by an aura of death.

Their bodies were covered with scars and bruises. It was impossible to say how much torment they had endured. Those who hadn't died wore vacant expressions, as if they were looking at something far, far away.

None of them emitted any wails or screams. All of them maintained silence.

One of the people was an old woman. Her face was wrinkled, her body withered and covered with lash marks, her hair pure white. She was clearly in very sore straits. However, if you looked closely, you could tell that when this woman had been young, she had been beautiful.

She gazed off into the distance, her eyes filled with despair. It was hard

to tell what she was thinking. However, her heart clearly burned with an ever burning life force. It was as if her heart raged with incredible hatred.

A roaring sound filled Meng Hao's mind, and an intense, unprecedented coldness filled his face, the likes of which hadn't appeared for more than a hundred years. Even when facing the Black Bat, Meng Hao's fury was nothing compared to the feeling he was experiencing now.

His body trembled as his rage began to reach a pinnacle, a place where he could not control it. Coldness began to radiate off him in pulses. Ice appeared on the wooden planks beneath his feet, and enormous waves began to roll across the surface of the Violet Sea outside the outpost.

His brain suddenly filled with memories of the past.

"Senior, this is my older sister, Wu Ling."

"If you dare to deceive my little brother, then I won't rest until you're dead!"

"Senior, I, Wu Ling, am willing to do anything for my younger brother, anything! I can even be your...." The echoing voice in his mind seemed to transform into the old woman in front of him.

She had once been nothing but a young girl. The passage of time, however, had transformed her beauty into ancientness.

Meng Hao was just barely able to recognize this old woman as none other than... Wu Ling!

As for the other people who were hanging on the racks, Meng Hao recognized four or five of them. They were none other than... members of the Golden Crow Tribe!

As Meng Hao looked at the members of the Golden Crow Tribe, some of the surrounding Cultivators watched on and sighed. They glanced at the hanging Golden Crow Tribe members and talked about them in low voices.

"There are members of the Golden Crow Black Dragon Clan hanging in all of the ten outposts. They shouldn't have provoked the Heavenly Pursuit

Tribe and Patriarch Huyan.”

“The real one to blame is their former totemic Sacred Ancient. He actually killed Patriarch Huyan’s only son. That’s simply too much of a provocation. All of the powers in the Black Lands were completely astonished when it happened.”

“Heh heh. This collection of corpses and half-dead Cultivators is all to force the old Golden Grow Tribe totemic Sacred Ancient to show his face. If I remember correctly, his name is Meng Hao, right?”

“I even heard that the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe made an announcement that for every day Meng Hao doesn’t show up, the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe will kill one hundred members of the Golden Crow Tribe.”

The words stabbed into Meng Hao’s heart like sharp knives. His heart felt as if it were being ripped open. His face was pale white, and the ice beneath his feet grew even thicker.

His breath came in sharp stabs, and his eyes filled with veins of blood and a glow of red.

He had never imagined that Patriarch Huyan would actually... do something so heartless. Such deeds showed that he completely disregarded Meng Hao. This was the action of someone who felt himself to be in a position of vast superiority. Even though he knew that the crime had not been committed by Meng Hao, he still dragged him into the issue.

“Golden Crow Tribe....” The roaring of the Violet Sea grew even more intense. Quite a few of the Cultivators were looking out in astonishment. There were also some who had noticed that something seemed a little bit off about Meng Hao.

Among the group of fifty hanging on the racks, Wu Ling suddenly seemed to sense something. With great effort, she turned her head and... looked at Meng Hao.

The instant she saw him, an expression of shock filled her face.

Slowly, a smile spread out. Meng Hao looked at her, his expression one of guilt, but mostly, of unsurpassable fury.

As of this moment, the hushed conversations in the area had been interrupted by the churning of the Violet Sea. There were two sentences, however, which rung out into Meng Hao's ears.

“The Golden Crow Black Dragon Clan actually split because of this matter. The Black Dragon Tribe took the opportunity to once again stand on their own. The Golden Crow Tribe barely managed to escape complete calamity. I heard that the the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe actually went to war with them, and that the war is still raging even as we speak. There is no clear winner right now, but recently, the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe managed to capture about five hundred members of the Golden Crow Tribe.”

“The Golden Crow Tribe is still amazing, though. They are even more powerful than the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe anticipated. The Heavenly Pursuit Tribe has suffered quite a few casualties, and finally mobilized their entire Tribe to go to war.”

After hearing these words, the roaring Violet Sea outside the outpost suddenly exploded up. The coldness beneath Meng Hao's feet swept out in all directions, covering the entire outpost.

Everything had changed!

Chapter 537: Awaken, Mastiff!

Meng Hao's body trembled and his mind filled with roaring. Intense fury exploded out from within his heart.

"Heavenly Pursuit Tribe!!

"Huyan Yunming, you cretin!!"

The Violet Sea roared and coldness spread out in all directions, causing something that appeared like snowflakes to appear in the air. Within the outpost, all of the Cultivators were incapable of preventing a shudder from passing through their bodies. As for the ones near Meng Hao, they started to shake as they looked over at Meng Hao.

Figures appeared, surrounding Meng Hao, nine Nascent Soul Cultivators. The two old experts who were in charge of the outpost also appeared, floating in mid-air.

Next, the spell formation in the outpost activated completely. Roaring sounds echoed about as the entire area was enveloped with an enormous pressure that constantly pushed down on Meng Hao.

"Meng Hao," said the black-robed old man, "you ruthlessly slaughtered Conclave members of the Heavenly Court Alliance. Now you dare to show your face in this outpost? We have come here today to take your head!" Even as his voice echoed about the city, dozens of Alliance members appeared in the area. They sat there cross-legged, maintaining the rotation of the spell formation.

Meng Hao's eyes were bright red, and his heart dripped with blood. He did not kill Huyan Qing; in fact, in an attempt to prevent any misunderstandings, he annihilated the Black Bat and brought its head to offer explanation.

He simply didn't believe that Patriarch Huyan, with his level of Cultivation base and powers of insight, would not be able to read the clues surrounding Huyan Qing's death. Now he could see clearly that the damnable Huyan had no intention of discussing matters rationally.

“Patriarch Huyan, since you’re so dead set on dragging me into the matter, then... go ahead and consider Huyan Qing to have been killed by Meng Hao!” Setting his jaw with determination, he slapped his bag of holding to produce the head of the Black Bat. Before, he had viewed the head as all the proof needed to explain things clearly. Now, he simply waved his hand, causing it to explode into ash.

As the head transformed into ash, the killing intent in Meng Hao’s eyes exploded to incredible heights. His aura suddenly became icy to a shocking extent.

“Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, as long as I, Meng Hao, am alive on this earth, I will wipe out your Tribe and all your bloodlines!” With that, Meng Hao waved his sleeve, causing a powerful wind to kick up. It swept the dozens of Golden Crow Tribe members up off the racks and then deposited them on the ground.

After that, the wind transformed into life force, which nourished Wu Ling and the others, restoring them to health. As for the dead Tribe members, there was nothing that could be done for them now.

Including Wu Ling, there were four or five original Crow Divinity Tribe members who had traveled the long campaign trail with Meng Hao. When they saw Meng Hao, their bodies trembled and their eyes filled with intense excitement and determination. They immediately knelt and kowtowed to Meng Hao.

In the loudest voices they could possibly muster, they shouted out, releasing all the pressure and hope that existed within their hearts.

“Greetings, Sacred Ancient!!”

The other Tribe members were people who had been born in the past hundred years. They had never seen Meng Hao before, but they had seen his statue. Now that they were able to personally lay eyes on this most senior member of the Tribe, they began to tremble. Their faces pale, they ignored the weakened state of their body to drop to their knees and kowtow. They too shouted:

“Greetings, Sacred Ancient!!”

Their voices echoed out in all directions. When you added the words spoken by the black-robed old man, whose tone made it sound as if he were facing a mortal enemy, the rest of the Cultivators in the seventh outpost felt their hearts shaking. Their eyes went wide as they looked at Meng Hao. Now that they thought about it, all of them had heard legends about Meng Hao during the past hundred years.

Without a single exception, the legends spoke of how Meng Hao had single-handedly led his Tribe out from the Western Desert North region.

“That really is Meng Hao!!”

“The totemic Sacred Ancient of the Golden Crow Tribe! So, that’s him!”

As Meng Hao’s aura billowed up, and the surrounding Cultivators recognized who he was, cries of alarm could be heard. The faces of the nine Nascent Soul Cultivators from the Heavenly Court Alliance, as well as the two old men, instantly changed. They clenched their teeth and attacked, shooting directly toward Meng Hao.

At the same time, the roaring power of the spell formation descended onto Meng Hao. It was like some sort of intense pressure that caused his Cultivation base to weaken, limiting him to the mid Nascent Soul stage.

This was the full power of a spell formation that had been constructed by a Spirit Severing Patriarch of the Heavenly Court Alliance. Its power was extraordinary. Were it not, it wouldn’t have been set up as the ultimate weapon of the great outpost.

Even someone of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage would be severely weakened by the intense pressure from the spell formation. It was also this incredible power that caused the two old men stationed here to be so confident in being able to fight Meng Hao!

At the same time that the power of the spell formation descended, eleven Nascent Soul Cultivators appeared near Meng Hao, filled with killing intent. A blast of brilliant color could be seen as magical items, divine abilities, magical techniques, and totems were all unleashed in attack.

“You might be a totemic Sacred Ancient, but once you enter our outpost’s spell formation, your fate is sealed.... You’re dead for sure!” Cold laughter rang out, only to be interrupted by a shocking roar that exploded out from none other than Meng Hao.

As the sound roared out, Meng Hao’s voice could be heard, filled with sinister coldness and killing intent: “Third Anima!”

His voice could be heard almost at the same time that the attacks of the incoming eleven Nascent Soul Cultivators appeared. These men were clearly going all out against Meng Hao. It was also then that all of their faces instantly flickered, and their hearts filled with an unprecedented feeling of terror. The feeling was such that they had no choice but to instantly retreat.

As they retreated, the light caused by the various divine abilities and magical items dissipated to reveal, right there in the middle of the spell formation, a man who looked like somewhat like an Immortal Devil. Meng Hao!

His hair whipped about his head. Now that he was in the Third Anima, he was filled with the power of four great circle Nascent Soul Cultivators. The spell formation which enveloped him, while previously invisible, could now be seen in the form of a large net.

The net glittered brightly and emitted groaning sounds as if it were under great strain. Popping sounds rang out, and fissures appeared. As the fissures spread out, Meng Hao’s aura exploded out fearsomely. The aura caused all of the Cultivators in the city to be completely astonished.

That was especially true of the eleven Nascent Soul Cultivators. Their faces immediately filled with looks of disbelief, and they gasped. They couldn’t imagine how a Nascent Soul Cultivator could possibly fight back so strongly against the spell formation. From the look of it... the spell formation would be able to pin him down for only a very short period of time.

Unfortunately for them... their guesses were incorrect. Even as their faces fell and they speculated that Meng Hao wouldn’t be held in the spell

formation for very long, the gigantic web suddenly collapsed into pieces and vanished.

As the spell formation vanished, the entire outpost suddenly shook. Blood sprayed from the mouths of the ten Alliance Tribe members who had been maintaining the spell formation. A moment later, their bodies directly exploded, transforming into hazes of blood and gore.

The spell formation was simply not qualified to hold out against Meng Hao. In the blink of an eye, it was completely destroyed.

The moment the spell formation was wiped out, Meng Hao strode forward and waved his arm toward the astonished eleven Nascent Soul Cultivators.

The waving of his arm caused four times the battle prowess of a great circle Nascent Soul to explode out. It fused into the raging wind and exploded out. Bloodcurdling screams drifted out as nine of the eleven Nascent Soul Cultivators... were incapable of avoiding a force like that of crushing mountain. They could not dodge, nor could they resist. The wind cleaved the flesh from their bones and wiped away their screaming Nascent Souls.

Nine people... dead in an instant!!

Blood sprayed from the mouths of the most powerful Cultivators, the two old men, as they tumbled backward.

“Just what kind of Cultivator is he!?!?”

“That’s not an ordinary great circle Nascent Soul Cultivation base.... That’s halfway to Spirit Severing!”

As they tumbled backward, their physical bodies were shredded into pieces, leaving behind only their Nascent Souls. Letting out unprecedented shrieks of regret, they spared nothing in their attempts to flee at top speed, their hearts filled with ultimate terror.

The scene caused the rest of the Cultivators in the city to be filled with shock. They began trembling, their gazes filled with intense alarm and astonishment as they looked at Meng Hao.

He stood there, tall, hair flying about, his aura shocking to the extreme. The berserk aura of an Immortal Demon rose up, filled with killing intent. All of his fury had transformed into the desire to kill. All of that killing intent was focused on one thing...

Wiping out the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe!

If you kill one of my people, I'll kill a hundred of yours. You kill a hundred of mine, I will wipe out all of yours!

I didn't want to fight. I wanted to resolve the issue. I even came to this place with the head of the Black Bat for that very purpose. But, you place yourself on a pedestal. You believe yourself to be invincible. You saw no reason to talk reasonably with me. Well then, I might as well go to war!

Meng Hao's body suddenly flew up into the air. His eyes were red as he looked toward the two fleeing old men. He did not pursue them. Instead, he closed his eyes. His fury, his desire to kill, his determination, all transformed into an intense stimulation. It was a stimulation like tidewaters which poured into the blood-colored mask that rested inside his bag of holding. It reached inside and touched... the Blood Mastiff which had been asleep for nearly two hundred years!

It had now slept until the point that it was ready to awaken. The sensation had continued to grow stronger to Meng Hao after the Heavenly Tribulation. At that time, he felt that even without outside stimulation, the Mastiff would awaken within a few months.

"I need you, my mastiff....

"Awaken, my Blood Mastiff.... Together, we will bring war to the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe!

"Mastiff... AWAKEN!"

In that moment, the blood-colored mask inside his bag of holding began to shudder. The mastiff could sense Meng Hao's wrath. It could feel how much he desired to slaughter the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe. It could tell that Meng Hao needed it.

In that moment, a tremor ran through the mastiff's body. The blood-

colored eyes which it had not opened for nearly two hundred years, suddenly... completely opened!

The mastiff had awakened!

As soon as it opened its eyes, a boundless bloody glow erupted out from Meng Hao. It filled the sky in all directions, rapidly covering the entire area.

Before the two fleeing Nascent Souls could get very far, they were covered over by the bloody light. Piercing screams could be heard as the Nascent Souls melted into nothingness.

There is a phrase that goes like this: “rewards come only with risk.” However, there is a second line to the phrase: “Risk can also bring death!”

Chapter 538: Blood Mastiff Dao Protector!

Even as the two Nascent Souls died, the red glow, which filled the surrounding tens of thousands of meters, transformed into a red mist. The mist churned and seethed, rising up into the air in shocking fashion.

It changed; no longer was it wide and flat, but rather, spherical. In fact, from a distance, it looked like... an enormous red eyeball!

Anyone who looked at the eye would feel extreme fear and shock, and would even lose the ability to think clearly. The sight would cause the brain to fill with roaring, as if one were in the middle of a sea of blood, incapable of freeing oneself.

It seemed as if in this instant, all lives became the color of blood.

The eye was incredibly realistic, and was filled with a strange, demonic air. Red mist seethed, as if the eye were blinking. It was frightening to the extreme. In the very center of the gigantic eyeball appeared a vortex. It spun rapidly, transforming into a black hole.

The black hole seemed capable of consuming anything and everything. As soon as it appeared, the air in the area distorted, as if all the light in the area were being sucked in. Anyone who could see the scene would be horrified.

As the vortex spun, the black hole grew larger. 30 meters. 150 meters. 300 meters... 900 meters. In the end, it expanded outward until it was no less than 3,000 meters.

A red eye 30,000 meters wide. A black hole 3,000 wide, like a pupil. The vortex was the border between the pupil and the eye.

All of this completely shocked everyone who was in the outpost. The local Cultivators were trembling, their expressions that of utter astonishment and disbelief.

“What is that?!?”

“The Nascent Soul Cultivators are all dead, and it only took a moment! This Meng Hao... he’s... just what level Cultivation base does he have?!”

“Just what horrifying thing is he summoning?!”

Cold sweat began to drip down the foreheads of everyone present, and their breath came in ragged pants. A profound sense of deadly crisis filled their hearts. As of this moment, they were filled with an indescribable dread of Meng Hao. It was like they were in a nightmare from which they couldn't awaken, something that would be forever branded in their souls.

The surrounding Violet Sea was covered with huge waves. From within the black hole in the enormous eye, a roar could suddenly be heard.

AAAooooo!

The roar sounded like the howl of some type of beast. Everything shook and the air vibrated. The pupil within the gigantic red eye seemed to contract and then rapidly expand. Everything distorted, and the crowds of people in the outpost felt their hearts shaken.

It was a single roar, but it was as shocking as thunder. As it echoed out in the world, half of the people within the outpost began to bleed from their eyes, nose, mouth and ears, and then passed out, unconscious.

They were simply incapable of resisting the roar, which contained a Cultivation base power capable of filling the heart and mind with shock. One sound was filled with such intense pressure that it rendered people unconscious.

Cracking sounds could be heard coming from the airships and wooden planks that made up the outpost. The entire structure began to sink down. The surrounding Violet Sea churned violently, as if it, too, were roaring in response to the the howl coming from the red eye.

The remaining Cultivators who had not been rendered unconscious all had extraordinary Cultivation bases. However, their faces were pale as they expended incredible effort to endure. Their Cultivation bases rotated and they panted as they stared at the scene up above.

The instant the roar could be heard, a gigantic paw began to stretch out from the black hole. It had razor-sharp claws and luxuriant, long fur. The paw continued to stretch out revealing an entire limb.

The long hair flowed loosely and was filled with a barbaric, wild air, and the claws seemed capable of ripping the air open. Another ear-splitting roar could suddenly be heard from within the black hole.

A second paw appeared from within the black hole, and then a gigantic head. The roar shook everything.

The head was... incredibly large!

Red fur, ferocious fangs, and a savage, barbaric aura that exploded out.

The head was clearly that of a dog!

It waved back and forth, as if it were using all the power it could muster to emerge from the black hole. It surged forward, emerging in full, accompanied by a Heaven-shaking roar.

All that could be seen was a beam of red light that shot out violently from within the black hole. A vast, red mist rose up, and then just as quickly, disappeared. When it did, an enormous red figure could be seen standing there, straight and mighty.

It was huge, covered with loose, red fur. Bone spurs stuck out all over its body, making its appearance even more ferocious. Its gaze was filled with bloodthirstiness, like a Qilin or a Bloodlion. The level of incredible fierceness that it emanated was difficult to describe!

This was... the Blood Mastiff!

As soon as it appeared, an aura similar to the Spirit Severing stage exploded out from its body, and even emanated the feeling of a Domain. Meng Hao knew that this Domain was not inherently the mastiff's, but rather, branded to it by the Blood Immortal as part of its bloodline, and the Blood Immortal legacy.

Such a brand existed in all Blood Spirits. However, because of the unprecedented fusion it had experienced, it was able to completely manifest it. It was for the same reason that the mastiff had fallen asleep for nearly two hundred years. Now, though, it was fully awakened.

The mastiff lifted its head and roared, a sound which shook Heaven and

Earth. The sky dimmed and everything trembled. The Violet Sea seethed. All of the Cultivators who remained conscious in the outpost passed out.

Meng Hao looked at the mastiff, at its enormous frame, its fierce appearance, and its intrepid Cultivation base. However, even if the mastiff grew more fierce in appearance, to Meng Hao, it was the same, fluffy little puppy that had run along at his side all those years ago.

It was still his partner, the partner who had fought with him in the Blood Immortal legacy tournament, and had refused to leave his side.

It was the same mastiff who had stood guard over him atop that lonely mountain in the Blood Immortal legacy tournament. No matter how exhausted or injured it grew, even when it was on the verge of death, it refused to leave. It put its own life on the line to protect Meng Hao. Even when exhausted and nearing the point of death, all it wanted was for Meng Hao to lift his hand and pet its head.

Meng Hao would never forget all of that. He had watched as the mastiff, its body broken and nearly destroyed, crawled over to him and then exerted all the effort it could muster just to lick his hand.

Then he thought about how it had saved him during the encounter with the Li Clan Patriarch, using all its power to fling him out of the portal. Innumerable hands had stretched out to grab it, and it was pulled down into the sludge. Just before it disappeared, it had stuck its tongue out, as if in a final attempt to lick its master.

How could Meng Hao... possibly forget such things?!

"Blood Mastiff," he said softly, looking at the gigantic, ferocious mastiff. He saw the shocking spurs, and the astonishing aura it emanated.

His voice was soft, but the instant it left his mouth, the mastiff suddenly trembled. It turned its head and looked in confusion toward Meng Hao. But then, its expression turned gentle, even happy. It slowly lowered its head, allowing Meng Hao to rub its nose. It carefully extended its tongue to lick Meng Hao's hand.

As Meng Hao rubbed its nose, it emitted a contented growl, just like it

had when it was tiny.

Meng Hao smiled as he gently pet the mastiff. He thought about that time outside the Rebirth Cave when the mastiff, despite being asleep, had exerted all the power it could to extend a single paw.

“Hey buddy, I haven’t seen you for more than a hundred years....” he said softly. “Let’s go wipe out that damned Heavenly Pursuit Tribe!” His killing intent suddenly boiled up. At the same time, the mastiff’s killing intent exploded to the sky. It roared, the sound of which was like thunder. Meng Hao leaped up into the air, flying up to stand on the mastiff’s head. He waved his right hand, causing a massive wave to sweep out and pick up the Golden Crow Tribe members, as well as the bodies of their dead.

Under Meng Hao’s control, the Violet Sea’s power of extermination was restricted, ensuring that the Golden Crow Tribe members would not be harmed in any way.

Meng Hao looked at Wu Ling and the others. “We’re going together. There’s a debt of blood that can only be paid back... with blood!”

As soon as the words left his mouth, the mastiff roared again and then shot up into the sky, taking Meng Hao with it. Wu Ling and the other old-timers felt their blood beginning to grow hot, just like it had in the old days. They and the other Tribe members shot forward within the wave.

They did not leave for the Black Lands. Instead, they went to the nearest outpost, the ninth.

Under the orders of Patriarch Huyan, the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe had gone to war with the Golden Crow Tribe in order to force Meng Hao out. It had cost them quite a bit, but in the first battle, they had managed to capture five hundred prisoners. Those captives had been subjected to endless forms of torture. Their Cultivation bases had been ruined, and they were then sent to the ten outposts in the Western Desert Sea to be strung up!

They were hung out in the open, exposed to the elements. The entire purpose... was so that Meng Hao would see it. In Patriarch Huyan’s estimation, once Meng Hao saw, he would be forced to appear.

If he didn't, then his totems would be severely weakened and he would lose his faith power. In actuality, Meng Hao had long since reached the point where he didn't need either of those. He had successfully formed his Nascent Soul. As such, he was both a totemic Sacred Ancient, and... wasn't.

In any case, Patriarch Huyan had severely miscalculated. Meng Hao... would definitely appear.

However, the reason was because of sentiment, and because of the Golden Crow Tribe!

"Our slaughter... will begin with the ten outposts on the Violet Sea!"

The mastiff roared as it shot forward with the incredible speed of Spirit Severing. Meng Hao stood on top of its head, the wind whipping his clothes about. The killing intent in his eyes only continued to grow thicker, and his determination to exterminate the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe grew even stronger.

BOOM!

The second outpost soon became visible. After consulting with the former members of the Crow Divinity Tribe, he now knew that although the tenth outpost belonged to the Heavenly Court Alliance, it was mostly controlled by the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe.

The second, fifth, and ninth outposts were all the same. As for the seventh outpost which Meng Hao had already destroyed, the blame for that could be placed squarely on the shoulders of the two old men who had tried to kill him.

"I don't care what Tribe they belong to," said Meng Hao, his eyes glowing coldly, "anyone who dares to string up my Golden Crow Tribe members... deserves to die!"

There was no need for an order from Meng Hao. The Blood Mastiff's eyes glowed with red light as it neared the second outpost.

AAAAOOOOOOOOO!!

The sound of the roar created a sonic boom which sent mad, invisible power sweeping out. As it slammed into the outpost, a spell formation activated. However, it could only stand up to the roar for the space of a single breath before it collapsed into pieces.

At the same time, the Cultivators of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe within the outpost began to fly into the air, looks of shock on their faces. Before they could even react, a gale force wind swept toward them. Each and every Cultivator was instantly shredded into pieces, completely destroyed in body and soul.

An off-kilter roar of despair rose up from within the outpost. It belonged to a Cultivator who was at the peak of the late Nascent Soul stage. His body was trembling, and he was surrounded by the reek of blood. To see so many people slaughtered in front of his eyes was like something from a nightmare.

He knew that for a single roar to do that could only mean that he was facing... Spirit Severing!

“Your Excellency, who are you? We are Cultivators from the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe of the Heavenly Court Alliance!”

“I am the totemic Sacred Ancient of the Golden Crow Tribe, Meng Hao. I’m here to save my people and to eradicate the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe!”

*

I just had to include this official rendition of the mastiff again:



Chapter 539: Slaughtering the Outposts!

Meng Hao's voice was like a cold wind that blasted out in all directions. He pointed with the index finger of his right hand, causing a massive collection of Violet Qi to amass up ahead and form into the shape of a blade. It shot forward directly toward the peak late Nascent Soul Cultivator who had just spoken.

The Cultivator's face fell as he heard Meng Hao's cold, echoing words. His scalp went numb and he shot backward in astonishment, both hands performing an incantation gesture. Vast quantities of magical items appeared as he attempted to fight back.

When all of his defenses met Meng Hao's Violet Qi Guillotine, it was clear that they were so weak they couldn't stand up to a single attack. One after another, they shattered into pieces. Booms could be heard as the Violet Qi Guillotine sliced through the body of the Cultivator.

Blood exploded out into the air. The Heavenly Pursuit Tribe Cultivator trembled and looked down to see that his body had been completely cut in two. Even his Nascent Soul was destroyed.

The corpse splashed down into the Violet Sea and the mastiff let out another astonishing roar. The Heavenly Pursuit Tribe city guards in the outpost began to bleed from their eyes, ear, nose and mouth. One by one, regardless of the level of their Cultivation base, they dropped dead.

Regarding the other Cultivators in the city, Meng Hao didn't kill them.

He strode down from off of the mastiff until he stood in front of the fifty Golden Crow Tribe members strung up within the outpost.

More than twenty of them were already dead. The rest slowly opened their listless, sallow eyes. When they saw Meng Hao in front of them, they gaped.

Among the group were two old ones whose bodies began to tremble. Their eyes filled with unprecedented emotion.

"Exalted... exalted Sacred Ancient!!"

“Sir, it’s you....”

These two old ones had accompanied Meng Hao during the long migration and campaign of war of the Crow Divinity Tribe. They almost didn’t dare to believe what they were seeing. They had never imagined that it might be possible see their Sacred Ancient once again during their lives.

Meng Hao looked back at them, and his expression softened. “It’s me. I’ve... returned.”

He waved his right hand, sweeping up all the Golden Crow Tribe members into a wind that gently placed them onto the ground. The wind carried life force which nourished them. Wu Ling and the others who were being carried along by the wave instantly rushed over.

Excited shouts instantly could be heard from the members of the Golden Crow Tribe. Many of these people had never seen Meng Hao before, only his statue. However, as soon as they heard his words, indescribable emotions filled the hearts of everyone present. “Exalted Sacred Ancient... we offer our sincerest greetings!”

As for the old people, it suddenly caused them to recall all the struggles of the past years.

Meng Hao looked at them with similar thoughts. However, when he saw the corpses of the Tribe Members who had not survived, his heart filled with stabs of pain. His rage toward the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe grew only more intense.

“I’ve returned to take you with me... to collect a blood debt!” He turned and flew back up into the air. The Violet Sea roared as it swept up the Tribe members. Together, they moved onward.

Shortly thereafter....

The Blood Mastiff roared toward the first outpost. Massive paws rose up to attack the spell formation. A boom could be heard as it shattered into pieces. The Heavenly Court Alliance Cultivators who were maintaining it instantly exploded, destroyed in body and spirit.

As soon as Meng Hao arrived, the slaughter began. It didn't matter the Cultivation base involved. Core Formation. Nascent Soul. Any member of the Heavenly Court Alliance in the ten outposts who had dared to string up the Golden Crow Tribe members... were swept over by Meng Hao and exterminated.

The Tribe in control of the first outpost was the Wild Flame Tribe of the Heavenly Court Alliance. They watched the slaughter in shock. Two middle-aged men with the highest Cultivation bases recognized who Meng Hao was, and knew of his hatred and desire for revenge against the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe. It was without hesitation that they instantly turned and fled.

However, before they could get very far, two enormous arms suddenly stretched up from within the Violet Sea. The men were grabbed and then violently crushed. Bloodcurdling screams rang out, but were quickly cut off.

The wooden planks of the outpost ran with blood, which then flowed down into the Violet Sea.

After rescuing the Golden Crow Tribe members, Meng Hao led them all to the third outpost. Then the fourth, and the fifth....

Everywhere he went, the slaughter rose up to the sky. However... no amount of killing appeared capable of lessening Meng Hao's fury. Instead, he began to grow even more berserk.

The reason was because each outpost he went to, he found more and more corpses of the Golden Crow Tribe, and fewer survivors. In fact, at the eighth outpost, of the group of fifty, all had passed away. The corpses had even begun to rot.

The sight of it caused Meng Hao's body to tremble. He felt as if his entire person were on fire. Among the dead Tribe members were five whose faces he recognized. They had died with their eyes open, and within those eyes could be seen an enmity and desire for revenge that could not be wiped away even by death.

They would not close their eyes, nor would Meng Hao force them to. He

would allow these dead Golden Crow Tribe members to watch with their own eyes as the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe was eradicated.

Only then... could they close their eyes in death and be content.

Meng Hao flicked his sleeve and then headed toward the ninth outpost.

By now, several days had passed. Meng Hao was sure that his appearance had been noticed by certain parties. If his suppositions were correct, Patriarch Huyan would be arriving soon.

And that was exactly what Meng Hao was waiting for! Patriarch Huyan was of the Spirit Severing stage, but.... So what!?

With the mastiff here, and Meng Hao being the master of the Violet Sea, he could battle with the Spirit Severing stage. Not fighting was something he couldn't comprehend. Not fighting would leave his heart unsettled. Not fighting... was something he refused to do!

You want to drag me into the matter? Well, since there is no way to avoid a fight, then all of my explanations are useless. Fine, then... let's fight!

Patriarch Huyan, I am in the Violet Sea, waiting for you!

To Meng Hao, the Violet Sea was the most advantageous location to do battle. That was why he he had exterminated the members of the Heavenly Court Alliance in the outposts. He wanted the battle to be fought in the Violet Sea, not the Black Lands.

"You've forced me to fight, Patriarch Huyan. Well then, I will force you to fight on my home ground!" Despite the fact that his fury boiled up into the Heavens, Meng Hao was as calm as ever. He knew that his current actions would quickly be relayed to Patriarch Huyan, who would personally come, and soon.

The Devil Spear appeared in Meng Hao's hand. He hurled it out, causing a towering mist to appear as it shot toward the ninth outpost. By this point, Meng Hao had possessed the Devil Spear for more than a hundred years. Despite the fact that he had been in secluded meditation most of that time, the spear had continued to fade away.

Even still, after a hundred years had passed, it had not faded away completely.

The power of the spear slammed into the spell formation, inside of which were the Heavenly Court Alliance Cultivators of the ninth outpost, all ready to do battle.

It was impossible to tell exactly how the Heavenly Court Alliance had pulled it off, but there were even Cultivators inside who were not of the alliance, staring out at Meng Hao with intense killing intent. Within their eyes was also greed. There were seven hundred people in total, all of them brimming with the desire to slay Meng Hao.

Obviously, they had been promised of an enticing reward by the Heavenly Court Alliance if Meng Hao were to be killed.

As the Devil Spear neared, an arrogant voice rang out from within the outpost.

“Pour full power into the spell formation! Patriarch Huyan knows that this villain is here, and is on his way!!”

BANG!!

Even as the voice echoed out within the spell formation, the sound of an explosion rang out, interrupting the words. The spell formation shook violently; at the same time, vast quantities of black mist spread out, causing the spell formation to erode. Countless vicious faces could be seen consuming everything.

In only the space of a few breaths, the spell formation grew incredibly weak because of the corrosion of the Devil Spear. The faces, filled with excitement and persistence, suddenly burst through and shot toward the seven hundred Cultivators. Miserable screams suddenly lifted up into the air.

The area of the spell formation that the Devil Spear had struck corroded away until there was a huge hole. The black mist suddenly congealed together into the form of a face, exactly the same face that had belonged to the Devil Construct from years ago.

The face, filled with a greedy thirst for blood, transformed into a devilish mist that spread out to cover the entire ninth outpost. The only safe place was the location where the Golden Crow Tribe members were.

Meng Hao floated in mid-air. This was the first time he had completely wiped out the population of an entire outpost. In this case, these Cultivators had made their own choice to deliver themselves up to death.

The black Devil Spear mist roiled and churned. Intense, bloodcurdling screams could be heard for a few moments. Suddenly, seven or eight figures shot out from inside. Even as they did, Meng Hao waved his hand, causing them to scream and then explode into pieces.

The surrounding Violet Sea surged up with huge waves that submerged the outpost. The black mist shrank down to surround the Golden Crow Tribe members and bring them to Meng Hao.

There were only eight Tribe members who were still alive. As Meng Hao treated their injuries, his killing intent grew even more intense.

He turned, returning to stand on the mastiff's head. A great wave rose up in the Violet Sea to take the Golden Crow Tribe members as they headed toward the last of the outposts.

Almost in the same moment in which Meng Hao headed off, a black beam suddenly appeared near the Black Lands. It employed speed that far exceeded the Nascent Soul stage, even employed greater teleportation as it moved.

Within the black beam was a man wearing a black robe. This was apparently nothing more than Patriarch Huyan's clone!

His face was grim, and he did not speak. His body flickered as he teleported, growing ever nearer to the tenth outpost.

"Qing'er," he murmured, "today, father will achieve only half of the vengeance you deserve. Soon, I will find the person who actually killed you, and that person will die the most cruel death imaginable.

"Qing'er, no one in the world is qualified to kill you. Only me... Only I have that right." His eyes were filled with kindness. For some reason,

however, the kindness was bizarre. Anyone who saw it would feel cold, and their hair would stand on end in terror.

Chapter 540: Patriarch Huyan!

The tenth outpost was waiting, its spell formation fully activated in preparation to meet this deadly foe.

It was night now, and the light of the spell formation was not soft, but rather, resplendent. It shone out onto the waters of the sea with brilliant colors. The radiance of the light emanated a mighty aura which made it clear that this spell formation was far more powerful than the formations from the other outposts.

In fact, there was no way to compare them. The spell formation of the tenth outpost seemed so incredibly powerful that it would surely make it very difficult for Meng Hao to break through it.

In the middle of the spell formation, the Cultivators waited vigilantly, their Qi settled and their minds calm.

There were sixteen Nascent Soul Cultivators present who sat cross-legged, meditating. Three were at the peak of the late Nascent Soul stage. Those three sat in three different directions, each sharing a portion of the recoil caused by the spell formation.

There were even more Cultivators maintaining the general operation of the spell formation. The entire outpost was completely silent.

They knew of the destruction of the other nine outposts, and of the slaughter carried out by Meng Hao. They knew that they were about to face up against something completely terrifying.

However, they weren't very afraid. They knew that Patriarch Huyan was coming, and so had made up their minds to not leave the spell formation. They had quite a bit of trust in its strength, and believed that as long as they stuck together, Meng Hao would not be able to quickly break through.

As long as they could hold out until Patriarch Huyan arrived, then the sky would become clear after the storm, so to speak, and everything would return to normal. Meng Hao would assuredly be killed!

Virtually everyone in the tenth outpost felt the same way. Also within the spell formation was a tall rack, upon which hung the corpses of fifty members of the Golden Crow Tribe. Not a single one remained alive. They were all dead....

They had died days before, actually. Especially noteworthy was that one of the dead tribe members had no body, only the head, that of an old man. His Cultivation base had clearly been destroyed before he died, rendering him nothing but a mortal.

Also within the spell formation were two enormous war chariots shaped like crossbows. They glowed with a black radiance, and had an indistinct, fierce aura. Cultivators were mounted on the chariots, ready to use them at a moment's notice.

Time passed. Soon, the deepest hour of night approached. The sky was pitch black. The only sound that could be heard was the gentle rise and fall of the waves. All of a sudden, a beam of bright light appeared in the sky. It instantly caught the attention of all the Cultivators.

“He’s here!”

“This Meng Hao has really got some guts. However, it doesn’t matter that he dares to attack us. He’ll never be able to break through the spell formation!” Quite a few people were looking up with cold smiles on their faces. However, even as they looked up at the red glow....

The Violet Sea around the tenth outpost suddenly surged into a huge whirlpool. The whirlpool spun faster and faster, causing the faces of everyone in the outpost to flicker. The water seethed and the airships bobbed up and down. Booming filled the air.

Next, the bright beam of light in the air neared, and the mastiff’s enormous frame became visible. The crowds could also see Meng Hao standing on its head. He wore a long green robe, and his face was extremely grim and dark. An astonishing killing aura rose up around him.

Meng Hao’s eyes swept across the tenth outpost, then suddenly came to a stop. His pupils constricted as he stared at the corpses of the Golden Crow Tribe members hanging from the rack, and the head.

When he saw the head, his heart filled with stabs of pain.

It was Gu La!

“Patriarch Huyan....” he murmured. “Heavenly Pursuit Tribe.” The killing aura in his eyes changed, becoming ruthlessly dense. He looked down at the tenth outpost and pointed his finger.

Instantly, the Violet Sea roared as the whirlpool that surrounded the tenth outpost suddenly rose up into the air.

A massive pillar of seawater, three thousand meters in area, completely enveloped the outpost. Roaring filled the air. It was like the eruption of a geyser. The outpost’s spell formation was utterly incapable of standing up to such power. It immediately exploded.

At the same time, the vast collection of airships began to shatter into pieces. The crowds of Cultivators in the outpost were screaming miserably. They couldn’t even control their own bodies as they were swept into the seawater. As soon as they touched it, the death will in the seawater collided with their life forces, causing the power of extermination to erupt.

In the blink of an eye, before any of the Cultivators could even use a divine ability, their bodies burst. They could not fight back, or block, or evade!

All of their power had been focused in defending against attacks from above. All their plans had been based on the reports regarding Meng Hao’s Cultivation base and the fearsomeness of the mastiff. They hadn’t prepared for... an explosive attack by the Violet Sea!

How could they ever have imagined that someone could actually control... the Western Desert’s Apocalyptic Violet Sea!?

It was impossible to believe that someone could even enter into the Violet Sea. Therefore, the outpost’s seemingly fierce and powerful spell formation had a fatal flaw: it had no bottom!

Roaring filled the air as the entire tenth outpost was completely scattered and smashed. All the advanced preparations that had been made

were crushed like dry weeds under the power of the Apocalyptic Violet Sea. The two war chariots weren't even able to make a single attack before they were crushed by the seawater and destroyed.

Crowds of people died without Meng Hao having to make a single attack of his own. A mere thought on his part caused the Violet Sea to explode out, completely burying the tenth outpost.

This was his home ground!

The Western Desert Violet Sea!

The corpses sank down, and the wreckage floated about. Not a single person in the tenth outpost was capable of existing within the exterminating power of the Violet Sea. All of them... were dead!

Death is oftentimes quite simple.

Life is oftentimes quite fragile.

People who have never witnessed death might not understand these two statements. Sometimes, only after witnessing many deaths can one truly understand life.

Meng Hao hovered in mid-air looking down at the death below him. He said nothing. The waters of the Violet Sea that had shot up into the air now transformed into a violet rain that slowly fell back down onto the wreckage below.

Meng Hao slowly lifted his head to gaze off into the distant sky.

In the gigantic wave on the Violet Sea, there were now more than a hundred living members of the Golden Crow Tribe. The rest... were all corpses.

The living members were only there because Meng Hao had saved them. Had only a few more days passed, all of them would have been dead.

This number of deaths was actually somewhat trivial when compared to how many people had died during the migration. However, these deaths were fundamentally avoidable. Furthermore, the entire matter actually had nothing to do with the Golden Crow Tribe.

Even Meng Hao was a victim in this case. By now, Meng Hao was certain that Patriarch Huyan knew the truth of what had happened.

He stood there silently atop the mastiff, glancing around coldly.

He was waiting. Waiting for Patriarch Huyan to arrive!

Before too much time passed, a black beam appeared in the sky that was even blacker than the night. As it approached it kicked up a shocking windstorm.

Within the windstorm was a middle-aged man dressed in a black robe. His hands were clasped behind his back as he strode through the air.

His long hair whipped about in the wind, and his eyes were piercingly bright. The aura that he emitted made him seem as if he were fused with Heaven and Earth. It seemed to contain its own law of nature that, in the blink of an eye, made the man suddenly translucent.

Suddenly, a Domain which exterminated emotion began to interfere with Heaven and Earth, enveloping everything. Around Meng Hao, black snowflakes suddenly began to flutter down.

This was Patriarch Huyan!

“Meng Hao!” he said coldly as he strode through the air. Cracking sounds could suddenly be heard from the Violet Sea beneath him as layers of ice formed.

Even the surrounding air began to freeze as a black snowstorm surrounded Patriarch Huyan. Another sound rang out, something that was like tens of thousands of voices all calling out Meng Hao’s name.

A power Meng Hao had never encountered before suddenly descended. It was like a natural law within the area. It appeared in Meng Hao’s mind and then transformed into an unprecedentedly loud noise that exceeded that of thunder and lightning.

It was as if it were calling out to deceased souls, trying to collect together the broken spirits. Actually, Patriarch Huyan’s divine ability could better be described as...

A shocking call of broken souls!

The coldness in the area seemed to be filled with emotionlessness. The coldness of the voices seemed to contain a heavenly might based on the lack of emotion. The sounds fused together, transforming into something like a rule of law... that could not be ignored!

This was the Spirit Severing stage. A simple sound was enough to exterminate all Nascent Soul Cultivators. Even someone of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage was puny to the extreme in front of a Spirit Severing Cultivator.

Boom!

Meng Hao's mind trembled, and his soul felt as if it were going to shatter and explode out of his body. The flame of his life flickered, as if it were about to be snuffed out. However... he was not an ordinary Nascent Soul Cultivator. He had a Perfect Nascent Soul Cultivation base with Divine Sense that had a range of 29,999 meters.

His seven Nascent Souls sat cross-legged in his dantian region, eyes closed, almost as if sleeping. Suddenly, all of their eyes snapped open.

In that instant, the power of Meng Hao's Divine Sense exploded up within him, fighting back against the power of law that was being levied against him.

Roaring filled the air as Meng Hao retreated backward. He lifted his head up, and his eyes were bright and clear.

"So, you're Patriarch Huyan!" he said slowly, looking at the approaching middle-aged man. Meng Hao's eyes shone with a fierce glow. He had seen this man before, of course. It was the same person who had tried to kill him when he left the Black Lands.

Even as he spoke, Meng Hao's expression began to radiate killing intent. He remembered hearing Zhixiang say that this man... was merely a clone!

Patriarch Huyan's eyes glittered, as if he found it very strange that Meng Hao was able to recover from his power of law. He continued forward nonetheless, not stopping for a moment as he approached Meng Hao.

Such action had a lot to do with his personality, and Huyan Yunming's special fighting style. Any time he fought someone, he would push down on them with an intense pressure.

As he neared Meng Hao, it seemed as if his aura grew even stronger, fusing together with the surroundings, becoming inseparable.

The might of Spirit Severing was impossible to overlook. The surroundings seemed to be changing only because of him.

Patriarch Huyan didn't even look at the wreckage floating on the surface of the Violet Sea, as if he didn't care about it at all. "Answer me. Who killed my only son, Huyan Qing?"

He suddenly stopped in mid-air. His voice echoed out, and his expression was calm, even cool. He glanced over Meng Hao, and then the mastiff. At that point, his pupils constricted.

*

1. What I'm translating as "emotionless" could also be translated as merciless, ruthless, apathetic and cold.

Chapter 541: Battle!

After hearing Patriarch Huyan's words, Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever. That was his personality. The more he wanted to kill someone, the less he spoke. From the words Patriarch Huyan had spoken just now, it was obvious that he was well aware of what had actually happened.

"What's the point in more talk?" said Meng Hao coolly. "You want to fight? Let's fight." As he spoke, he lifted up his right hand and made a snatching motion. Instantly, the black Devil Spear appeared in his hand. He hurled it out, causing a boom to ring out as the spear shot forward at an incredible speed.

As it screamed through the air, roaring sounds could be heard coming from the spear as boundless black mist appeared. Within the mist were innumerable vicious faces. Their bloodthirsty smiles were filled with greed.

In some indistinct way, the mist actually seemed to be forming into an enormous head. It was the head... of the Devil Construct!

The Devil Spear had now completely unleashed the explosive power of Demon Weapon Lonelytomb's Devil Construct. It shot through the air with a droning sound.

The spear had nothing to do with Meng Hao's Cultivation base. Its mightiness was completely self-contained. However, it was still nothing but a strand of a Devil Construct that couldn't even compare to the real Demon Weapon Lonelytomb.

Even still, when the Devil Spear exploded out, it was powerful enough to slay any Nascent Soul Cultivator. As for Spirit Severing... Meng Hao wasn't sure. Therefore, he had decided to test it out.

"Area," said Patriarch Huyan, his voice calm and his expression unchanging. He lifted his right hand and then gestured forward. Instantly, everything within three hundred meters turned into his own Area world!

This divine ability was little different than natural law. It was a magical ability belonging to the Spirit Severing stage. The Area was not large, only three hundred meters. A three hundred meter Area which was a world only his own. Within that world, Patriarch Huyan had ultimate power. No divine abilities or magical techniques would be capable of breaking open the Area to harm him in any way.

This is what sets Spirit Severing completely above Nascent Soul. In the Spirit Severing stage, divine abilities become natural laws!

Nothing within the three hundred meter Area seemed unusual. However, in that instant, Meng Hao could sense that Patriarch Huyan had turned the space surrounding him into his own world.

A boom could be heard. As soon as the Devil Spear entered the three hundred meter region, it was defeated and transformed into a black mist. The mist spread out as if it were trying to infect the area, but Meng Hao could tell that it was actually fighting back against the world around it.

Such formidableness, such usage of natural law, was the first time that Meng Hao personally experienced the mightiness of Spirit Severing. Patriarch Reliance ran away without fighting. At Holy Snow City, he had been fused with the Agarwood legacy.

Outside of Blackgate Fort, Zhixiang had stepped in.

This was the first time Meng Hao was truly facing up against a Spirit Severing expert.

“Childish,” said Patriarch Huyan. He moved forward, causing the sense of pressure to grow even more intense. He didn’t even attack; he simply advanced. As he did, the three hundred meter Space went along with him. The mist that was the Devil Spear seemed to be completely suppressed by the world around it. Popping sounds could be heard from inside as it shrank down on itself. The countless faces sucked inward, transforming into the head of the Devil Construct.

The expression on its face was one of unprecedented seriousness. Underneath the suppressive pressure, it began to howl. It then started to back up, dissipating the entire time, as if it were on the verge of being

destroyed. Patriarch Huyan neared it, and it was at this moment that the Devil Construct exploded into action. Suddenly, Demonic Qi began to shot toward it from all directions, transforming into ripples that fought against the Area world and enabled the Devil Construct to successfully escape.

It fled, surrounding by roaring sounds, to return to Meng Hao. The black mist was now extremely faint, as if it were on the verge of dissipating completely. Meng Hao collected it up grimly. As of this point, Patriarch Huyan was about three hundred meters away from Meng Hao.

Meng Hao backed up. Even at this distance of three hundred meters, he could clearly sense the fearsomeness of a Spirit Severing expert.

“There’s no need to feel resentment,” Patriarch Huyan said calmly as he looked at Meng Hao. “I understand how Karma works. If you want to blame something, blame your own bad luck.”

At this moment, the mastiff lifted its head up and howled, the sound of which caused everything to shake. Suddenly, power exploded out, revealing its Spirit Severing aura.

As soon as the aura appeared, Patriarch Huyan’s pupils constricted. He looked over at the mastiff with a serious look.

At the same time, a bloody glow began to shine out from the mastiff’s eyes. It suddenly shot forward, entering into Patriarch Huyan’s three hundred meter Area. As soon as it entered, the Area began to distort.

It roared again, causing red-colored ripples to emanate out from its body. They spread out in all directions, coming into contact with Patriarch Huyan’s Area. Patriarch Huyan’s face went pale, as if all the blood in his body were suddenly flowing in reverse.

A fierce glow shone up from his eyes. This entire time, he had been moving forward, but now, he stopped.

He gave the mastiff a closer look and then slowly said, “One moment of contact, and it cost me ten percent of my Essence Blood. This Immortal Beast isn’t bad at all. It clearly has gained enlightenment from a Spirit Severing legacy, but isn’t of Spirit Severing itself. Still... such a will of

undeath is truly rare.”

A tremor ran through the mastiff’s body as it was suddenly pushed back several paces. It let out a threatening growl as it stared fixedly at Patriarch Huyan.

The Blood Mastiff’s Domain was exactly as Patriarch Huyan had said. It was acquired via a legacy, and had not been gained from personal enlightenment. However, the legacy Domain of the Blood Immortal was no trivial matter; it was a will of undeath!

The First Severing had been a Severing of blood! All the blood in the body, Severed!

Blood represents life. Therefore, Severing blood is equivalent to severing life! Life without death is... undeath!

Therefore, this Domain of undeath could affect natural laws, and create a world in which blood was prohibited!

Almost in the same moment in which the invisible struggle between the Blood Mastiff and Patriarch Huyan unfolded, Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. Having tested out Patriarch Huyan’s strength, he was now able to form somewhat of an image in his mind, clarifying the differences between himself and Spirit Severing.

“I... CAN fight it!” He strode forward two paces. With those two steps, roaring filled his body as he entered the Second Anima. The power of two great circle Nascent Souls exploded out in his body.

His aura radiated out like a whirlwind. His body grew taller and more intrepid. He took a third step, and instantly, entered the Third Anima of his Seven Animas Soul Transformations. The combination of three Nascent Souls caused his body to explode with battle prowess equivalent to four great circle Nascent Souls. He grew taller and even more powerful.

“Even if you do possess some temporary way to magically power up,” said Patriarch Huyan coolly, “it is still... thinking far too much of yourself!” He waved his sleeve, causing the three hundred meter Area to distort in ripples toward the mastiff. The mastiff let out a growling roar as bloody

light exploded up from its body. It also manifested an Area world to fight back, although it was only about 250 meters.

Battles of Spirit Severing were different from those of Nascent Soul Cultivators. All Spirit Severing Cultivators have Area worlds. Without breaking the Area world, the Spirit Severing Cultivator is incapable of being harmed.

Between the Mastiff and Patriarch Huyan, the Area worlds opposed each other. Meng Hao's wind whipped about, and his aura shot up. He took a fourth step forward.

Four Nascent Souls combined. Popping sounds rang out in waves as Meng Hao's body grew even taller and stronger. The aura of a scholar was now gone, replaced instead by the evil sense of an Immortal Devil. The battle prowess of eight full circle Nascent Souls exploded out.

Such battle prowess, such energy, caused the wind in the area to scream into a vortex that swirled around Meng Hao. His clothes danced in the wind, and his eyes shone with a blinding light. At this point, even Patriarch Huyan couldn't help but be visibly affected by such power.

Patriarch Huyan had never encountered another great circle Nascent Soul Cultivator as powerful or shocking as Meng Hao. Such fearsome strength would enable him to sweep across the entire Nascent Soul stage.

"You have an excellent temporary power up magic...." said thoughtfully, his eyes narrowing.

It was at this point that Meng Hao took a fifth step, his eyes fixed dead on Patriarch Huyan. As of this point, he had now entered Patriarch Huyan's three hundred meter Area.

The instant it happened, Meng Hao felt an incredible sense of pressure weighing down on him from the Area world. It felt like a mountain had suddenly been dropped onto his body, to crush it into a pulp. As soon as that incredible pressure weighed down on him, however, Meng Hao's body emitted a roar as five colors united and he entered the Fifth Anima!

With the Fifth Anima came sixteen times the battle prowess of a great

circle Nascent Soul. Such explosive power fought back against the enormous pressure exerted by the three hundred meter Area, causing distortions to ripple out.

The sight of it made Patriarch Huyan to feel thorough astonishment.

The three hundred meter Area was something that would make the heads of any Nascent Soul Cultivator bow, even one of the great circle. All Patriarch Huyan would have to do is exercise a thought, and that person would be crushed into pieces.

Meng Hao, however, was using some astonishing technique to make himself terrifyingly powerful and fight back against his three hundred meter Area.

“I can’t let him live,” thought Patriarch Huyan. “He’s only at the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, and already has such terrifying power. If he ever Severs his Spirit....”

It was the first time he seemed to be taking the situation seriously. His killing intent grew, and he let out a cold harrumph. He immediately took a portion of the three hundred meter Area which was resisting the Blood Mastiff, and sent it crushing down onto Meng Hao.

“You’ll be reaching your limit any second now, won’t you!? In front of Spirit Severing... it doesn’t matter how powerful your Nascent Soul, you’re nothing but an insect!”

Even as Patriarch Huyan sent the Area pressure bearing down onto Meng Hao, Meng Hao set his jaw. A tremor ran through his body, and his eyes shone with a cold, fierce light.

“Sixth Anima!”

Boom!

Six colors combined. Meng Hao grew taller, and looked just like an Immortal Devil. An indescribably aura of valiance skyrocketed up. He now possessed a Cultivation base equivalent to thirty-two great circle Nascent Souls. This was a level of Nascent Soul power that had never been seen before in the Cultivation world!

Chapter 542: Clever Mastiff!

As he faced up against the pressure from the three hundred meter Area, Meng Hao focused all the power of his Sixth Anima Cultivation base into his hands. He lifted them up and then made a ripping motion.

In response, the air in front of him distorted, and a snapping sound could be heard. It was as if some shapeless obstacle had suddenly been torn. Meng Hao's body suddenly grew more relaxed, as if the invisible pressure had suddenly been removed.

"Mastiff!" said Meng Hao, charging forward. The mastiff howled, causing its two hundred fifty meter Area to focus around Meng Hao, following him as he shot toward Patriarch Huyan.

For the second time, Patriarch Huyan's expression changed because of Meng Hao.

He gave a cold harrumph. As Meng Hao and the Mastiff neared, he lifted his right hand and flicked his sleeve out in front of him. No magical item appeared, nor any divine ability. The sleeve was flicked casually. However, for a Spirit Severing Patriarch, the simple flick of a sleeve would explode out with incredible power.

The three hundred meter Area shrunk down to only one hundred fifty meters, causing its strength to double in intensity. The Area pushed down on everything with an incredible pressure that could suppress all divine abilities. Roaring filled the air as it slammed into Meng Hao and the mastiff and the one hundred fifty meter mark.

Booming sounds rose up into the sky. Meng Hao's right hand clenched into a fist and punched down. Roaring filled his body, as if this fist was capable of causing mountains to tremble. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth, but his eyes glittered with a cold light. Thanks to this battle, he was now forming a much better understanding of Spirit Severing.

The mastiff's entire body trembled as it exploded with increased ferocity. The bloody light emanating from it pierced into the one hundred fifty meter Area. It also surrounded Meng Hao, forming a mighty power,

allowing him to push forward with irresistible force.

Meng Hao shot directly toward Patriarch Huyan. He stabbed clean through the one hundred fifty meter Area until he actually made contact with Patriarch Huyan!

BAM!

Blood flowed out from Patriarch Huyan's mouth, and he was forced to retreat several paces. The bright glow in his eyes grew more intense. His one hundred fifty meter Area suddenly shrunk under the power of the attacks against it. It rebounded into a seventy-five meter Area before finally counterbalancing the attacks from Meng Hao and the mastiff.

"This Immortal Beast is incredibly devious! It was actually concealing its true power!!" Patriarch Huyan's eyes glittered with killing intent. His expression gradually became tranquil again. However, despite the calm look, he was shaken inwardly. To encounter a Nascent Soul Cultivator who could shake his Spirit Severing Area in such a way caused his desire to kill Meng Hao to grow even stronger. Before Meng Hao could back up, Patriarch Huyan advanced toward him along with his seventy-five meter Area.

"After I kill you, I'll skin this Immortal Beast and then debone it!" he said, his voice calm. Although his words contained no ripples of power, the killing intent they contained was incredibly obvious.

The seventy-five meter Area was like a restricted zone; entering it would result in immediate injury. As it moved forward, the air vibrated. Seeing that it was about to reach Meng Hao, the mastiff howled, and its eyes filled with a fierce glow. It had grown up with Meng Hao, so in terms of conning people, you could say that it had inherited the ability from its master.

Its own Area shrank and then shot forward. Its paws lifted into the air as it charged in a vicious attack.

Its claws were incredibly sharp. They slashed through the air toward Patriarch Huyan's advancing Area. Booms filled the air, and Patriarch Huyan's entire body shook. He suddenly stopped moving. At the same time, the Blood Mastiff trembled and coughed up a mouthful of life Qi.

Then, without even the slightest fear of death, it charged again.

This time, it didn't attack with its claws. It did not use its teeth either. Instead, it butted viciously with its head. This was Meng Hao's mastiff, and even if it died, it would protect Meng Hao and kill his enemies!

BANG!

More blood oozed out of Patriarch Huyan's mouth, and he was forced backward again. He looked at the fierce and increasingly vicious mastiff, and his killing intent soared to the Heavens. He now felt an unprecedented jealousy regarding Meng Hao.

"Damnable Immortal Beast!! It... it was hiding even more power than it revealed before!! Immortal Beasts as treacherous as this are hard to come by!"

Even as Patriarch Huyan defended himself yet again, Meng Hao's cold voice suddenly rang out.

"Seventh Anima!"

Boom!

Meng Hao's body grew rapidly once again. A violent, raging tempest sprang up around him. The sky dimmed and everything shook. His fleshly body grew even more powerful, to an astonishing degree. He now had far more power than thirty-two great circle Nascent Souls. Now he had... sixty-four!

A Nascent Soul Cultivator like this was unparalleled in history. Most likely, there would never be someone similar in the future, either. Meng Hao's hair whipped about. He was incredibly tall now, like an Immortal Demon. The strength of his fleshly body, his majestic battle prowess, and his incredible aura could shake the Heavens and Earth.

As of this moment, he was the most powerful of Nascent Soul Cultivators, someone who could fight the Spirit Severing stage!

He was now over half a meter taller than his original height. His shoulders were broad, his posture ramrod straight. He looked like a Devil

Divinity, emanating an aura that would cause anyone to pant. His eyes were cold and sharp in such a way that made it seem as if everything in the area would surely freeze.

“Impossible!” Patriarch Huyan’s face fell. As of this moment, Meng Hao was emanating an unprecedented pressure, something that Patriarch Huyan would only expect to see when facing up against someone of the same stage as himself!

At the same moment in which Patriarch Huyan’s seventy-five meter Area neared Meng Hao, Meng Hao unhesitatingly shot forward. Relying only on the strength of his fleshly body, he charged directly into the seventy-five meter Area.

BANG!

Distorted ripples spread out through the seventy-five meter Area. It shrank down, turning into a thirty meter Area. Meng Hao, the spitting image of a Devil Divinity, immediately appeared thirty meters away from the shocked Patriarch Huyan. He clenched his fist and punched.

This was not a divine ability, or a magical technique. There was no magical item involved. This was just the terrifying power of his fleshly body. The battle prowess of sixty-four great circle Nascent Souls, fused together. It formed... a shocking punch that had never before been seen in the Nascent Soul stage of the Cultivation world!

BOOMMMMM!

Meng Hao’s punch completely shattered the thirty meter Area, breaking it up into countless pieces that exploded out in all directions. A Spirit Severing Area, shattered!

In the same moment, the mastiff howled and shot forward like lightning. Even as the Spirit Severing Area collapsed, it charged Patriarch Huyan, its sharp, awe-inspiring fangs savagely biting down.

BAM!

Patriarch Huyan waved both hands forward to block. His body shook violently, and he was sent tumbling backward, his face filling with an

expression of utter disbelief and shock. He could never have possibly imagined that his Spirit Severing Area would be broken to pieces by a Nascent Soul Cultivator.

Even as it was happening, he could scarcely believe it. As of now, his desire to kill Meng Hao had reached a pinnacle. In fact, deep in his heart, he had begun to regret provoking Meng Hao.

A powerful expert like this, someone from the Nascent Soul stage who could battle against the Spirit Severing stage, was like a nightmare to any Cultivator. If he were not killed, it would likely result in the calamitous extermination of an entire Tribe.

“You WILL die this day!” howled Patriarch Huyan. His eyes narrowed as he looked at Meng Hao, who was currently behind the mastiff. Meng Hao’s intrepid fleshly body caused Patriarch Huyan to pause momentarily as feelings of jealousy rose up within him. He suddenly performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing the image of an enormous wheel to suddenly appear in front of him.

It was in this moment that Meng Hao shot forward through the air with another punch.

In the blink of an eye, he was closing in on Patriarch Huyan....

“Wheel of Time, Universal Death! First Rotation, Time Destruction!” He performed a final incantation and then pushed his hand forward. The illusory image in front of him suddenly became clear. It was a black chariot wheel!

It emanated the archaic feeling of time, and was branded with countless magical symbols. The magical symbols flickered with light as the wheel suddenly began to rotate.

Meng Hao’s fist descended, and was just about to slam into the wheel, when suddenly an intense feeling filled his mind. The mastiff sensed it a bit faster; it suddenly grabbed him with his mouth and shot backward with him in retreat.

At the same time, boundless Time power exploded out from the wheel.

This type of power was different than the type that Meng Hao wielded. This power was that of reversal. Meng Hao was astonished to see that even as he retreated, the Area which he had shattered was being restored. After having retreated more than sixty meters, Meng Hao's Seventh Anima was beginning to dissolve.

Patriarch Huyan smiled coldly, and his eyes shone with a cold disdain. He suddenly vanished, then shockingly reappeared right behind Meng Hao. He reached out and then gestured forward with his finger. The mastiff howled, and red light expanded as it shot forward to block the finger attack.

Patriarch Huyan frowned and cursed inwardly as he forced the attack to complete. Booms could be heard as the red light shattered. Ignoring the incoming Blood Mastiff and its gaping mouth, Patriarch Huyan continued to stab his finger toward Meng Hao's back.

The finger attack landed, and a roaring could be heard. However, what it hit was layers of Eyeless Larva silk! The silk prevented ninety percent of the force of the blow from hitting Meng Hao.

The remaining ten percent slammed into Meng Hao, causing blood to spray from his mouth. As he tumbled forward, Patriarch Huyan was just about to pursue when the mastiff bit down. Patriarch Huyan trembled violently and blood sprayed from his mouth. He was forced to retreat backward several paces and abandon pursuit of Meng Hao.

"Tough little bastard!" said Patriarch Huyan through gritted teeth. He could only watch as Meng Hao sped away from him, while he was held up by the frenzied, crimson mastiff. Unable to pursue, he could only let out a cold harrumph. He knew that the power of Time was still going to envelop Meng Hao, and that there was nothing he could do to escape it.

"Since that's the case," said Patriarch Huyan, performing an incantation gesture, "I'll just slaughter this little animal of yours!" Booming filled the air and the mastiff howled as its Area was shattered. However, the red glow coming off of its body suddenly transformed into countless red spikes that shot toward Patriarch Huyan. The battle between the two

instantly exploded out. At the same time, Patriarch Huyan's eyes flickered as he continuously sought an opportunity to kill Meng Hao.

All of these things happened in the time it takes a spark to fly up off of a piece of flint. The blood that had sprayed from Meng Hao's mouth as he was sent tumbling suddenly seemed as if it was about to return into his mouth.

Chapter 543: Seizing Treasures!

This power of Time gave Meng Hao an intense sense of grave crisis. As the blood moved backward toward him, violet light suddenly flickered in his eyes. The East Pill Division catalysis technique, the Time magic from Han Bei of the Black Sieve Sect, and the technique he had learned from the jade page, all combined into a branding mark that Meng Hao placed onto the mouthful of blood.

This was also a power of Time. However, instead of causing Time to flow backward, it did the opposite. The power exploded out, fighting back at the power from the Wheel of Time. Roaring rose up into the air. At the same time, Patriarch Huyan was incapable of avoiding the mastiff, which teleported in to once again wound him with its slashing claws. Meng Hao's body was currently recovering. He suddenly transformed into a green smoke and a black moon, disappearing in the blink of an eye.

Patriarch Huyan made a slight, "Eee?" sound. By this point, Meng Hao had already reappeared in mid-air, blood seeping out of the corners of his mouth. There was no time to wipe it away. He looked over at Patriarch Huyan, his eyes glittered with killing intent.

"Blood Mastiff!" bellowed Meng Hao. He shot up into the air, performing an incantation and then waving his arm. Instantly, an enormous face appeared. Simultaneously, the mastiff began to glow with a bright, bloody light that merged into the blood-colored face.

Combining the Blood Immortal divine ability with the power of the Blood Mastiff resulted in... a true Blood Immortal magic!

Before the mastiff had awakened, what Meng Hao could utilize could be counted as skills lacking true magic. Now, however, he was using true magic, a true divine ability!

The fact that Meng Hao was able to evade the Wheel of Time left Patriarch Huyan amazed yet again. That was especially so because the method he had used to escape the Time reversal technique... was also Time!

“Your name isn’t Meng! It’s Han!” said Patriarch Huyan. This caused Meng Hao’s pupils to constrict, and gave birth to a new idea. He did not respond to the words. Instead, he caused the battle prowess of sixty-four Nascent Souls to explode out. Instantly, the blood-colored face transformed into sixty-four separate faces, which transformed into ghost images that then superimposed over each other. Then they combined and shot toward Patriarch Huyan.

As the blood-colored faces whizzed forward through the air, Meng Hao slapped his bag of holding to produce his Wooden Time Swords. He did not employ their power of Time, but rather treated them as ordinary flying swords. They stabbed through the blood-colored face and then shot toward Patriarch Huyan.

Patriarch Huyan frowned. He had a sneaky suspicion about what was going on. His right hand lifted up as he flashed an incantation gesture then pointed toward the Wheel of Time. Instantly, the ancient, black chariot wheel began to spin again. The power of Time then exploded out.

A massive roaring sound could be heard. Ripples caused the Violet Sea down below to seethe. Meng Hao’s Blood Immortal divine ability face suddenly began to wither. In the blink of an eye it transformed into gray ash.

It was at this point that the Time Sword Formation appeared. The formation trembled as it shot out. For some reason, the formation seemed somewhat different than it had in the past.

It was as if encountering this new power of Time had somehow changed the Time Sword Formation.

At the same time, Patriarch Huyan’s Wheel of Time suddenly stopped moving and seemed to fade. The Time power inside of it was as boundless as ever, though. Patriarch Huyan performed an incantation and pointed, causing the black wheel to fly screaming through the air toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao continued to shoot backward in retreat. He spit out a mouthful of blood and then produced a medicinal pill which he

immediately consumed. He then made a grasping motion with his right hand, causing the Devil Spear to appear. Although it appeared to be much more faint than before, there were still countless vicious, howling faces within its mist.

Without hesitation, Meng Hao shot backward, hurling the Devil Spear out. It buzzed through the air as it headed toward the black chariot wheel.

Next, Meng Hao's eyes began to shine with a strange light. He flicked his right sleeve, and at the same time, sent his Divine Sense into the Blood Immortal mask. Considering that he was currently in the Seventh Anima, as soon as his Divine Sense touched the flag of three streamers, he was able to fully employ the true power of the first streamer of the flag.

The air around him vibrated and distorted as a streamer as red as the color of blood suddenly appeared in Meng Hao's hand. It rippled in the air as Meng Hao waved it, causing a blood-like wind to suddenly rise up!

This was different from the times Meng Hao had wielded the flag of three streamers on previous occasions. This was the true manifestation of the first streamer, and was not illusory like before. The blood-colored tempest that the treasure gave rise to caused Patriarch Huyan's face to fill with astonishment.

"That flag.... Dammit! How could you have an Immortal treasure like that!?" Even as Patriarch Huyan was expressing his disbelief, the flag unfurled, transforming into a red banner that stretched out in front of Meng Hao toward the Wheel of Time.

Although it takes some time to describe, the Devil Spear and the flag of three streamers instantly shot toward the black chariot wheel. There was no hesitation on Patriarch Huyan's part as he performed a double-handed incantation in an attempt to control the wheel treasure.

However, even in the middle of the incantation, the mastiff suddenly pounced toward him. It had reached a frenzied state, as if it didn't fear death at all. As it neared, the bloody light shining off of it flickered in intensity and transformed into countless threads that slashed toward Patriarch Huyan.

Patriarch Huyan was cursing inwardly. His hatred for the mastiff had already sunk deep into his bones. Yet again, he realized that if it weren't for the damnable Immortal Beast, the battle would have gone much more smoothly.

While Patriarch Huyan was being pinned down by the mastiff, Meng Hao's eyes glittered with a red light. His aura exploded up into the heavens. He was utilizing sixty four times the battle prowess of a great circle Nascent Soul, and Divine Sense with a range of 29,999 meters. Together, they formed into... a divine ability!

"Demon Sealing, Eighth Hex!" His hair whipped about and his Cultivation base rotated rapidly. Demonic Qi in the area seethed as he lifted his hand up and pointed his index finger straight out ahead of him toward Patriarch Huyan.

As he pointed, blood oozed out of Meng Hao's nose, ears and eyes. Popping sounds could be heard within him, and his brain and body filled with a roaring sound.

Meng Hao's eyes were awash with madness. However, beneath that madness was utter calm. He was sealing a powerful Spirit Severing expert, so he would of course have to pay... a heavy price.

But, why did that matter?

A tremor ran through Patriarch Huyan's body. The demonic Qi in the area was boundless and majestic, and formed into something like a sea. In the blink of an eye, it wrapped around Patriarch Huyan, transforming into a seal. His Cultivation base was suppressed and he suddenly... ceased all movement.

"What divine ability is this!?!?" Patriarch Huyan was completely shocked. The mastiff seized this opportunity to strike out with its paw. Roaring could be heard, and blood sprayed from Patriarch Huyan's mouth. His expression was one of savageness.

However, the brief pause imposed upon him damaged his connection to the Wheel of Time, almost as if his Divine Sense had been severed. Only a tiny connection remained. However, it was at this moment that the Devil

Spear bore down onto the wheel. It stabbed directly into it, causing a massive explosion to ring out. Even though the spear was greatly weakened, vast quantities of mist still poured out of it, causing the wheel to tremble violently and then move about a third of a meter to the side.

It was a small movement, but it instantly weakened the final scrap of Divine Sense which connected the Wheel of Time and Patriarch Huyan. This caused Patriarch Huyan's face to flicker once again. It was in this moment that the flag of three streamers hit the wheel. A boom rose up into the air. Meng Hao shouted, and the flag...

Completely wrapped around the wheel, then heaved it to the side. Booms could be heard. The wheel turned into a black, trembling beam of light that moved a full thirty meters off to the side. The movement caused any remaining connection with Patriarch Huyan to be completely destroyed!

All of this took place in the amount of time it takes for a spark to fly up into the air. The effect of the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex was already vanishing from Patriarch Huyan. Blood sprayed from Meng Hao's mouth as he once again used the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex, ignoring any injuries he would receive in the process.

Just when Patriarch Huyan recovered use of his Cultivation base, it was once again sealed! At the same time, the Blood Mastiff, in response to Meng Hao's Divine Sense, roared. Bloody light shot up, and the power of its Spirit Severing Cultivation base rocketed out as it charged again toward Patriarch Huyan.

As of now, Meng Hao was completely ignoring Patriarch Huyan. Instead, he shot directly toward the Wheel of Time. The single flag streamer teleported to join him.

A fierce light gleamed in Patriarch Huyan's eyes. In this critical moment of the battle, the power of his Cultivation base suddenly exploded out. He raised his head up and howled as the Demonic Qi seal surrounding him collapsed. He had extricated himself and restored his Cultivation base. But now, the mastiff was upon him, and he was forced to fight.

Temporarily, Patriarch Huyan was incapable of completely freeing himself. His fury burned like raging fires, consuming him as he howled in rage.

As for Meng Hao, he was just now slamming into the Wheel of Time.

He flicked his sleeve, causing the single streamer to wrap up the Wheel of Time, which Patriarch Huyan had lost control of.... Then, he collected up the streamer and... put it into his bag of holding!

He... shockingly captured Patriarch Huyan's precious treasure!

Earlier, when Patriarch Huyan had claimed that his surname was actually Han, it instantly made him think of Han Bei. He also thought about that Patriarch of the Han Clan who could control the power of Time.

All of the various threads of information formed together to give Meng Hao the audacious idea of stealing Patriarch Huyan's treasure!

All of his actions up to this point had been aimed at snatching away the treasure! He even allowed himself to be injured in the process! The benefits of acquiring such an item were indescribable!

"Meng Hao!!" roared Patriarch Huyan, his eyes filling with veins of blood along with killing intent. He wanted to pursue Meng Hao, but the howling Blood Mastiff then attacked him once again. Pinned down, Patriarch Huyan could do nothing but be consumed by his indescribable rage. This mastiff, which seemingly didn't fear death in the least, had the power of Spirit Severing. Patriarch Huyan wasn't capable of killing it, nor even sealing it. He could only watch helplessly as his treasure was stolen away by a great circle Nascent Soul Cultivator. The shame and rage that he felt were virtually driving him insane.

In all the years he had practiced cultivation, he had almost never been put into such a difficult position. His rage could not grow any more.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered with killing intent. He had made a lot of preparations with the intent of facing Patriarch Huyan. As of this moment, his preparations had been used by about half. He still had more tricks up

his sleeves. His trump card of fusing with the Violet Sea, had not been brought into play yet.

Chapter 544: The Dao of Emotion

Severing

Meng Hao's expression was calm. He had no time to personally do anything about the effects of the Wheel of Time. He let the flag of three streamers suppress it, then turned and lifted up his hand. The tip of his finger turned bright red.

It then transformed into a red colored totem tattoo. This was the Ji Clan Blood Clone aspect of his Water-type totem. After absorbing it and gaining enlightenment regarding the Blood-type totem, it hadn't disappeared. Rather, Meng Hao had completely suppressed it inside of his own body.

It was now that, without hesitation, he released the Blood Clone. A bloody light shone out from his finger, flying out into mid-air to transform into the Ji Clan Blood Clone. As soon as it appeared, its body exploded with bloody light that shot up into the sky. It turned its head to look at Meng Hao, as if it planned to attack him. In that moment, Meng Hao gave a cold snort.

The sound of it sent rippling tremors through the body of the Blood Clone, as if it weren't stable. Actually, when Meng Hao suppressed the clone within his body, he had also branded it with vast amounts of restrictive spells.

An expression of struggle appeared on the Blood Clone's face for a moment. Then it turned, howling as it shot toward Patriarch Huyan. It seemed it planned to vent its frustration with Meng Hao onto Patriarch Huyan.

The instant the Blood Clone appeared, Patriarch Huyan once again looked shocked. He could not help but tremble inwardly at Meng Hao's continuous succession of shocking methods. First was his astonishing Seven Animas Soul Transformations, then his Time Sword Formation and the flag of three streamers, and finally this Blood Clone. All of it left Patriarch Huyan thoroughly shaken inwardly.

The Blood Clone shouted as it neared. Together with the Blood Mastiff, it had Patriarch Huyan essentially flanked on both sides. Patriarch Huyan's face fell. He raised up his right hand and pointed out in front of him. Instantly, the Blood Clone exploded, only to reform a moment later.

"Dammit! It also has a will of undeath!!" Patriarch Huyan's face flickered as the Blood Mastiff pounced toward him from behind. He was not in a position to evade; the mastiff's razor sharp fangs sank into his body, ripping open a wound from which blood sprayed out unimpeded.

At the same time, Meng Hao made his move. As he neared, a divine ability suddenly manifested.

"Without a face, a single word, flames of war unify!" More than sixty enormous faces appeared. They superimposed over each other, transforming into a divine ability backed by the power of sixty-four great circle Nascent Souls, a power that could rock Spirit Severing.

The face's eyes opened, and its mouth moved. Roaring sounds pulsed out within Patriarch Huyan's mind. Streams of black smoke suddenly rose up from his body, sixty-four in total. They billowed up into the air as Meng Hao's divine ability closed in.

One man, one clone, one dog, battling Spirit Severing!

Booms continued to explode out. Patriarch Huyan's aura expanded out to transform into an enormous vortex which slammed into Meng Hao, the mastiff and the clone.

Roaring filled the area and kicked up huge waves on the surface of the sea. The air itself seemed to be on the verge of splitting open. Patriarch Huyan was infuriated. Never since reaching the Spirit Severing stage, had he ever been in such a bad position. His Spirit Severing Area had been shattered, his Wheel of Time stolen. And to top it all off, his opponent... was only a great circle Nascent Soul Cultivator. Even though he had a Spirit Severing Immortal Beast, even though he had a strange Blood Clone, this was all a complete humiliation to Patriarch Huyan!

"My Dao...." said Patriarch Huyan. He took a deep breath, causing all of his emotions to disappear. He became completely calm.

“My Dao of severing emotions...

“When speaking of human emotions, love for one’s family is the most powerful. By Severing family love, one can sever the Dao of a lifetime.” A freezing, emotionless cold suddenly rose up from Patriarch Huyan. This coldness was unfeeling, almost like it was... a funeral for the seven emotions and six pleasures.

“My parents died when I was young,” murmured Patriarch Huyan, “so there was no way to Sever them. My feelings for my beloved are dispensable as far as I am concerned, so that Severing would have been useless.... Only my feelings for my sons would conform to my Dao of severing emotions.

“My First Severing was of that Dao of feelings. It is common knowledge that I have an only son. What is not common knowledge is that I actually had nine sons in total. I killed the first eight with my own hands in order to create my Dao of extinguishing emotions!

“I placed all my hopes in my final son, Huyan Qing, and did everything for him. I concentrated all my fatherly love on him. When that love reached its pinnacle, I would kill him, and the resulting pain would be intense to the extreme. Only by experiencing such pain and grief could I... complete my first Severing and become... totally emotionless!

“By killing my son, you have ruined my Dao! Nothing could possibly compare to the towering hatred which I feel toward you!

“My Dao... is a Severing of emotion!” Patriarch Huyan’s aura suddenly exploded out.

His Spirit Severing Domain, his first Severing, was of emotion!

That emotion was not romantic love, nor friendship. Instead, it was the most powerful of all emotions, the love for blood relatives!

Before Spirit Severing, Patriarch Huyan had been an emotional and loving person. Afterwards... he chose to slaughter his own sons for the sake of his Dao. The only one that remained was Huyan Qing.

His choice for this Spirit Severing Dao was actually very similar to that

of Patriarch Hanxue of the Frigid Snow Clan. However, in the end Patriarch Hanxue chose not to continue with the Severing. Patriarch Huyan, on the other hand, was more resolute.

He concentrated all of his fatherly love onto his son, Huyan Qing, holding none in reserve. It was like he took all of the family love that existed within his person and focused it solely on Huyan Qing.

As far as Huyan Qing was concerned, Patriarch Huyan had indulged him in every way, tolerated anything. It had been a boundless fatherly love.

Only in that way could he sever pain, sever his heart, and truly complete his first Severing. By extinguishing family love, he could form... his Dao of extinguishing emotions!

But now, Huyan Qing was dead, killed by another. Because Patriarch Huyan hadn't killed him, it meant that Patriarch Huyan's First Severing could not be completed perfectly unless he spent much time reversing the setback.

The easiest method would be to slay the person who had killed Huyan Qing, to get revenge.

But that wasn't enough. What he needed... was a rain of blood that would allow him to express all of his fatherly love... and release himself from worldly cares.

"Severing emotions," he said, his voice low. Instantly, everything in the area became extremely cold. An emotionless Domain erupted out from him.

This was a unique divine ability of the Spirit Severing stage, the Domain!

Patriarch Huyan's Domain was one in which the only thing that could exist was an extinguishing of emotions. Any scrap of emotion or passion would be extinguished inside, dispersed. As the Domain spread out, the Blood Clone trembled. It recovered a moment later, not having been affected very much. That was because it... was innately an emotionless creature.

As for the mastiff, however, it began to shake violently. The bloody light

which surrounded it began to flicker. The will of undeath which filled it fought back fiercely, but was clearly not a match. It began to tremble more and more violently, and emit fierce howls.

The one to be affected the most, though, was Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's mind filled with roaring. Blood oozed out of his eyes, ears, nose and mouth. His eyes shone with confusion. Suddenly, his mind began to fill with images. His childhood and his parents. His friendship with Fatty and the others. The blur that existed between Xu Qing and Chu Yuyan. The emotional connection between apprentice and Master that he felt for Pill Demon.

All of these things completely filled his mind, transforming into a blade that hung there within his mind.

An archaic voice suddenly filled his mind.

"Sever your emotions, and you can exist...."

"Emotions are a hindrance, they burn away at your flame of life...."

"Sever them...."

"Sever them...."

The voice seemed to carry some mysterious power. It caused Meng Hao's entire body to tremble. He felt as if his soul were about to be shredded into pieces. He couldn't help but let out a scream of anguish.

At the same time, all the images in his mind, all the people, began to distort. They transformed into black flames that set Meng Hao's mind on fire. He felt pain.... the kind of pain that comes from watching your parents dying and being helpless to save them!

It was the pain that comes from watching your beloved coldly turn away into the embrace of another!

It was the pain of watching your best friend smile maliciously while plunging a knife into your back!

It was a pain formed from all of those various emotions, rising to the pinnacle!

The pain transformed into black flames which burned at Meng Hao's very soul.

"Sever them.... Sever the emotions, and you can exist. Refuse... and your soul will be destroyed." The voice echoed out in Meng Hao's body as he trembled. It seemed as if he were existing in an illusion, but was unable to distinguish the difference between the illusion and reality.

Confusion filled his eyes. Blood oozed out of his mouth. He lost control and fell down, down into the Violet Sea.

This was Patriarch Huyan's emotionless Domain, which severed both emotions and pain. It severed the emotions of the enemy, smashed the soul, crushed the fleshly body. Facing Patriarch Huyan with emotions led only to death.

Giving in to the demands of the Domain led to becoming a puppet. Refusing to give in, led to death in body and spirit.

Meng Hao sank down into the Violet Sea. As he did, his mind's eye was filled with various images from his life. The joys, the sorrows, the partings, the reunions. Pain. Betrayal. They all seemed to swirl into a cycle of pain.

When Meng Hao's body suddenly hit the seafloor, his eyes opened. As of this moment, they were clear. However, it was a clearness filled with exhaustion.

"Emotions... are not a hindrance," he murmured. "Emotions... are what make life complete." He closed his eyes. In the instant that he did, the Violet Sea began to roar, and its surface roiled. The mastiff was trembling in mid-air, its eyes bright red. The Blood Clone was actually not impeded at all. However, as it neared Patriarch Huyan, confusion suddenly filled its eyes.

Patriarch Huyan hovered there in mid-air, his Domain spreading out, filling the entire area. It was at this moment that the Violet Sea began to roar, causing Patriarch Huyan's brow to furrow.

As he frowned, the waters of the Violet Sea began to collect together. An enormous head suddenly began to emerge, then a body, then two legs. In

the shocking blink of an eye, an enormous giant made of seawater rose up from within the Violet Sea.

The giant looked like Meng Hao in every way. Its closed eyes suddenly snapped open. They emanated a bright glow as it lifted up its right hand. The gigantic hand, formed of massive quantities of water, formed into a fist and then punched out toward Patriarch Huyan.

A massive boom echoed out across the waters. Patriarch Huyan's face fell and he instantly retreated. He managed to avoid the fist, but his Domain was completely shattered.

"Emotionless? You actually transformed into something emotionless.... No! This isn't you! This is the Violet Sea!! He actually... actually fused with the Violet Sea. This... this...." Patriarch Huyan's eyes went wide and filled with disbelief. Only emotionless beings could exist within his domain. This Violet Sea Giant, was just such an emotionless creature. After all, the Violet Sea was fundamentally death.

In death, what dies is not just the body, but also emotion.

Chapter 545: The Most Powerful!

Currently, far up above in the air, three streams of powerful Divine Sense were paying very close attention to battle down below.

These streams of Divine Sense far exceeded the Nascent Soul stage. Each one seemed to contain different natural laws and different Domains. Shockingly, these were... three streams of Divine Sense belonging to Spirit Severing Patriarchs.

All three were from the Black Lands. Two were from the great Wild Flame Tribe and great Demon Butterfly Tribe respectively. The other was a patriarch from the great Cloud Sky Tribe, the Tribe Zhou Dekun was a member of.

The streams of Divine Sense hovered there in mid-air, staring down at the battle with both concentration and shock.

“Patriarch Huyan’s clone is going all out.”

“This kid has really got some extraordinary battle prowess! Patriarch Huyan’s clone is different from our clones. Our clones only possess thirty percent of the battle prowess of our true selves. Patriarch Huyan’s clone, however... possesses its own Nascent Divinity Spirit Immortal! It’s a Divine Clone with seventy percent of the battle prowess of his true self! It’s like a second life for Patriarch Huyan. It required years of refinement to create something he can exchange his life with!”

“Seven superimpositions. A Spirit Severing Immortal Beast. The will of the Violet Sea. This kid is incredible!”

As the three streams of Divine Sense discussed the goings on, they only continued to grow more serious.

Down on the surface of the sea, booms echoed out into the air. Meng Hao, in the form of the Violet Sea Giant, clenched his hand into a fist again. He punched out into the air, which kicked up a violent tempest that swept out in all directions, with the power to destroy all Domains in the area.

The mastiff howled, and bloody light exploded up from its body, transforming into eighteen sharp fangs which then shot directly toward Patriarch Huyan, seemingly capable of ripping holes in the air.

A boom could be heard and blood sprayed from the mouth of Patriarch Huyan. He fell back once again. Even as he did, the giant-form Meng Hao slapped his hands together in exactly the same way he had when he killed the Black Bat.

Next, another giant began to rise up from within the Violet Sea. Then a third, followed by a fourth, a fifth and then a sixth....

In total, seven giants towered above the Violet Sea, each one of them thousands of meters tall and shocking to the extreme.

Each of the giants looked exactly like Meng Hao. As soon as they appeared, they charged toward Patriarch Huyan. This was... a divine ability that Meng Hao could employ after fusing with the Violet Sea.

Seven giants roared. The mastiff's Cultivation base exploded out with all its power. The Blood Clone trembled, then exploded with killing intent. All of them charged directly toward Patriarch Huyan.

As they approached, destructive power exploded up. The power of extermination raged. Patriarch Huyan's Domain was no longer effective, having been shattered by Meng Hao using the Violet Sea. Patriarch Huyan's eyes were red and his hair was in disarray. He looked completely out of sorts as he suddenly howled.

Instantly, a divine ability magically manifested. It coalesced into a three thousand meter long Heaven Saber. As the blade chopped down, it caused roaring sounds to fill the air. Of the seven giants, four exploded. Of the fangs shooting toward Patriarch Huyan from the mastiff, five were shattered. All the rest continued on to slam into Patriarch Huyan.

Patriarch Huyan's entire body shook violently, and he coughed up a huge mouthful of blood. He tumbled backward in astonishment, his hair flying around, his eyes filled with madness.

"You're good, Meng Hao, I'll give you that.... To be able to fight back

against me to this extent shows that you are truly powerful.

“However... you are not of the Spirit Severing stage! Not yet! You have no Nascent Divinity Spirit Immortal. You are doomed.... You cannot slay me. Instead... you have assured your own death!

“Spirit Severing!” Patriarch Huyan lifted his head up and roared. Along with the sound of the roar, his aura exploded up, revealing the power of his Spirit Severing Cultivation base. As this happened, his body began to wither. In the blink of an eye, it withered up and he began to disappear.

Instantly, his body completely turned into ashes and was gone. However, as his fleshly body disappeared, what appeared in its places was a Spirit Body!

It was like a Nascent Soul, but fundamentally different. It was translucent, and possessed Immortal Will!

This was the Spirit Immortal of Patriarch Huyan’s clone!

Spirit Severing can also be referred to as Mortality Severing. Everything beneath Spirit Severing is mortal. However, Spirit Severing and above can be considered Immortal. After severing Mortality, the Nascent Soul disappears, and is transformed into a Nascent Divinity. This can also be referred to as a Spirit Immortal!

This Nascent Divinity Spirit Immortal is not something that is easily revealed. Only by casting off the fleshly body would it be able to appear. Actually, a Nascent Divinity Spirit Immortal can only truly connect properly with one’s true physical body, not a clone.

Therefore, by casting off the clone’s physical body, the Nascent Divinity Spirit Immortal would be able to truly employ Spirit Severing divine abilities!

Bright glows appeared in the eyes of giant-form Meng Hao. He stared at Patriarch Huyan’s Nascent Divinity Spirit Immortal. Meng Hao had actually gained quite a bit throughout the course of this battle; his understanding regarding Spirit Severing was now much deeper.

“So, there is no Nascent Soul in Spirit Severing, but rather, a Nascent

Divinity Spirit Immortal is formed!” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered as his enlightenment deepened. Thanks to this battle, the path of Spirit Severing was now much clearer in his mind.

Patriarch Huyan’s Nascent Divinity Spirit Immortal began to perform an incantation gesture, touching its left thumb with its right forefinger, and vice versa. This formed a rectangle which it used to surround Meng Hao’s image. “Spirit Severing Banishment!” it shouted.

As the words left its mouth, rumbling filled Heaven and Earth, and the sky dimmed. Giant-form Meng Hao began to shake, as if explosive power from Heaven and Earth were forming to expel him.

Such an expulsion made it seem as if the entire world, as if all the lands of South Heaven, viewed Meng Hao as an enemy. It was as if in this moment, all living things, even the plants and animals, all existence, were filled with an intense desire to expel Meng Hao.

All of a sudden, a sound like countless murmuring voices suddenly joined together to form an echoing shout.

“Begone!”

The sound was such that it seemed as if the will of the entire world was focused on expelling and banishing Meng Hao!

Meng Hao’s giant-form exploded into countless pieces, as did the other remaining giants in the area. The mastiff whined as roaring also filled its body and its life force rapidly began to drain away. It, however, did not explode. After all... it was of the Spirit Severing stage!

Such a banishment could only be resisted by the Spirit Severing stage!

Anything beneath Spirit Severing would be killed by this banishment. That was the power of a Nascent Divinity Spirit Immortal.

The Blood Clone also exploded, although it quickly reformed, only to explode once more. The Violet Sea churned. Deep beneath the surface, blood sprayed from Meng Hao’s mouth. Roaring filled his mind as he heard all living things roaring.

“BEGONE!!”

More blood exploded from his mouth. Popping sounds rang out from his body as he shot up from within the waters. The voices continued to echo in his ears.

“BEEGOOONNEEE!!

“Begone from this place! Begone from these lands! Begone from South Heaven...!” An indescribable power of expulsion caused Meng Hao to retreat at full speed. He coughed up blood continuously. The magic of this divine ability was incredibly powerful, far beyond anything Meng Hao could have imagined.

The power of expulsion continued to grow more intense, causing an enormous vortex to appear in midair. The gravitation force of the vortex latched onto Meng Hao, as if it intended to completely banish him from the lands of South Heaven.

“I live in the lands of South Heaven,” said Meng Hao. “This is my home! You trifling Spirit Severing Cultivator! What gives you the right to banish me!” A look of determination filled his eyes as he slapped his bag of holding to produce the blood-colored mask.

After entering the Seventh Anima, Meng Hao didn’t actually need the mask. However, now that the mastiff had awakened, Meng Hao could actually sense that within the mask... was a shocking divine ability!

Originally, Meng Hao had planned to keep this divine ability as a trump card, but now he had no other options.

Without hesitation, he placed the mask onto his face. When that happened, his green robe instantly turned the color of blood, as did his hair. In the blink of an eye, a glow of blood rose up from him.

“Blood Mastiff, my Blood Immortal Spirit.... My Dao Protector.... Use the primordial Blood Immortal law to merge with this mask. Make your Cultivation base... my Cultivation base!

“Let the Domain change! Let the primordial transform! Let the image of the Blood Immortal... come!” As Meng Hao spoke, his voice seemed to

carry an archaic will. The mastiff trembled, and a strange glow appeared in its eyes. Without hesitation, it shot toward Meng Hao. As it did, its body transformed into a red glow. It shot like lightning toward Meng Hao and then... merged directly into the mask.

As soon as the mastiff merged into the mask a tremor ran through Meng Hao's body. His aura suddenly expanded out, and his hair whipped about him. His robe fluttered madly.

His Divine Sense... suddenly was no longer 29,999 meters, but rather... 30,000!

It was only an increase in one meter , but that meter... made all the difference compared to the previous 29,999 meters. That one meter gap represented the difference between mortality and Immortality!

Meng Hao's Cultivation base suddenly exploded up. Shockingly, a blood-colored figure suddenly appeared behind him. It was a figure seated on a throne of bones, wearing a mask, hair floating in the air. Also, it was a woman!

The woman was none other than... the Blood Immortal of the Doom Clan!!

In this moment, Meng Hao was fused with the Cultivation base of the Blood Mastiff. On top of his great Circle Nascent Soul Cultivation base appeared another Cultivation base that did not belong to him. It fused with his, causing thunderous roars to fill his body. His aura exploded out... with the power of Spirit Severing!

In this moment, it seemed as if Meng Hao suddenly came to a new realization. He looked up into the sky, but then just as quickly retracted his gaze.

At the same time, the three streams of Divine Sense belonging to the Spirit Severing Cultivators emanated powerful ripples, caused by the shock of realizing that they had been spotted by Meng Hao.

"He saw us! I would never have imagined that he could actually borrow the power of Spirit Severing!!"

“It seems Patriarch Huyan’s Divine Clone is going to perish!”

“This kid... well, perhaps we shouldn’t call him that. This Fellow Daoist Meng Hao might not know us personally, but he is qualified to sit as equals with us at the same table.”

The three were now paying rapt attention to Meng Hao.

Chapter 546: The Patriarch Goes All Out!

Ripples of Spirit Severing Power expanded out in all directions. Meng Hao's hair whipped about as his Cultivation base roared upward.

The Spirit Severing power did not belong to him; he could only possess it temporarily. Even the Domain was not his, but rather, that of the Blood Immortal.

After the Spirit Severing Cultivation base growth, shockingly, an Area world appeared around Meng Hao. Within his mind, he could also faintly sense the Domain of the Blood Immortal.

However, he could not utilize them. All he could do was vaguely sense them.... The Domain actually had nothing to do with blood. Strangely, it contained a sense of waiting, as well as of glorious pursuit. It was like a blooming, blood-colored flower....

In the moment that Meng Hao borrowed the Spirit Severing power, the expulsion power around him instantly grew weaker by more than half. The vortex in mid-air vanished without a trace.

An expression of disbelief appeared on the face of Patriarch Huyan. Never could he possibly have imagined that the battle would go the way it had, or that he would end up being so shaken by Meng Hao.

"How is this possible?! How can he be so terrifying!? Don't tell me that he's... a Dao Seeking reincarnation!? Or maybe... he's an Immortal's Soul in a mortal body!?!?" Even as Patriarch Huyan was reeling in shock, Meng Hao looked up. He could sense the undefinable power that was surging within him. He couldn't sustain such power for long, only about the space of twelve breaths.

Therefore, he didn't hesitate. The glow of blood surged up around him as he lifted his right hand up and performed an incantation gesture, then pointed forward.

"Sundered clouds, a bloody rain, seas that cover the sky!"

Three forms of the Blood Immortal legacy divine ability. The body of the

Blood Immortal. A Spirit Severing Cultivation base. In this moment, the power of all of these things exploded out.

The sky was now the color of blood!

Beneath the red glow, the Violet Sea turned black.

From a distance, all that could be seen was a black sea and a red sky, with just a glimmer of violet in between the two. Even an expert artist would have a hard time depicting such a scene.

There were clouds in the sky, sundered clouds.

There was rain as well, a rain of blood!

A sea of blood roared with huge waves that seemed to wish to fly up to the heavens. The sea of blood merged with the Violet Sea, transforming into black blood!

Sundered clouds, a bloody rain, seas that cover the sky. These three things were Blood Immortal divine abilities, majestic and shocking.

The sundered clouds surged into motion, causing vapor to instantly rise up around Patriarch Huyan's Nascent Divinity Spirit Immortal. From within the thick clouds emerged... sundering!

A boom could be heard as the sundering mist exploded. Patriarch Huyan's Nascent Divinity Spirit Immortal emitted a shrill cry. It was shocked to discover that it couldn't evade and was powerless to fight back! The natural law in the world seemed to have completely changed.

These rules did not belong to him, but rather, to Meng Hao. Or perhaps... to the woman who sat behind Meng Hao on the throne of bones.

The sundered clouds surged endlessly. That was because they were propelled by a wind of sundering. Roaring filled the air as, within the short space of time of a few breaths, Patriarch Huyan's Nascent Divinity Spirit Immortal was battered dozens of times. He was forced backward several hundred meters. Explosions and booms echoed out; it seemed as if the Nascent Divinity Spirit Immortal was on the verge of being destroyed.

He was shocked, filled with disbelief as well as an intense sense of deadly crisis.

In this moment, a rain of blood appeared in the midst of the sundered clouds. It carried with it a shocking power, seemingly another expulsion power. The raindrops fell down from all directions toward Patriarch Huyan.

A bloodcurdling scream could be heard. Patriarch Huyan was flabbergasted and shaking with fear. Booming could be heard as his body began to fall apart. He quickly pulled it back together, only to have more blood rain whistle toward him. As of this moment, the entire world, everything in the area, was transformed into a world of blood rain.

Within that world, all life would be submerged, buried in the blood rain!

But... this was not the greatest danger. The greatest danger... was within the black sea!

The sea roared up into the sky. The sky roared down into the sea. The blackness of the once violet-colored sea, merged with the blood rain, turning it black!

The black sea rose up into the sky, making it impossible to determine what was the sky and what was the sea. It was as if everything had been turned upside down, as if everything had been twisted about.

Within all the booming and roaring, the sundered clouds, the blood rain, the black sea, became... Blood Death!

Patriarch Huyan was filled with a sense of grave danger. He had the intense premonition that if he didn't do something immediately, then he... would definitely die!!

If someone had told him before that he would die at Meng Hao's hands, he would have mocked and ridiculed that person to no end. But now... such a scene was playing out in front of his own eyes. As of this moment, though, there was no time for shock and astonishment. Heart pounding, he suddenly looked up into the sky and roared.

"Fellow Daoists, the three of you must help me slay this man! Regardless

of whether you succeed or not, I vow to present you with precious treasures as gifts in return!”

Hearing this caused the streams of Divine Sense to instantly reveal intense glows. They immediately began to discuss the matter.

“There’s really no need to continue watching the battle,” said the Spirit Severing Patriarch from the great Cloud Sky Tribe. “The clone is doomed to perish. This Meng Hao has fused his will with the Violet Sea. He’s not someone to be provoked lightly.” His words contained deeper meaning, which was obvious.

“Fellow Daoist Yunlian, don’t worry. True, we’re allies, and therefore can’t go back on our word to help each other. However, the best thing to do would be to leave with the promise of treasure from Patriarch Huyan, and at the same time get Meng Hao to owe us a favor. Sowing some good Karma would be the best outcome!”

“That’s right. It was of his own accord that Patriarch Huyan provoked a powerful foe. He can’t blame anyone else. If the Heavenly Court Alliance loses the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, but then gains the great Cloud Sky Tribe, it will still be a Heavenly Court.”

After discussing the matter, the three streams of Divine Sense began to chuckle. Three forms began to take shape out of nothing. In the blink of an eye, three figures could be seen.

One was a white-haired old man. Another was a middle-aged man with a luxuriant beard. The third was a young boy in a red robe.

As soon as they appeared, they exchanged smiling glances. These were all clones, the likes of which most Spirit Severing Cultivators possessed. They were different from Patriarch Huyan’s clone, which was a type that was rarely seen.

Moments later, the three figures appeared in front of Patriarch Huyan’s Nascent Divinity. Without even a pause, they charged Meng Hao.

Each of these clones possessed roughly thirty percent of the power of the Cultivation base of their true selves. However, even thirty percent

should be enough to crush someone of the Nascent Soul stage. They instantly turned into three fierce beams of light that shot toward Meng Hao's three great Blood Immortal divine abilities.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered in response to the attack. For these three people to make a move wasn't something unforeseen. He waved his sleeve. The sundered clouds roared, the blood rain howled, and the black sea screamed. The three forces slammed into the three clones.

"This guy is incredible! Now that I'm experiencing his power, it's obvious that he's far stronger than I imagined after simply observing him fight!"

"If our clones met him by themselves, and he unleashed his full power, it would only take a few moves for him to completely eradicate us!"

The three exchanged another glance, then performed incantation gesture, causing their own divine abilities to blast into Meng Hao's Blood Immortal divine abilities. During the space of a few breaths, booms filled the air. The three clones exploded, completely destroyed.

Before they completely vanished, all of them cast meaningful glances toward Meng Hao.

Patriarch Huyan stared in shock, and then began to tremble. He lifted his head up and howled. How could he not see through the plan the three crafty old foxes had just carried out?

The three clones weren't as strong as Patriarch Huyan's clone, so if they were fighting solo, they might be destroyed relatively quickly. But how could it be possible for them to be defeated so quickly while fighting together?

The only explanation was that all three had actually been unwilling to attack. Everything they had done was just an excuse to get their hands on the treasure that he had promised.

Patriarch Huyan's expression was one of livid fury.

"If I'm going to die, there's no way I'll die by his hand!" he roared.

"Totems combine...." he cried. Suddenly, five and a half totems appeared

within this Nascent Divinity and then suddenly flew out. Within the half totem could be seen several souls that bore an eerie resemblance to Patriarch Huyan. They formed together to... form the eight sons that had been personally slain by Patriarch Huyan.

Unfortunately, because Huyan Qing had died in the way he did, the totem was incomplete.

With the appearance of these totems, Patriarch Huyan's expression was suddenly one of complete resolve.

"Ancestral Awakening, commence!" As Patriarch Huyan roared, the five totems shattered, transforming into countless fragments that instantly fused into the Nascent Divinity Spirit Immortal. Patriarch Huyan's roar turned into a wail as the Nascent Divinity began to turn blurry, and then suddenly exploded.

The exploding pieces almost looked like human flesh. They shot out, but then just as quickly began to form back together. In the blink of an eye, an indescribably gruesome aura suddenly spread out to fill the area.

At the same time, Patriarch Huyan's Nascent Divinity was reforming, turning into a body formed out of countless chunks of flesh.

It looked like innumerable patches of flesh were sewn together, as if the body were covered with countless centipedes. It was thoroughly savage in appearance, especially the forehead, where three golden scales could be seen that emanated blinding golden light.

The bizarre, gruesome aura completely matched the bizarre, gruesome body. This was Patriarch Huyan's Ancestral Awakening body, the result of the most powerful divine ability that his clone could employ.

The head had no facial features, only the three golden scales which were almost like eyes. They glowed with golden, flickering light that transformed into an enormous vortex.

The vortex spun, seemingly powerful enough to shatter the air. As it expanded out, everything for thousands of meters around instantly began to shatter.

The sundered clouds shattered, the blood rain dissipated and the black sea was destroyed. Meng Hao's three Blood Immortal divine abilities were completely dispelled.

Patriarch Huyan was burning his life force. His Cultivation base was blurry, and his appearance bizarre in this Ancestral Awakening form, which could explode out with power to destroy anything and everything.

After the Blood Immortal divine abilities were destroyed, Patriarch Huyan's strange body disappeared. When he reappeared, he was directly in front of Meng Hao. He lifted up his hand and pushed out.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered. Without hesitation he waved his sleeve, borrowing explosive Spirit Severing power to shoot backward.

"I only have about seven more breaths worth of time before I run out of Spirit Severing power!"

His eyes glowed with coldness. Setting his jaw, he stared at Patriarch Huyan. From the look of it, this version of Patriarch Huyan was not sentient, but rather, was acting on instinct. The strange divine ability would only last for a certain period of time before it ran out of life force power to burn.

"Going all out?" said Meng Hao with a cold laugh. "Unfortunately for you, I still have a lot of tricks up my sleeve."

Chapter 547: Sealing Spirit Severing!

Seeing that Patriarch Huyan was going all out caused killing intent to flicker within Meng Hao's eyes. Patriarch Huyan was in a state of mindless madness, but his battle prowess had leaped up, and was now completely beyond what it had been before!

Considering that Patriarch Huyan had entered such a state, Meng Hao had the option of simply dodging his attacks, then waiting for enough time to go by for this version of Patriarch Huyan to dissipate naturally. However, the desire for battle was thick in Meng Hao's eyes. This was a fight to prove the power of his Cultivation base and achieve mastery of his divine abilities and magical arts through actual use.

To Meng Hao, this battle was a way to gain understanding and control over himself, to grow more perfect. Now that he was facing Patriarch Huyan's most powerful divine ability, Meng Hao... had absolutely no desire whatsoever to flinch away. He would fight!

Even as the desire to engage in battle overflowed from Meng Hao's eyes, Patriarch Huyan's body flashed in yet another charge. Meng Hao's lips turned up in a vicious smile as he did not retreat, but rather, counterattacked!

They slammed into each other, making continuous attacks that sent shocking booms to fill the area. The Violet Sea churned violently, and the air rippled with distortions. As the battle continued, popping sounds rang out from within Meng Hao's body. He was suddenly sent tumbling backward. His borrowed Spirit Severing power was now growing unstable. According to his calculations, he had only three breaths of time left before it was gone.

In the final critical moment, Meng Hao suddenly rocketed up into the air. He looked down toward Patriarch Huyan, who was shooting toward him from the surface of the Violet Sea.

"I've gained a lot from this battle. Therefore, I think I'll use the trump card that I recently mastered... to bury you!" A strange light burned in

Meng Hao's eyes as he spoke the words. In the final moment in which his borrowed Spirit Severing power was about to disappear, he took a deep breath. The image of a magical symbol suddenly flickered within his eyes.

It seemed as if his entire person had slipped into some indistinct state. He lifted his right hand, causing an enormous illusory image to appear behind him. That image was... a magical symbol!

It was blurry, but in the instant it appeared, the Violet Sea roared as it was pushed away. It was as if some shapeless pressure was pushing it away, forming a huge crater down below.

The air all around twisted with distortions. It was as if in the entire world, nothing existed except for this magical symbol.

The symbol's origin was Meng Hao's eyes, and his heart. This was none other than the magical symbol that Meng Hao had been trying to gain enlightenment regarding for years and years, the magical symbol from... the Black Lands Celestial soil!

Its true origin was the talisman from the Heavens that was destroyed, falling onto the Black Lands, where it transformed into black magical symbols.

Meng Hao still had not gained complete enlightenment. Therefore, to employ it required forceful use of his Cultivation base. However, with the borrowed power of the mastiff, he was able to do just that.

His expression was blank, as if he had lost use of his faculties. Within Meng Hao's mind's eye, he suddenly saw an image of a boundless starscape. In the middle of it all was an indistinct figure who bore the semblance of a transcendent being.

The figure stood there above Planet South Heaven, waving its finger to summon talismanic paper. It began to write on the paper and then, with indescribable hatred, waved its sleeve, causing the talisman to shoot toward South Heaven.

As soon as the talisman began its descent, an aura appeared from some unknown location in South Heaven. The two slammed into each other,

causing vibrations to ripple out through space, filling Planet South Heaven with an enormous roaring sound.

Along with the roaring, the talisman began to burn into pieces, which then became ash. The ash fell down, transforming into the Black Lands. Within the remnants of the ash was the will of a Celestial talisman!

As Meng Hao hovered there in mid-air, he waved his right hand down. The magical symbol behind him turned black, then passed through Meng Hao's body as it shot down toward Patriarch Huyan.

In that moment, Meng Hao seemed to have turned into the Immortal from all those years ago. As his hand descended, the magical symbol roared. At the same time, the blood-colored mask fell off of his face. The mastiff flew out, and Meng Hao's Cultivation base fell down from the Spirit Severing stage to return to its previous level.

Patriarch Huyan's body trembled. The three scales on his forehead flickered. It was as if his consciousness had been restored a bit in the face of this imminent crisis.

However, even as he recovered his faculties, the magical symbol closed in on him, emitting shocking roars. It slammed into Patriarch Huyan, causing the sound of an enormous explosion to lift up into the sky. An intense howl of despair could be heard from Patriarch Huyan as the magical symbol shoved him down into the Violet Sea.

The water seethed as it surged out in all directions. The magical symbol descended, shooting through the water until it slammed onto the seafloor.

Everything shook. Patriarch Huyan's aura was nothing but a thread, and his body was virtually completely shattered, sealed tightly onto the bottom of the Violet Sea.

His Ancestral Awakening body was disappearing. As it did, his Nascent Divinity slowly became visible. Struggling, it began to transform into glittering dots of light that slowly dissipated out into the Violet Sea.

However, even as the Nascent Divinity Spirit Immortal was about to disappear, Meng Hao made a grasping motion toward the Violet Sea. A

power of sealing appeared. It branded down onto Patriarch Huyan's Nascent Divinity before it could die, instantly sealing it within the blood-colored mask.

"Want to die? It's not that easy," said Meng Hao coolly as he sealed it. "It would be too much of a pity to let a Nascent Divinity Spirit Immortal like this disappear. I think I'll turn it into my third Soul of Lightning."

Next, he produced some medicinal pills which he immediately consumed. He then closed his eyes for a moment and hovered there in mid-air. After some time passed, his eyes snapped open, and they glowed with a brilliant light. He suddenly slapped his hand onto the blood-colored mask.

The flag of three streamers appeared in Meng Hao's hand, as well as a glowing black wheel that resembled a chariot's wheel.

As the surroundings returned to their normal appearance, Meng Hao inspected the wheel with glittering eyes. Then, he sent his Divine Sense inside it, branding it with multiple layers, to make it completely his own.

It was an extraordinary treasure. Despite having its connection to Patriarch Huyan severed, Meng Hao still encountered some resistance when he was trying to brand it. He gave a cold snort, causing the Time Sword Formation to appear and emanate intense pressure. He also entered the Seventh Anima, causing its Divine Sense with a range just a hair away from 30,000 meters to bore into the Wheel of Time.

Meng Hao took a deep breath as the power of the successive brands caused the Wheel of Time to shrink down. It turned into a black glow that Meng Hao then swallowed. It sank down into his dantian region, suppressed by the seven Nascent Souls there.

Meanwhile back in the Black Lands...

The same moment in which Meng Hao sealed Patriarch Huyan's Nascent Divinity Spirit Immortal, Patriarch Huyan's white-robed true self was sitting cross-legged in meditation. Suddenly, a tremor ran through his body.

His face grew red, and although his eyes did not open, he coughed up a huge mouthful of blood.

As he coughed up the blood, his features changed. Before, he looked like a middle-aged man. Now, he seemed older. His hair was gray, and his skin wrinkled. An aura of decay suddenly emanated out from his body.

The aura was intense, and seemed to cause the flame of Patriarch Huyan's life force to darken by quite a bit.

For his clone to be sealed, and its connection to him severed, had caused severe internal injuries to Patriarch Huyan. Were it an ordinary clone, it wouldn't matter. Clones such as that were dispensable. But this Divine Clone was different. It was like a second life for him. As of this moment, his longevity was reduced, and his Cultivation base sank. It was no longer at the peak it had been before, and he could no longer wield the same level of power as earlier.

His face was pale. His body trembled as he took a deep breath. Even as he was about to begin treating his injuries, another tremor ran through him, and his eyes snapped open.

This was the first time he had opened his eyes during his secluded meditation of a hundred years. They did not open to shine with an expression of success. The entire hundred years of secluded meditation had been wasted, causing something that seemed like a tempest to appear in his eyes as soon as he opened them.

He glared at the space in front of him where three figures were materializing. One was an old person, another sported a luxuriant beard, and the third was a young boy in a red robe.

"So, Fellow Daoist Huyan, where are the precious treasures?" asked the red-robed boy, smiling at Patriarch Huyan.

Patriarch Huyan took a deep breath and suppressed his fury. These three people had obviously joined forces; that was the only way they could have gotten past the Tribe's defenses. If Patriarch Huyan hadn't decisively given up on his secluded meditation by opening his eyes, who knew what other machinations they might have attempted....

After all, despite being fellow Spirit Severing Cultivators who seemed to be on good terms with him, everything in such an arrangement had to do with mutual benefit. His Divine Clone had been destroyed, and his Cultivation base had just slipped from its peak. Although they might not have come here to outright attack him, they would definitely think of some ways to extort him to their benefit.

Patriarch Huyan's face was grim as he waved his right hand. Instantly, three glowing beams of light shot out toward the three. One was a sword, the other a tree branch, and the third, a medicinal pill bottle.

The red-robed boy was the one to receive the pill bottle. It emanated a rippling aura, and was clearly very different from the other two.

As he tossed out the magical items, Patriarch Huyan coolly said, "As of this day, the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe secedes from the Heavenly Court Alliance. However... are the three of you really so sure that I will perish by the hand of that Meng Hao?"

The red-robed boy's eyes glittered. The other two exchanged a glance and smiled. No one said anything. The three of them turned and left, vanishing, leaving behind nothing but ripples in the air.

After they disappeared, Patriarch Huyan coughed up a mouthful of blood, the price paid for forcefully ending his secluded meditation. His body suddenly grew blurry for a moment, and he aged even more. His eyes began to shine with a cold hardness.

"Considering how devious they are, they could obviously tell that I was willing to remove myself from the Alliance in order to prevent the Patriarch of the Cloud Sky Tribe from attacking me to get his way in. Furthermore, those three treasures were to ensure that the Wild Flame and Demon Butterfly Tribes don't support that thieving Meng Hao!" Patriarch Huyan was shrewd and astute. During his battle with Meng Hao, he had seen that he might not necessarily be a match if he fought alone. He also could tell that Meng Hao would definitely come to the Black Lands looking for him. His main goal all along had been to come up with a reason to give out the three treasures, and thus ensure that the other three

did not side against him.

Of course, everyone realized this. There was no need to point it out directly.

“Meng Hao!” growled Patriarch Huyan, grinding his teeth. He took a deep breath as he closed his eyes once more. He needed to restore his power to its peak so that he could battle with Meng Hao.

As of now, not only did he hate Meng Hao down to his bones. He also felt... unprecedented fear!

Chapter 548: Return to the Black Lands

Naturally, the Li Clan Patriarch was the first to receive the honor of becoming one of Meng Hao's Souls of Lightning. He had long since enjoyed quite a bit of freedom, and was quite comfortable in the Blood Immortal mask. As long as he wasn't being struck by lightning, or tormented by the meat jelly, he was actually quite happy.

He had long since abandoned any expectations of Li Clan members coming to rescue him. He felt numb toward any such hopes. Recently, his greatest enjoyment came from tormenting Ji Nineteen.

Being able to take the pain he had suffered and inflict it exponentially on someone else made the Li Clan Patriarch more happy than he had ever been.

Of course, Ji Nineteen was fated to become Meng Hao's second Soul of Lightning, although not voluntarily. In fact, it had taken quite a bit of pleading on the part of the Li Clan Patriarch to convince Meng Hao to bestow such an honor upon Ji Nineteen....

The third Soul of Lightning was of course Patriarch Huyan, who had just been pulled into the blood-colored mask, completely out of sorts and on the verge of dissipating completely.

As soon as he saw Patriarch Huyan, the Li Clan Patriarch grew extremely excited, and his body started to crackle with lightning.... Once the torment began, it naturally couldn't be minimized in any way.

Meng Hao retracted his Divine Sense from his dantian region, having finished his observations of his seven Nascent Souls refining the glowing Wheel of time. He floated there in mid air, the Blood Mastiff next to him, licking its wounds. A brutal expression filled its eyes. It could sense that Meng Hao's killing intent had not faded, but instead, had grown more powerful as they carried out their slaughter.

Meng Hao's gaze swept across the Violet Sea. Patriarch Huyan's clone had not possessed a bag of holding. At first, Meng Hao did not understand why that was. However, after borrowing the power of Spirit Severing, he

suddenly understood.

Some Spirit Severing experts might use bags of holding, but most of them opened up a space in their Nascent Divinity. This was another difference between the mortal and the Immortal.

However, Meng Hao had destroyed ten outposts, and killed many Cultivators. Within the bags of holding he had collected were a host of items, which helped make up for everything he had wasted to acquire his seventh Nascent Soul.

Voices could be heard as the members of the Golden Crow Tribe approached. They looked at Meng Hao with excited expressions. They had stayed off in the distance for the course of the battle, and hadn't been able to see what was happening. However, they could sense the shocking nature of the magical battle.

"I'm not sure what percentage of true Cultivation base was possessed by Patriarch Huyan's clone...." Meng Hao mused to himself. "However, this clone was clearly different from the average clone." He smiled. It didn't really matter what percent power the clone had, or how much Patriarch Huyan's true self possessed. Meng Hao would not shrink back from a fight just because his opponent was powerful.

"Those other three Spirit Severing experts sure were interesting. Patriarch Huyan seemed to have some ulterior motive in asking them to attack. It seems all Spirit Severing experts are filled with schemes and foresights. I definitely cannot look down on them." After a moment's thought, he looked down toward the Golden Crow Clan members down below, and his eyes glittered brightly.

"Let us return... to the Black Lands!" he said. He waved his right hand, causing the entire Violet Sea to fill with a rumbling sound. An enormous Violet Sea Giant suddenly rose up. Water poured off of its surface, crashing down onto the surface of the sea below. Next, a second, then a third Violet Sea Giant appeared.

In the blink of an eye, there were seven. Seven towering Violet Sea Giants, each one three thousand meters tall. Although their facial features

were somewhat indistinct, it was obvious that they resembled Meng Hao.

“Let’s go!”

Meng Hao sat cross-legged on the mastiff as it flew through the air. The Violet Sea Giants began to run, kicking up huge waves, which swept the members of the Golden Crow Tribe along with them as they headed toward the Black Lands.

From a distance, it was also possible to observe the Violet Sea seethe as Meng Hao sent his will expanding out.

A wave sped out across the Violet Sea, causing countless specters appear on the surface of the waters. By the time the wave reached Blackgate Fort, their numbers had grown into the hundreds of thousands.

Some of the specters began to congregate around the seven Violet Sea Giants as they all charged toward the Black Lands.

They proceeded forward with the power to crush anything. Nothing could possibly obstruct their path. Roaring echoed out constantly, to the point that the Black Lands were now on high alert. All the powers therein were sent into a commotion.

When the seven Violet Sea Giants appeared off in the distance, the tens of thousands of Cultivators gathered atop Blackgate Fort could only watch out as if they were facing an incredible foe. Down below, massive waves surged across the surface of the sea.

It was in this moment that one particular enormous, furious wave smashed into Blackgate Fort. The resulting boom rose up to the sky, and Blackgate Fort itself shook. The surrounding mountains trembled, and massive rockslides occurred. The people gathered atop Blackgate Fort were astonished.

At the same time, the Blood Mastiff screamed through the air, Meng Hao seated cross-legged atop it. A few dozen Cultivators flew out to block the way.

However, in the instant that they appeared, the Blood Mastiff let out a huge roar. A Spirit Severing aura appeared, along with an Area. Booms

could be heard as the dozens of Nascent Soul Cultivators were sent tumbling back, blood spraying from their mouths, their faces filled with astonishment. Their disbelief and terror couldn't be greater.

“A Spirit Severing neo-demon!!”

“That's... a Spirit Severing Beast!!”

Even at the same time that the Nascent Soul Cultivators were retreating, the mastiff roared again and shot through the great gate of Blackgate Fort and into the Black Lands. Simultaneously, seven Violet Sea Giants leaped out from within the waves, also passing through the gate into the Black Lands.

“What... what are those? They're giants made from the Violet Sea?!?!”

“He... he can actually control the Violet Sea!!”

“That's impossible! How could someone control the Violet Sea! Hey, I recognize him! That's the totemic Sacred Ancient of the Golden Crow Tribe....”

When the seven Violet Sea Giants stepped foot onto the Black Lands, everything quaked. Even as the Black Lands Cultivators atop Blackgate Fort were sent into an astonished commotion, Meng Hao's voice could be heard echoing out.

“I am the totemic Sacred Ancient of the Golden Crow Tribe. The Heavenly Pursuit Tribe wants to eradicate my Golden Crow Tribe. That is the only reason I have come to the Black Lands this day. I will wipe out the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe!

“I've already exterminated Patriarch Huyan's clone. If any Tribes here stand in my way, I will see to it that the ruthless Violet Sea spreads throughout all the Black Lands!” In response to his words, enormous waves rose up on the Violet Sea outside Blackgate Fort. At the same time, hundreds of thousands of specters whistled through the air to enter the Black Lands.

Even as Meng Hao's words rang out, the seven Violet Sea Giants took booming strides forward. Hundreds of thousands of specters screamed

through the air, obscuring the sky above. All of this caused the tens of thousands of Cultivators to gasp. Not a single one of them made any move to stop Meng Hao.

They were simply... incapable of doing so. Whether it was in terms of the seven Violet Sea Giants, the hundreds of thousands of specters, the Spirit Severing Beast or the roaring Violet Sea outside of Blackgate Fort, all of it... was far beyond anything that they could do anything to resist.

That was especially true considering what Meng Hao had just said. The fact that he had slaughtered Patriarch Huyan's clone transformed into a roaring that filled their minds and hearts. In fact, many of them... simply couldn't believe it.

Regardless, none of them could block Meng Hao's way. It was without hesitation that tens of thousands of Cultivators immediately began to send news of what was happening back to their respective organizations. As to how each individual Tribe would respond, that would be up to the leadership of the Tribe.

What happened next astonished everyone. Without exception, all of the Tribes immediately responded to the messages with strict orders not to participate in any way in the conflict between the Golden Crow Tribe and the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe.

As he moved on, Meng Hao did not meet any interference. All the Black Lands Tribes made way for him. Booming echoed out as the seven Violet Sea Giants stomped through the land.

Hundreds of thousands of specters obfuscated the sky as they flew along. As for Meng Hao's Blood Mastiff, wherever it passed, a matchless aura would spread about. On this day... Meng Hao's name thoroughly shook the entirety of the Black Lands.

With Wu Ling providing directions, Meng Hao headed directly toward the area of the Golden Crow Tribe, where the war was still underway.

The Black Dragon Tribe had left, reducing by thirty percent the force that had once been the Golden Crow Black Dragon Clan. The Golden Crow Tribe's battle power had been significantly reduced. Furthermore,

they had already been fighting for more than half a month.

It left the Golden Crow Tribe with roughly 50,000 members, almost all of whom had been mobilized. Vast amounts of neo-demons fought viciously. Big Hairy and the other totemic Sacred Ancients fought like mad, seemingly unaware of their own exhaustion.

As for the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, they had mobilized nearly all of their forces. There were more than 100,000 Cultivators, along with massive hordes of neo-demons, along with totemic Sacred Ancients. As the two sides battled back and forth over the days, heavy casualties had been inflicted on both sides.

Originally, the Golden Crow Tribe would not have been a match. However, the Thorn Rampart vine had continued to follow the mission it had been entrusted with by Meng Hao all those years ago. It surrounded the Golden Crow Tribe, causing thorns to spread out. Over and over again it had blocked the deadly attacks of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe.

Blood soaked the ground as the war between the two parties slowly raged into a fever pitch. Booming echoed about as people died left and right.

The spell formation of the Church of the Golden Light was another reason that the Golden Crow Tribe had been able to hold their ground for so long. The attacks of the parrot, meat jelly and Outlander Beast also turned the battlefield with the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe into a sea of blood.

Both sides fought with bloodshot eyes. Neo-demons flew about in mid-air massacring each other.

However, as time had passed, the situation for the Golden Crow Tribe continued to grow more critical.

Currently, more than a hundred Nascent Soul Cultivators of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe flew about in mid-air, emitting truly crushing pressure. There were also more than twenty totemic Sacred Ancients, who, although were not of the Spirit Severing stage, only the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, were still astonishingly powerful.

When you added in the ordinary Cultivators and the roaring neo-demons, it caused the sky to dim.

The Heavenly Pursuit Tribe was a great Tribe after all, with deep, powerful resources. Considering that the entire Tribe had been mobilized, the Golden Crow Tribe fundamentally weren't a match for them. They had no choice but to slowly fall back into the perimeter of the Thorn Rampart. All the neo-demons and Cultivators were deeply exhausted, but not in despair.

Within the confines of the Tribe, the Tribe members gathered around Meng Hao's statue and called out the name of their Sacred Ancient. It was at this point that they began to feel their blood burn with righteousness. They felt just the way they imagined the old-timers, who were now the leadership of the Tribe, must have felt during the days of the migration.

However, the situation continued to decline. The protective Thorn Rampart began to show signs of collapse, although... it continued to hold on.

Big Hairy and the Wild Giant continued to fight on, absolutely no fear of death within their hearts. They fought with madness, with determination, also incapable of forgetting the mission Meng Hao had entrusted them with. Even if they died, they would continue to protect the Golden Crow Tribe.

Big Hairy, covered in blood, howled as he fought. The Wild Giant lost an eye, but was still as fierce as ever.

Meanwhile, within the forces of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, Zhang Wenzu looked coldly out across the battlefield. 1. He then waved his right hand, snatching up a member of the Golden Crow Tribe by the neck. He squeezed down violently. Cracking sounds could be heard as the neck was crushed.

He suddenly cried out: "Tower Toppling Tribe, Cloud Mountain Tribe, Nine Crystals Tribe. The three of you, attack the right flank!

"Flying Cloud Tribe, Vast Mountain Tribe, Peng Lai Tribe, attack the left flank!

“This battle is about to end! Members of the main Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, attack the center.... Crush the Golden Crow Tribe. Men, women, elderly, children... don’t leave a single one alive!” Killing intent flickered in Zhang Wenzu’s eyes. He, of course, was the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe Chosen who was taking the lead in the battle.

*

1. Zhang Wenzu was present on the day Meng Hao led the Tribe to Blackgate Fort. He was introduced in chapter 510, where he had some interaction with Duo Lan of the Demon Butterfly Tribe. He had some minor reactions to the battle in subsequent chapters, and then made a comment in chapter 515 about wanting to fight Meng Hao.

Chapter 549: I've Returned!

Up in mid-air, the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe's Greatfather and High Priest looked down coldly at the battlefield. They were exhausted, but their killing intent filled the air. They very much approved of Zhang Wenzu's plans....

"This battle will be over soon," said the Greatfather.

In accord with the orders issued by Zhang Wenzu, the Tribe slashed into the Golden Crow Tribe from three directions. The sounds of slaughter immediately intensified.

War chariots constructed from magical treasures pulsed with prismatic light as they crushed anything in their path, instantly putting the Golden Crow Tribe in grave danger.

The peak level battle prowess of the more than one hundred Nascent Soul Cultivators and twenty totemic Sacred Ancients emitted crushing pressure that weighed down on everything. It was a force that would be equivalent even to a great Sect from the Southern Domain.

As the brutal battle raged, the Golden Crow Tribe was forced to shrink back. The Thorn Rampart vines were in a frenzy, and the brilliant glow of magical techniques and divine abilities rose up into the sky.

The parrot soared through midair, its eyes red. As more and more members of the Golden Crow Tribe perished, the parrot felt worse and worse. Everything that was happening made it think of a painful memory from the past.

The meat jelly trembled as it looked around. Although its body was indestructible, when it saw the Cultivators dying all around, it felt grief similar to the parrot's.

"Hey old bird, why the hell haven't you opened the seal and gotten rid of these enemies?!"

"I can't open it, bitch! It won't open!" shouted the parrot, charging in attack.

The Golden Crow Tribe fell back again. Booming roars rose up into the sky. They had long since given up on the thought of advancing. Everything was focused on defense. They were completely surrounded by the forces of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe. The combined power of more than twenty totemic Sacred Ancients and over one hundred Nascent Soul Cultivators caused the Thorn Rampart vines to begin to collapse. From the look of things it wouldn't be long before they died completely.

It was at this moment that suddenly, a roaring sound could be heard from off in the distance. Thirteen Heavenly Pursuit Tribe Cultivators came into view, carrying with them a black-colored pillar that even five people couldn't encircle with their arms.

The pillar was carved with countless ferocious beasts, and emanated a primitive, archaic aura that made it seem as if it had existed for countless years. The thirteen Cultivators slowly proceeded forward with the pillar, their faces red and dripping with sweat. Apparently the pillar was incredibly heavy, and even with their combined strength, it was difficult to bear it on their shoulders for very long.

As it turned out, there wasn't just one column heading toward the battlefield. There were three!

They slowly approached the Golden Crow Tribe from three directions, each one roughly three hundred meters in length.

From up above, the three black pillars looked like three gigantic spikes, pulsing with black Qi. They seemed to be filled with the rancor of countless ferocious beasts.

Up in mid-air, Zhang Wenzu's eyes glittered and he suddenly cried out, "Crush them!"

In response, all of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe members instantly began to cry out strange incantations. The sounds of their voices shook everything, creating a roar that turned into a sound wave.

As it echoed out, the three gigantic black spikes responded to the power of the incantation. They suddenly flew up of their own accord to drift in mid-air.

The Greatfather and High Priest of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe lifted their hands to press down hard on their foreheads. Their bodies trembled and blood sprayed from their mouths. Their faces twisted bizarrely as they uttered the final, awkward-sounding words of the incantation: “Hongmosan!”

The incantation sucked in some of their life forces. The sound of it filled the entire battlefield, causing anyone who heard it to suddenly feel bedazzled, as if their souls were being tugged at.

Next, the three enormous black spikes suddenly shot downward. A rumbling bang could be heard as they stabbed into the ground.

Instantly, a black field of light sprang up between the black spikes, connecting them and completely enveloping the Golden Crow Tribe.

In that instant, all of the members of the Golden Crow Tribe, men and women, the elderly and children, even the neo-demons, all felt signs of withering within their bodies.

Meanwhile, the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe’s Nascent Soul Cultivators and totemic Sacred Ancients split into three groups, each one of which moved into the direction of one of the black spikes. After arriving, they unleashed the full power of their Cultivation bases to slam into the spikes.

Each successive blast sent the three spikes further into the ground by several meters. The black field of light grew stronger, and countless bolts of lightning appeared. The Golden Crow Tribe was completely enveloped, and the signs of withering grew stronger. The Tribe members’ faces filled with despair. It seemed as if what the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe said was true; they really were going to eradicate the entire Tribe and leave not a single person alive.

“Three Lives Spirit Extermination Spikes....” said the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe’s Greatfather. “They are precious treasures of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe. Were it not for the fact that the Golden Crow Tribe has fought back the entire time and not given in a bit, we would never have used them.”

“Hopefully the life forces of this Tribe will be of some use to the Patriarch,” said the High Priest.

The two of them let out soft sighs. The war had gone on for roughly half a month, but now it was finally going to conclude.

They weren't the only ones who heaved sighs of relief. Most of the surrounding Heavenly Pursuit Tribe members were the same, with the exception of Zhang Wenzu, whose expression was cold. The desire to kill still flickered in his eyes.

"They really are tenacious. However, the more they struggle, the more quickly their life forces will be drained, and the sooner they will die."

Roaring filled the air as the spikes were driven deeper into the ground. The Golden Crow Tribe members were wasting away, even the Outlander Beast and Big Hairy. There were no exceptions.

There was despair, but as they struggled, their eyes were filled enmity and frenzy. They fused together to form a hatred that could only be washed away with the blood of their enemies. All their enemies.

"There's no need to struggle," said the High Priest coolly.

"If you want to blame someone," said the Greatfather, "blame that totemic Sacred Ancient of yours. He killed someone he shouldn't have killed, and provoked someone he shouldn't have provoked, the Patriarch of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe. In fact, he's most likely already dead at the hands of Patriarch Huyan's clone." He smiled, his expression one of arrogance and scorn as he looked down at the Golden Crow Tribe.

The parrot flew in mid-air beneath within the field of light. "Who's dead, bitch? If anyone died, he wouldn't... uh... eee?" In the middle of its cursing, the parrot suddenly stared in shock. It immediately stopped speaking and looked off into the distance.

Even as the Golden Crow Tribe was struggling on the verge of collapse, even as the parrot stared in shock, suddenly, the ground began to shake. The shaking was not caused by the spikes being driven down. No, this shaking was much more intense, much more large in scale. It was as if the entire world was being turned upside down!

Off in the distance, huge forms could be seen, running with enormous

strides that caused the entire land to quake.

Soon, the aroma of saltwater blasted against the faces of everyone present. A wild wind sprang up that caused dust to fly up all over the place. A towering killing intent spread out in all directions.

The Heavenly Pursuit Tribe Cultivators sensed the shaking almost immediately. One after another, the more than one hundred Nascent Soul Cultivators and twenty totemic Sacred Ancients in mid-air looked up.

What they saw... was a gale force wind sweeping through the air!

The wind was dark and sinister as it screamed toward them, and within it could be seen hundreds of thousands of specters!

When they saw the specters, the Nascent Soul Cultivators and totemic Sacred Ancients gasped. The rest of the surrounding Heavenly Pursuit Tribe members were also shocked.

At the same time... the shaking grew more intense. Finally, the crowds could clearly see the seven giants leaping through the air. Every step they took slammed into the ground and caused it to quake. These were the three thousand meter tall Violet Sea Giants!

The aroma of saltwater grew stronger. The appearance of these seven Violet Sea Giants caused all of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe members to gasp.

“What are they...?” Zheng Wenzu was dumbstruck, his eyes wide and filled with astonishment. Then his mind began to fill with a roaring sound as he realized what the giants were made from.

The Heavenly Pursuit Tribe High Priest, his voice hoarse and filled with disbelief, said, “The Violet Sea.... They’re giants made from the waters of the Violet Sea!”

“Violet Sea Giants.... And the one in the lead position is holding something in its hand. It’s....” The Heavenly Pursuit Tribe Greatfather’s eyes narrowed as he looked off into the distance.

It was at this point that the High Priest and all the Nascent Soul

Cultivators also looked closely in the same direction. In that instant, they suddenly stopped breathing for a moment.

“Golden Crow Tribe members!!”

“Those are the ones we captured and sent to the ten outposts!!”

Even as the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe members felt complete and utter astonishment, an enormous red shape appeared in the approaching wind. It moved with incredible speed and emitted intense killing intent. The sky dimmed and the clouds were thrown into upheaval. An intense, hair-raising pressure radiated out toward the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe.

The intensity of the pressure felt to them like the strength of the Heavens.

It was an enormous, blood-colored mastiff. Standing on its head was a man in a green robe. His hair whipped about in the wind, and his eyes were as cold as ice. His expression was grim, and he suddenly exploded with seemingly infinite killing intent.

“Meng Hao!” Zhang Wenzu’s breath came in ragged pants. He recognized Meng Hao from that day outside Blackgate Fort. Meng Hao had left a deep impression on him at that time.

The Heavenly Pursuit Tribe Greatfather and High Priest also recognized Meng Hao, as well as some of the Nascent Soul Cultivators. As soon as they saw Meng Hao, their minds filled with roaring.

They were well aware that the Patriarch’s Clone had gone to kill Meng Hao. However... here was Meng Hao now. There was only one thing that meant, and everyone knew it.

It was in this moment that among the trembling Golden Crow Tribe members caught in the black field of light, older members of the Tribe finally caught sight of Meng Hao, standing there atop the mastiff. These were old-timers who had accompanied Meng Hao during the long migration years ago.

He looked almost completely the same as he had a hundred years ago. Immediately, the old-timers began to tremble with excitement.

“Exalted Sacred Ancient, we welcome you back with deep respect!”

The other Golden Crow Tribe members who had been born in the past hundred years, or perhaps had joined the Tribe, all gaped in astonishment. The instant they saw Meng Hao, they connected his visage to that the of the statue in the middle of the Tribe. They too were filled with excitement.

“Exalted Sacred Ancient, we welcome you back with deep respect!!”

“Exalted Sacred Ancient, we welcome you back with deep respect!!” Their voices roared out in all directions, filled with hope and frenzy. As the sound echoed about, Meng Hao’s voice could be heard.

“I’ve returned.”

Chapter 550: Breaking the Formation!

The two simple words rang out from Meng Hao's mouth to fill the entire battlefield. When the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe heard the words, the sound of countless gasps could be heard. As for the Golden Crow Tribe members, their hearts filled with wild excitement.

The two words contained guilt as well as killing intent directed toward the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe. Even as his words continued to echo about, Meng Hao's eyes fell upon the bedraggled, listless Big Hairy.

Then he saw the trembling Wild Giant, and many other faces within the crowd that he recognized from the migration.

He saw Wu Chen. He saw the remnants of his neo-demon horde. He saw the members of the Church of the Golden Light. Many images shone brightly inside his mind. More than a hundred years of separation hadn't seemed like a long time to Meng Hao, but for the Golden Crow Tribe, it had been like an eternity.

"I've... returned," he murmured. The Karma that existed between him and the Golden Crow Tribe could not be broken. When he saw their sorry state, the killing intent visible on his face grew even more intense.

At the same time, among the panting members of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, the Greatfather's eyes glimmered with the desire to kill.

"So, you were able to evade the Patriarch," said the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe High Priest. "You've clearly got some skill! However, since you've delivered yourself up, today will be the day you die!"

"Heavenly Pursuit Tribe Cultivators, kill this man! Eradicate the Golden Crow Tribe!" As soon as they heard his words, the members of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe roared.

Zhang Wenzu's eyes gleamed with the desire to do battle.

"So, you appear again! This time... we will fight!" Zhang Wenzu had been left with a deep impression of Meng Hao that year. Right now, his will to fight exploded out.

Killing intent roared up from the more than one hundred Nascent Soul Cultivators and twenty totemic Sacred Ancients. They were just about to charge into battle when suddenly, the mastiff gave them a look of disdain and then let out a roar.

The roar was backed by the mastiff's Spirit Severing aura. As it exploded out, an invisible tempest sprung up with the mastiff at its center. All the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe members that the aura touched, including the Nascent Soul Cultivators and totemic Sacred Ancients, were filled with astonishment. Their faces fell; they almost couldn't believe that it was true!

"Spirit Severing!!"

"That's... that's a Spirit Severing neo-demon!!"

At the same time, the seven huge Violet Sea Giants finally reached the battlefield, striding forward at top speed, the ground quaking beneath them.

The hundreds of thousands of specters also neared, emanating grimness. The entire battlefield was suddenly filled with extreme coldness.

As the mastiff sped forward, it turned into a beam of crimson light that shot toward the black field of light that was enveloping the Golden Crow Tribe.

Meng Hao's body flickered as he transformed into a green smoke and a black moon. Moments later, he appeared directly next to one of the black spikes. At the same time, he entered the Third Anima.

The parrot and the meat jelly instantly flew out at top speed to perch on Meng Hao's shoulder. They seemed as if they had suddenly found their backbones. They looked around the battlefield, their expressions triumphant and arrogant.

"Come on, bitches! Well, what are you doing?!?! Who's the tough one now? You dare to provoke Lord Fifth, bitches? Little Haowie, get out there and screw them!"

"Humph! Lord Third isn't going to convert you! Lord Third is gonna beat

you to death! Little Haowie, get out there and screw them!”

Meng Hao’s face was grim as he ignored the parrot and meat jelly. Now that he had entered the Third Anima, the power of four great circle Nascent Souls rose up within him, causing ripples to emanate out in all directions.

BANG!

As his Cultivation base exploded out, he waved his index finger through the air. It looked like an ordinary movement, but suddenly, violet Qi boiled up. This was none other than Meng Hao’s Violet Qi Guillotine.

The blade descended onto the body of one of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe Nascent Soul Cultivators. His eyes went wide and a booming sound rang out as his body was cleaved entirely in half.

“Screw ‘em!! SCREW THEM!!” squawked the parrot excitedly, finally able to vent a bit after all this time.

Meng Hao shot forward with a boom. At the same time, within the red glow surrounding the mastiff, countless bright red hairs suddenly appeared in the air. They began to rotate around the mastiff, shockingly transforming into a red tornado. It moved forward unimpeded, crushing anything that got in its way as easily as if it were dried weeds. It didn’t matter if it was a Sacred Ancient or a Nascent Soul Cultivator, anything that it touched screamed and then exploded, destroyed in both body and soul.

This was not a battle. This was a massacre!

As for the hundreds of thousands of specters, they were grim and emotionless as they pounced on the ordinary Cultivators of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe. They could do nothing but tremble as their life force was exterminated.

Most shocking of all were the seven Violet Sea Giants. After arriving on the battlefield, they sprang into motion. When their fists descended onto the surface of the ground, enormous craters appeared. Even more astonishing was the power of extermination that existed within them. Any

living thing they touched was exterminated.

The battlefield was instantly thrown into complete chaos!

The sudden change caused the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe Greatfather and High Priest to gasp with disbelief. Zhang Wenzu's eyes were wide as he stared, his mind a complete blank. Originally, he wanted to duel with Meng Hao, but now he could only watch as Meng Hao faced up against the Nascent Soul Cultivators. Not one could last for more than a single breath against him. At the moment, he watched as one of the illustrious Tribe Elders, who was in the late Nascent Soul stage, was so weak that he exploded under a single finger attack. As the man's bloodcurdling shriek echoed in Zhang Wenzu's ears, he began to tremble, and abandoned all thoughts of fighting a duel with Meng Hao.

"Stop them from pulling up the Spirit Extermination Spikes!!" he cried.

Despite their shock and widened eyes, the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe Cultivators howled and charged toward Meng Hao. Currently, Meng Hao was surrounded by thirty Nascent Soul Cultivators and seven or eight totemic Sacred Ancients, all of whom were attempting to prevent him from nearing the black spike.

"Screw off!" he cried. The killing intent in his eyes boiled as he waved his hand, causing a wild wind to spring up that was filled with the power of four great circle Nascent Souls. It shot out, causing eight or so Nascent Soul Cultivators in front of him to tumble backward, blood spraying out of their mouths. Two of them even screamed and then directly exploded.

At the same time, Meng Hao made a grasping motion. The Devil Spear appeared in his hand, and he tossed it backward. It instantly became a black mist filled with vicious faces which began to consume eight or so incoming opponents.

Meng Hao didn't pause for even a moment. He next appeared in front of one of the totemic Sacred Ancients, which bore the semblance of a rhinoceros. The killing intent in his eyes sparkled as his right fist descended.

BAM!

The totemic Sacred Ancient's face was filled with disbelief in the moment before it exploded into a haze of blood and gore that Meng Hao passed directly through. Gasps could be heard from the other eight or so Nascent Soul Cultivators who had been attempting to block Meng Hao. They were filled with intense shock and their minds reeled. They suddenly stopped in their tracks, not daring to get in Meng Hao's way.

Meng Hao proceeded forward as if he were walking through a field of dry weeds. In the blink of an eye, he was directly above the black Spirit Extermination Spike. He reached down and grabbed ahold of it, then wrenched up.

The spike let out an intense rumbling sound as it slowly moved upward. However, it was at this point that the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe Greatfather approached. Intense killing intent filled his eyes. He knew that he must under no circumstance let the Spirit Extermination Spike be pulled up. If he did, then the Golden Crow Tribe would be able to charge out, which would be like adding snow onto frost, disaster upon disaster.

"Do not hold anything back! Stop him!" roared the Greatfather. The surrounding Nascent Soul Cultivators gritted their teeth, and, joined by eight or so totemic Sacred Ancients, charged toward Meng Hao.

In the blink of an eye, they were bearing down on him. However, Meng Hao's mouth curved in a cold smile.

"Fourth Anima!"

Roaring filled the air as he entered the Fourth Anima. Battle power equivalent to eight great circle Nascent Souls exploded out within Meng Hao. As his enemies neared, they were blasted by the explosive aura.

Blood sprayed out of the mouths of all of the surrounding Nascent Soul Cultivators and totemic Sacred Ancients. Even the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe's Greatfather coughed up blood and was sent tumbling backward, his face written with shock.

He watched with wide eyes as Meng Hao heaved up again. A booming sound reverberated through the air as the spike was wrenched completely up out of the ground. As it emerged, it began to shrink rapidly, until it fit

completely in Meng Hao's palm.

Now that one of the three spikes was gone, the black field of light which enveloped the Golden Crow Tribe rippled and distorted. Some of the life force that the black field had stolen now began to descend back down toward the excited members of the Golden Crow Tribe.

The sight of it caused the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe to be filled with shock.

"This man... just what level is his Cultivation base?!?!"

"This isn't the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, this is... halfway to Spirit Severing!!"

Even as everyone expressed their shock, another booming sound could be heard from the direction of the second of the Spirit Extermination Spikes. The ground quaked as the mastiff completely destroyed all the Nascent Soul Cultivators and totemic Sacred Ancients who defended it. Then, the mastiff smacked the spike violently with its paw. The blow was filled with such power that the spike was torn out the ground and sent flying, leaving behind a massive fissure.

Having lost two of the spikes, the black field of light was now covered in distortions. It was no longer sucking away life force, but restoring it!! It took only moments for all of the life force it had stolen to be returned.

As the black spike whizzed through the air, Meng Hao's body flashed and he waved his right index finger into the air. Immediately, the enormous black spike trembled and began to shrink. In the blink of an eye, it landed on Meng Hao's palm.

Without pausing for a second, Meng Hao continued toward the third black spike. Anyone who tried to block his way would suddenly notice a red glow speeding toward them. The mastiff would appear and bat them away with its paw.

Of course, anyone who received a blow from the paw of the mastiff ended up being transformed completely into a haze of blood and gore!

BOOM!

Meng Hao's hand slammed down onto the surface of the third black spike. Rumbling filled the air, along with a popping sound, as he heaved it out of the ground.

The black field of light completely shattered, and the Golden Crow Tribe members, their bodies fully recovered, charged out, killing intent rising to the Heavens.

“KILL THEM!!”

Chapter 551: Dead end!

The massacre intensified!

The members of the Golden Crow Tribe emerged with excited roars. This was especially true of the old-timers who had accompanied Meng Hao through the migration. Their veins burned with passion as they recalled the blood and fire they had experienced on that long road years ago. Ah, the glory of life!

As for the new members of the Tribe who had appeared throughout the last hundred years, they too felt their blood boiling. It was almost like the stories that they had heard from the elder generation were suddenly playing out right in front of them. Except, it was all real!

They were no longer the Five Crow Divinity Tribes that needed the protection of Meng Hao's neo-demon horde to survive. Even the great Heavenly Pursuit Tribe needed to exert all their power to destroy them.

Once they charged out in attack, their killing intent soaring up, and that old intrepid madness that existed deep in their bones once again exploded out.

Tens of thousands of Golden Crow Tribe Cultivators charged directly into battle, joined by the neo-demon horde, Big Hairy, the Wild Giant, their Nascent Soul experts, and totemic Sacred Ancients. They instantly slaughtered their way into the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe.

Booming roars filled the air. It was an awe-inspiring massacre.

Meng Hao hovered in mid air, looking down for a moment at the third black spike as it landed onto his palm. He put it away, and then looked around, his eyes glinting with a cold glow.

The Blood Mastiff roared, and then suddenly vanished. It didn't kill anyone, but rather, transformed into a blinding red light that spread out like a gigantic blanket to cover the entire area.

The Heavenly Pursuit Tribe's path of retreat was now completely sealed off!

The only strange thing was that before the mastiff transformed into the red seal, the parrot suddenly looked at it with gleaming eyes. It stared open-mouthed at the mastiff, its body trembling. A burning excitement suddenly appeared in its eyes.

Meanwhile, the seven Violet Sea Giants continued to crash their way across the battlefield. Reddish glows emanated out from them as, everywhere they went, Cultivators around them were exterminated. The hundreds of thousands of specters flew about, surrounded by icy coldness. Every place they visited on the battlefield, lives were extinguished.

This was a complete and utter bloodbath!

The members of the Golden Crow Tribe became a blade of butchery that savagely attacked with complete determination to secure revenge.

Meng Hao's body flickered and he suddenly reappeared next to a Nascent Soul Cultivator. It was an old woman wearing a long, emerald robe. Her face was pale with shock because of everything that had happened. Meng Hao's sudden arrival to the battle had left her completely shaken. She looked around at the slaughter going on, and her scalp went numb. She had been just about to flee when Meng Hao appeared next to her.

Her pupils constricted and she instantly bit down on her tongue and then spit out some blood. She slapped her bag of holding, causing ten magical items to appear in front of her. In this moment of critical danger, the old woman did not hold anything back. Along with the appearance of her magical items, all the power of her totems magically manifested, transforming into a variety of totems. At the same time, her body grew even more withered as she burned a large portion of her life force.

Rumbling surrounded the two of them. The old woman's face grew fierce, whereas Meng Hao's expression was cold. He did nothing to evade her attack, but simply strode forward and lifted his right hand into the air. The Devil Spear instantly shot forward.

The spear roared through the air, shattering the magical items, destroying the old woman's totems. It stabbed into her forehead, passing

completely through to the other side.

The old woman's eyes went wide and she stared blankly at Meng Hao. Suddenly, her body exploded as her weakened Nascent Soul shot away in flight. Meng Hao reached out quickly with his left hand to grab it and crush it to pieces.

The sight of all this caused three totemic Sacred Ancients who had just been planning to launch a sneak attack, to gasp. Then they fell back in astonishment. Meng Hao turned his head, and his eyes flashed as if with electricity.

"Lightning," he said. Considering the massacre being carried out on the battlefield around him, it seemed at first as if Meng Hao's voice was not loud enough. However, in response, seven enormous lightning bolts suddenly appeared out of nowhere.

These were seven red-colored lightning bolts which were filled with the will of Heavenly Tribulation. At the same time, they also contained Meng Hao's will. The lightning bolts shot toward the three totemic Sacred Ancients, filling the three neo-demons with astonishment. Without hesitation, they employed their various divine abilities, causing layers of multicolored lights to appear in the form of a shield. Demonic Qi also swept out.

However... in the blink of an eye, the three neo-demons let out miserable shrieks as the red lightning smashed through all of their magic. It didn't matter if it was divine abilities or magical techniques; all were crushed like rotten wood. The three totemic Sacred Ancients were not able to avoid the seven bolts of red lightning, and were instantly inundated.

The sound of crashing thunder caused everything to shake. Everyone on the entire battlefield could see what was happening, and all of them gasped, faces filled with astonishment. 1

This was especially true of the members of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, most especially the Nascent Soul Cultivators and the totemic Sacred Ancients. Their faces fell and were filled with terror. Some of them even began to flee the battlefield. However, as soon as they slammed into the

red barrier, they screamed, and their bodies dissolved.

This place... had long since turned into a complete dead end for them!

The High Priest of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe was an archaic old man with the bearing of a transcendent being. He held an enormous wooden staff in his hand and wore a long, gray gown. Right now, though, he was trembling in his boots, and his eyes overflowed with despair. However, that despair quickly vanished, replaced with determination.

“Members of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, hold on just a little longer! The Patriarch will definitely come to save us!”

As his words drifted out across the battlefield, the members of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe who had been so stricken with fear of Meng Hao, suddenly felt flickers of hope burning within their hearts.

“The Patriarch is currently on his way here!” cried the Greatfather. “He will eradicate this villain and destroy his Tribe. The Heavenly Pursuit Tribe will not fall!” The Greatfather was an ancient man who wore a long violet robe and whose eyes shone with a fierce light. His Cultivation base was similar to a totemic Sacred Ancient, and he was in the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage.

Zhang Wenzu took a deep breath. The words of the Greatfather and the High Priest caused his heart to calm a bit. His face grim, his eyes suddenly shone with derision as he looked across the battlefield toward Meng Hao.

“The Patriarch will definitely come,” he thought. “Then what will he do? We are one of the three great Tribes of the Heavenly Court Alliance. Meng Hao hasn’t picked a fight with just the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, but the entire alliance!

“We have three Spirit Severing Patriarchs. This guy... is definitely going to die!”

Meng Hao’s body vanished. When he reappeared, his hand snaked out to latch around the neck of a totemic Sacred Ancient. This was a human-shaped neo-demon, which, after Meng Hao grabbed it, struggled fiercely. However, Meng Hao’s “Fire 火” character glowed faintly, causing the thing

to burst into black flames that burned with an indescribable temperature, causing it to emit a blood-curdling scream. In the blink of an eye, the neodemon was turned into nothing more than ash drifting in the wind.

Meng Hao didn't even look at it. Having heard the words of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe Greatfather and High Priest, his mouth twisted into a smile.

"You're waiting for that cretin Patriarch Huyan...?" he said, looking across the crowded battlefield at the Greatfather, who was several hundred meters away.

The instant his gaze fell upon the violet-robed Greatfather, all the hair on the man's body stood on end, and his heart filled with a sense of deadly crisis.

As he looked at Meng Hao, his mind trembled and filled with an ominous sense of foreboding. His action of looking over at Meng Hao was actually completely subconscious, but as soon as their gazes locked, the Heavenly Pursuit Greatfather's brain filled with an intense pain. It was as if Meng Hao's eyes were sharp knives that stabbed through his eyes into his brain, preparing to eradicate him.

Blood began to ooze out of the Greatfather's eyes, ears, nose and mouth. He started backing up, his eyes widening.

Meng Hao took a step forward and said, "I have no idea whether or not that patsy Huyan will be coming. But you won't be here to find out, of that I'm certain."

"Protect the Greatfather!" cried the surrounding Tribe members. Alarmed, they formed a protective circle around the Greatfather. Many of the group were Nascent Soul Cultivators and totemic Sacred Ancients.

Meng Hao smiled as he moved forward toward the Greatfather.

His path was one of explosions and annihilation. No one who stood in his way was able to impede him for even a moment. His finger reached out to tap on the forehead of a Nascent Soul Cultivator. Blood poured from the man's mouth and he was sent tumbling backward. By the time he exploded, Meng Hao had already moved more than three hundred

meters. He flicked his sleeve, and the character “Wind 风” appeared, transforming into a screaming wind that instantly became a cyclone. It raged out around Meng Hao, slamming into seven or eight nearby Nascent Soul Cultivators and totemic Sacred Ancients. Blood sprayed from their mouths and they were sent flying back.

There was not a single person on the battlefield who could do anything to stop Meng Hao. He proceeded forward another three hundred meters. He gestured off into the distance, and immediately, a frosty soil 土 appeared. It spread out rapidly toward the nearby Cultivators. Booming sounds could be heard as their bodies quivered and then completely froze!

Meng Hao moved a third time, another three hundred meters. By this time, he was directly in front of the rapidly retreating Greatfather. Even as the people surrounding him instantly charged in attack, the blank look on the Greatfather’s face was replaced with despair. Meng Hao lifted his hand up and pushed forward.

“Metal 金!”

In response to this single word, a golden light exploded up around Meng Hao’s right hand. The glow of it filled the battlefield, and, in the blink of an eye, the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe Greatfather was completely transformed into a statue of gold.

A bang rang out as the statue slammed into the ground below, where it came to rest, unmoving. The look of despair was still clear on the man’s face.... The sight of it caused all of the remaining Heavenly Pursuit Tribe members to gape. Their bodies trembled and were filled with icy coldness.

The Golden Crow Tribe members, on the other hand, were growing even more excited.

“Sacred Ancient!!”

“Sacred Ancient!!”

Their roars echoed out in all directions, filled with anger and indignation, as well as their determination to eradicate the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe.

You want to wipe out our Tribe? Allow us to wipe out YOURS!

Such enmity could not be reconciled. It was simply impossible to do so. The only option was for the bloodlines of one of these Tribes to be completely removed from the lands of South Heaven!

Chapter 552: Why Haven't You Come!?

“The Patriarch is on his way!”

“The Patriarch will come to save us!”

“Hold on just a bit longer!”

The death of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe Greatfather filled the other Tribe members' hearts with despair. The only thing that kept them from completely collapsing was the hope that Patriarch Huyan would come to save them.

They truly believed that Patriarch Huyan would come to save them!

Huyan Yunming was THEIR Patriarch!

The slaughter intensified yet again. The sound of killing rose up to the Heavens. Meng Hao was the peak power on the battlefield. Not a single Heavenly Pursuit Cultivator dared to get close to him. No totemic Sacred Ancient had the gall to attack him. Wherever he went, enemy Cultivators scattered immediately.

Finally, Meng Hao's gaze came to fall upon Zhang Wenzu. In that instant, Zhang Wenzu began to tremble, and without pausing for a moment, he fled backward. His mind was reeling with shock, and yet, even as he began to flee, Meng Hao turned into a green smoke and then appeared directly next to him.

“I surrender to the Golden Crow Tribe!!” cried Zhang Wenzu, his face flickering. The pressure bearing down on him from Meng Hao was too intense, filling him with a sense of deadly crisis. Fearing that Meng Hao wouldn't believe him, he actually dropped all of his defenses.

“I surrender!” he gushed anxiously. “I'm the Chosen of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe. If I join the Golden Crow Tribe then I can give you....” Before he could finish, Meng Hao's hand flashed out like lightning to grab his neck with an iron grip.

“I remember you,” said Meng Hao. “You were there that year at Blackgate Fort.”

Zhang Wenzu's body trembled, and his face filled with fear. It felt as if an enormous vice were clamped down onto his neck. In response to Meng Hao's words, he instantly nodded.

"Unfortunately," said Meng Hao, "the Golden Crow Tribe doesn't need turncoats." With that, he tightened his grip. Zhang Wenzu was the Chosen of this generation of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe. He had practiced cultivation for two hundred years to reach the early Nascent Soul stage. Right now, a tremor ran through his body as his Nascent Soul was crushed and he died in both body and spirit.

Meng Hao loosened his grip and turned. Currently, only ten thousands members remained of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe. Of the previous force of one hundred Nascent Soul Cultivators, only twenty were left.

As far as totemic Sacred Ancients went, only five remained.

The Heavenly Pursuit Tribe could already be considered destroyed. However, with Patriarch Huyan still around, they could still count as a great Tribe!

Under the leadership of the High Priest, the members of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe had all formed together. In fact, they were now in much the same position that the Golden Crow Tribe had been in before. They were surrounded by enemy Tribe members, hundreds of thousands of specters, and seven Violet Sea Giants.

In the very middle of the group from the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe was the High Priest. His face filled with grief, he held his staff aloft and then plunged it down into the ground. Blood sprayed from his mouth as he sat down cross-legged.

His voice shrill, he cried, "Patriarch, why haven't you come!?!?"

"The Heavenly Pursuit Tribe is about to be destroyed... Of 80,000 Tribe members, only 10,000 are left! Patriarch, why... why haven't you come!?!?"

Even as he howled up to the Heavens, the staff in front of him began to glow with a white light that then shot up into the sky. As soon as it slammed into the red light of the mastiff, it vanished. However, despite the

fact that it vanished, it was still able to use a special bloodline method to pierce out into the outside world. It shot toward the location of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe directly into the mind of Patriarch Huyan, who sat there cross-legged.

Meanwhile, Meng Hao hovered there in mid-air, looking out over the scene. His eyes glittering, he waved his right hand, causing the three Spirit Extermination Spikes to appear. He sent his Divine Sense into the spikes, then, borrowing the power of the Mastiff, wiped the brands off of them and replaced them with his own.

“What you did to the Golden Crow Tribe,” he said coolly. “Meng Hao will do to you. It’s only fair.” With that, he tossed one of the black spikes out into the air, where it rapidly increased in size. Roaring could be heard as Meng Hao waved his hand, causing the spike to be stabbed half-way down into the ground.

Instantly, a black field of light sprang up to envelop the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe.

Next, a second spike flew out in a different direction to then stab down into the ground. The black field of light grew stronger, and the members of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe began to tremble and wither.

A third spike stabbed down. The Spirit Extermination Spike spell formation having been fully activated, all of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe members were now in the same position the Golden Crow Tribe members had been. Their flesh withered, and their life force drained away at a rapid pace.

They stood there shaking, expressions of despair appeared on their faces as they looked toward the High Priest. In turn, the High Priest looked up into the sky. As his body wasted away, his voice once again raised out, filled with hopelessness.

“Patriarch... save your people....

“Patriarch, why haven’t you come...? Have you forsaken us...?”

Meng Hao looked at the spectacle from up above, but said nothing. He

looked off into the distance, a thoughtful expression on his face.

The surrounding Golden Crow Tribe members watched on silently. They were not inherently fond of killing, but when they saw the hopelessness on the faces of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe Cultivators, they couldn't help but think of their own situation earlier.

If Meng Hao had not returned, then perhaps they would have begun to cry out just like the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe.

Time passed. Within the black field of light, the life forces of the withering members of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe were beginning to wink out. They turned into corpses which toppled to the ground. As they died, their life forces were completely absorbed by the spell formation, causing a white cyclone to gradually appear.

As more Tribe members became shriveled corpses, the High Priest continued to waste away. He now looked like a body just climbed up out of a grave, emanating a strong aura of death. Despite that, he continued to gaze up listlessly into the sky. His voice echoed out continuously.

“Patriarch... Did we make a mistake...?”

“Patriarch, please respond. Did we err? Why haven't you come...?”

1,000. 3,000. 5,000. Finally, all 10,000 Tribe members became desiccated corpses and toppled to the ground. Soon, only the Nascent Soul Cultivators and the totemic Sacred Ancients were left. They trembled and cried out helplessly, and the High Priest began to laugh bitterly.

The laughter became sadder until it was filled with resentment.

“Patriarch, why haven't you come for us!?!?” Even as his resentful words rang out, the remaining Nascent Soul Cultivators lifted their heads up to release the last howl they would release in their entire lives.

“Why... haven't you come?!?!?”

Boom!

The Nascent Soul Cultivators in the field of light were now dried up corpses. The totemic Sacred Ancients were all dead. The only person left

was the High Priest. He continued to chuckle hatefully as the flame of his life force was finally extinguished.

After they were all dead, the white cyclone floating within the black field of light transformed into a white pearl. Meng Hao had assumed the pearl would disappear, but it did not. It remained there, floating in the air until members of the Golden Crow Tribe approached to take it away.

The scene caused Meng Hao to frown and look off into the distance.

“Just what are you planning, Patriarch Huyan....” he thought. After a moment, a tremor ran through his body. He looked down into his bag of holding at the Demon Spirit he had acquired all those years ago in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. It was now shining with a brilliant light.

It grew more and more intense, and began to emanate a gravitational force.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. After calculating the days, he realized that the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane would be opening soon.

“Patriarch Huyan, I don’t care what you’re planning. The fight between the two of us cannot be avoided!”

He looked over the Golden Crow Tribe. Big Hairy was there, and the Wild Giant too. Finally, he waved his hand, causing the glowing red shield to shrink back down and transform back into the mastiff.

He stood on the mastiff’s head and looked off into the distance.

Eventually he looked back at the members of the Golden Crow Clan, and they looked back with expressions of fervent ardor. Meng Hao could clearly sense the intense faith power in the area. “I’m going to the Heavenly Pursuit Sect. As for all of you... there’s no need for you to come along.”

Faith power circled around Meng Hao, transforming into ghost images that superimposed with his body. It slowly fused into his Cultivation base in such a way that no magical technique could cause it to diffuse.

Meng Hao looked over at Big Hairy, who floated there in mid-air, and

gave him an encouraging look. Big Hairy let out a few yips in response.

The Thorn Rampart vines swayed back and forth in the air, seemingly looking up into the air as Meng Hao prepared to leave.

Meng Hao turned and opened up his bag of the Cosmos to suck in all the bodies of the members of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe. Then he and the mastiff flashed and shot up into the air.

Behind him, all the members of the Tribe clasped hands and bowed. Wu Chen and Wu Ling were there. They watched Meng Hao, their hearts filled with dolorousness. It was Wu Chen who finally spoke. The gratefulness in his heart toward Meng Hao was different than the others.

“Sacred Ancient, sir... will you return to us?”

“... Yes!” was the soft reply.

The old-timers who had accompanied Meng Hao during the migration felt deeply melancholy. They knew that it would be years before any of them would have a chance to see him again. They themselves might not even be alive at that time.

As Meng Hao sped off into the distance, the parrot and the meat jelly looked back from their position on his shoulder toward the Outlander Beast, who stood there amongst the Golden Crow Tribe members.

They had the sudden premonition that it would be hundreds of years before they met again, or perhaps even longer.... However, it was at this point that the parrot suddenly looked at the mastiff, and its eyes began to shine with burning passion. When the meat jelly sensed this, it shuddered.

The mastiff seemed to sense it as well, and gave the parrot a look. The parrot suddenly struck a graceful pose and smiled benevolently toward the mastiff. Subconsciously it looked back at the Outlander Beast. The Outlander Beast’s emotional expression caused the parrot to let out a sigh.

Meanwhile, far, far away a fissure suddenly opened up in mid-air above the Western Desert Violet Sea. A beautiful woman dressed in a flowing pink gown emerged. She looked irritated..

“The Primordial Demon Immortal Plane is opening and the teleportation power is strong. Everyone with Demon Spirits will be entering.” This was none other than Zhixiang. She ground her teeth as she looked down at the Violet Sea.

“Meng Hao, there is one badass bitch who hasn’t forgotten about you! Eee? You stopped the Demonic Transmigration?” She stared in shock for a moment, and then raised her eyebrows happily.

“So you do have some conscience after all. You still owe me, don’t forget it.” With a snort, she picked a mountain-island and sat down cross-legged to wait for the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane to completely open.

Back in the Black Lands, there were other forces who noticed the teleportation power, and were similarly waiting.

Chapter 553: Lord Fifth Lives for a Dream of Love!

At the same time that the members of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe met their grievous end within the field of black light, back in the main temple of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, Patriarch Huyan sat cross-legged, shielded off in a restricted area. When the last Tribe member died, his eyes opened.

A cold, emotionless glow could be seen therein.

Around him, souls formed from grief began to appear. These were discarnate souls; their main souls had already been destroyed. These were only bits of will left behind in the temple.

As the maltreated souls floated around Patriarch Huyan, they let out voiceless cries. Patriarch Huyan's looked calmly at the maltreated souls. His voice was cool as he murmured, "Your deaths are not meaningless. In fact, they were very important to me.

"Don't look at it as me not going to save you. Rather... you needed to die. The more miserable your deaths, the more emotionless I can be. The more grief you felt in dying... the stronger my Dao becomes!

"Qing'er's death made it so that my Dao cannot be completed perfectly. The only thing I can do now is to find someone to replace Qing'er. You 80,000 members of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe... are none other than that replacement.

"I watched you die, capable of saving you, yet choosing not to. I watched you die, watched you clamoring for help, and it filled my heart with stabs of pain. However, the deeper those stabs of pain, the more emotion can be obliterated.

"You will not have died in vain. You will make my Dao... reach the peak of the First Severing!

"As far as the Tribe goes... as long as I am alive, there will always be a Tribe." Patriarch Huyan closed his eyes.

Meanwhile, booms rang out with every step the seven Violet Sea Giants took as they ran through the Black Lands. From off in the distance it almost looked like the churning Violet Sea itself, radiating boundless energy. Meng Hao stood on the mastiff, which shot through the air, surrounded by a crimson glow.

Their destination was none other than the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe's temple in the Black Lands!

Meng Hao's face was incredibly grim as they made their way forward. His eyes twitched, and subconsciously, his hands clenched into fists and emanated cracking sounds. The reason for all of this actually had nothing to do with Patriarch Huyan, but rather... the parrot.

"Heyyy. Hi there! You can call me Lord Fifth. Let's get to know each other, okay?" The parrot was flying in front of the mastiff, trying to look very graceful and gentlemanly. However, no matter how you looked at it, it looked perverted. Currently, it was peering tenderheartedly at the mastiff.

The mastiff had a strange expression in its eyes as it looked back at the parrot, puzzled.

When its gaze fell upon the parrot, the parrot suddenly seemed as if it couldn't control itself any more. It clutched its talons to its chest and let out an impassioned cry.

"This is it! This is the true love I've been waiting for my entire life!! Look at the fur! So tempting! Look at that expression! So pure! Look at that figure! So enchanting!

"This is the true love of my life!" Tears appeared in the parrot's eyes as it looked at the Blood Mastiff with an expression of fanatical infatuation.

"Beautiful little darling, please allow me to introduce myself again," it said loudly, its eyes shining brightly. "You can call me Lord Fifth. From now on, you're my little girl. From now on, you..."

It was at this point that Meng Hao's grim voice could be heard through clenched teeth.

"SCREW OFF!!"

The sound caused the parrot to fall back with a squawk. However, it quickly flew back, glaring angrily at Meng Hao. From out of nowhere, a black cloth appeared in its claws, which it quickly tied around one of its eyes. Its aura suddenly exploded up.

“You want to duel with me?!?!” the parrot raved. “Little Haowie, let’s do this, right now! Duel with Lord Fifth. This beautiful little darling will belong to whoever wins!” The frenzied parrot’s appearance was one of ultimate arrogance. It appeared to have gone crazy for love. It truly believed that by challenging Meng Hao, it could attract the attention of what it referred to as the beautiful little darling.

Meng Hao felt his temples pulsing. The headache he was experiencing was almost too much to take. He had to admit that he had forgotten about the parrot’s unique addiction. After looking at the mastiff, he also had to admit that to the parrot, it must be incredibly alluring.

“It’s male,” he explained with a forced smile.

The parrot looked hurt. “Male, female, it doesn’t matter. Lord Fifth lives for true love!” it roared. Its multicolored feathers stood on end, making it look almost like a gamecock. In truth, it was feeling very pleased with itself. In its estimation, it looked extremely handsome and dashing at the moment. It couldn’t help but glance at the mastiff out of the corner of its eye to see the expression on its face.

Meng Hao said nothing. The pain in his head only continued to grow. As far as he was concerned, the parrot needed a good spanking. He waved his right hand, causing a gale force wind to sweep out and surround it.

Within the whipping wind, the parrot struggled and then roared, “This is true love! True love is invincible!”

“Screw off!” cried Meng Hao, waving his sleeve again and trying to ignore the pain in his head. The wind screamed, but the parrot’s persistent voice once again rang out.

“Meng Hao, you’re shameless! You wanna be the third wheel! You wanna break us up!!”

Meng Hao's face grew even darker. Finally, he shrugged and punched out. The response was a frenzied roar from the parrot.

"Lord Fifth's love will never change! Lord Fifth's love will last forever!!" The parrot held nothing back as it roared at the top of its lungs to vindicate itself. Then, it let out a pained cry as it fell back a few paces, after which it looked passionately at the mastiff and yelled, "Little darling, Lord Fifth will travel to the ends of the earth for love! Let's elope! What do you say?" Its eyes burned with passion.

The Blood Mastiff's Cultivation base was at the Spirit Severing stage, and it was quite intelligent. At first, it was confused about what was going on. Now, though, this intrepid Blood Mastiff trembled as it looked at the parrot. Suddenly, its rage exploded up to the Heavens. It appeared to feel provoked, humiliated, as if it had been taken to be a female. Such intense provocation immediately caused the mastiff to fly into a rage.

It roared and shot forward toward the parrot, then batted it with a huge paw.

With a bang, the parrot was sent flying backward. Moments later, it flew back persistently.

"I will go to the ends of the earth for love! I live for my dream of love!! I am the mighty, the passionate, the one and only Lord Fifth!!"

Even as the parrot declared loudly everything it would do for love, the mastiff disappeared. It reappeared directly in front of the parrot. It grabbed the parrot in its paw, forcibly shutting it up, and then opened its gigantic mouth to let out a threatening roar. Compared to the mastiff's giant head, the tiny parrot was so tiny that it could be considered negligible.

The parrot was about to struggle, but the crushing Spirit Severing pressure instantly caused it to settle down. Its eyes opened wide as the mastiff's huge face grew close. As for the parrot, it almost looked intoxicated. Seemingly incapable of controlling its passion, it stretched out with its pointed beak and... gently kissed the mastiff.

The mastiff gaped in astonishment. Meng Hao stared in shock. Even the

meat jelly was dumbfounded.

Everything was deathly quiet.

The parrot's eyes glowed with an intense light as it looked at the mastiff. "Lord Fifth loves your power, little darling," it said loudly. "The more powerful you are, the more you fight back, the more Lord Fifth loves you."

The mastiff lifted its head up and roared. Its fury had reached a pinnacle. Its eyes radiated fierceness as it bit down, ripping the parrot into pieces. Moments later, though, the parrot reformed and shamelessly began to once again shout out:

"I will go to the ends of the earth for love!" it declared. "I live for my dream of love!! Even if you kill Lord Fifth a thousand times, it's like tempering steel! My love for you... is eternal!"

The mastiff roared, charging once again to tear parrot into pieces. And then, it all began again....

Meng Hao rubbed the bridge of his nose, and chuckled bitterly. At some point, the meat jelly had taken up a position on his shoulder. Similar to Meng Hao, a hand appeared, and it too rubbed the bridge of its nose. Its expression was exactly the same as Meng Hao's.

"Now do you see why it takes Lord Third an entire lifetime to convert it?" said the meat jelly somberly. It looked at Meng Hao with an enigmatic expression that said, 'you know what I mean....'

"Yes, I get it now," replied Meng Hao, sighing. In that moment, a tremor ran through his body as he suddenly realized that he had just made a massive mistake. He had actually... started a conversation with the meat jelly!

The meat jelly's eyes lit up, its desire to chat suddenly aroused.

"You get it? You really get it? Heavens! You really do get it! You understand me now! Okay, then, let's talk about something that happened 30,000 years ago. It was just too much. Infuriating! Oh, wait. Before that, let's talk about the weather from 70,000 years ago...."

The meat jelly trembled with excitement as it began to chatter. It turned into a droning sound in Meng Hao's ears. He watched the mastiff and the parrot battling, and listened to the garrulous meat jelly.

Suddenly, a feeling rose up in Meng Hao's heart that gave him the sensation that he was about to go insane. Any normal person who spent a lot of time with the parrot and meat jelly would definitely become abnormal.

All of a sudden, he felt a twinge of sympathy for the Li Clan Patriarch.

Meng Hao sighed and obediently maintained his silence. He said nothing, but rather, allowed the meat jelly to talk endlessly, allowed the parrot to continue to be battered around by the mastiff. Every time the parrot was smacked away, it would return and say all kinds of things that Meng Hao could not help but hear. Soon, he started to go numb.

And that was how time passed by oh so slowly...

Half a day later, even as the parrot continued to pay court to the mastiff, who continued to violently refuse it, the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe's temple appeared up ahead.

The temple itself was an enormous mountain shaped like a bottle gourd. It looked like a gigantic stone bottle gourd placed directly onto the surface of the land. The mountains that surrounded it were bare and infertile. The only entrance was at the very top of the mountain, at the mouth of the gourd.

Seeing the bottle gourd mountain caused Meng Hao to feel an indescribable sense of release. He shot directly toward the mouth of the gourd, and as he neared, he could sense an incredibly powerful restrictive spell.

The mouth of the gourd was like that of a volcano, and was roughly three hundred meters wide.

An enormous magical symbol could be seen stretching across the opening, floating there in mid-air, preventing anything from entering, be it a person or a stream of Divine Sense. Shockingly, just barely visible

beyond the illusory mouth of the gourd, Meng Hao could see another world.

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Note from Er Gen: Heyyy, let me tell you a personal story from back when I had just started college. One time our dorm had a party with the girl's dorm and I took a liking to one of the girls... unfortunately, in the end I was turned down. (As for her name, well, I still remember it down to this day.)

At that time, chat software was just starting to get popular, so I started a QQ account. As for whether it was five numbers long or six, I can't remember. 1 Anyway, for whatever reason, the first online username I ever picked was "Live for a Dream of Love."

As I recall it now, it seems both corny and also somewhat unthinkable. At the same time, it reminds me of how wonderful youth can be.

Alright, enough of that. When I have a chance, I'll tell all of you about three love letters I received in college, as well as the one I received after I started working. Every once in a while, I remember them and take them out. They make me both sigh and smile. The paper is yellow, and old, and makes me think about past times.... (to be continued....)

*

1. QQ numbers nowadays are 8 or 9 numbers long, so this shows how old school he is.

Chapter 554: Huyan's True Self!

He saw a vast number of houses, exquisitely ornamented palace buildings, countless temples, and one Tribal district after another....

There were nearly 10,000 people sitting cross-legged atop the houses. It seemed as if all the power of their Cultivation bases was emanating out. Their bodies were withered, to the point where they seemed fused with the houses. Apparently, these people were sparing no cost, giving up even their life force, to maintain the operation of the restrictive spell.

Meng Hao wasn't able to make out any more concrete details.

Almost the same moment in which Meng Hao arrived at the mouth of the gourd, he was shocked to discover that in the air around him were multiple streams of Divine Sense.

There were even streams of Divine Sense that didn't belong to Spirit Severing, but were valiant nonetheless. Apparently these were the result of magical items that could allow Cultivators from various Tribes to lock onto this position from a distance, and thus observe the proceedings.

Meng Hao ignored them. The fact that no one had interfered during the battle against the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe revealed the attitudes of the others.

Right now, the appearance of these streams of Divine Sense made that attitude even more obvious. These people were here to see... exactly what would happen in the end between him and Patriarch Huyan!

Some people clearly had a vested interest in what was going on, although Meng Hao didn't want to know why.

The mastiff, having just endured the aggravation of the parrot the entire way here, needed no orders from Meng Hao. A bright red glow emanated from its body as its Spirit Severing aura exploded out. It swiped out with its paw, slamming at the magical symbol restrictive spell.

A boom echoed out. Cracking sounds could be heard as the magical symbol collapsed into fragments. However, even as it disintegrated,

another restrictive spell became visible. The mastiff's fiendish will expanded out. It roared and swiped out its paw again. And then again. The entire gourd mountain shook for the space of ten breaths as the mastiff destroyed hundreds of layers of restrictive spells. However... by this point, they had only proceeded about a hundred and fifty meters down into the mouth of the gourd.

Shockingly, the entire gourd... was completely filled with restrictive spell formations!

The mastiff was about to continue destroying them, but Meng Hao calmly prevented it. He hovered outside of the mouth of the gourd and looked down inside. Then, his eyes filled with a cold light. He waved his right hand, and instantly, one of the seven Violet Sea Giants moved forward. In the blink of an eye it entered the mouth of the gourd and then transformed into a majestic Violet Sea that began to drain down into the gourd.

"If the people die," Meng Hao said calmly, "the restrictive spells will shatter on their own." In the Southern Domain, Meng Hao had not mastered the art of cruelty. However, his experiences in the Black Lands and the Western Desert, and especially the migration with the Crow Divinity Tribes, had forced him to shed his former naivety. Because of his surroundings and his experiences, he had slowly, almost imperceptibly, changed. He now truly acted like a Cultivator.

When dealing with enemies, any tactic is acceptable! When dealing with benefactors, debts of gratitude must be repaid, regardless of the cost!

Even as the word left his mouth, the Violet Sea poured down into the gourd. The power of extermination exploded out, transforming into what sounded like rumbling voices. The entire gourd mountain began to tremble violently.

Life and death collided, and the power of extermination roared out. Even if the restrictive spells of the gourd bottle were powerful, they would still contain life force. It might not be something that the restrictive spell innately possessed, however, as the Violet Sea sank down into the gourd,

the life forces of the 10,000 Heavenly Pursuit Tribe members became explosive linchpins.

Roaring could be heard from within the world of the gourd. The Cultivators sitting cross-legged on top of the houses trembled and began to visibly break into pieces.

Massive explosions echoed about as the successive layers of restrictive spells were destroyed. At the same time, the second of the Violet Sea Giants neared, transformed into seawater and then poured into the gourd's mouth.

After that, it was a third, then a fourth. In the end, five of the Violet Sea Giants became seawater and poured down into the mouth of the gourd. Rumbling sounds completely filled the world inside the gourd.

The restrictive spells were now completely defeated and dispersed. Seawater completely filled the first level of the world of the gourd. Everything, all life, all Cultivators, were submerged within the Violet Sea and wiped out by the power of extermination.

Hundreds of thousands of specters now charged into the Violet Sea to sweep about the world of the gourd.

Gradually, an enormous spell formation began to emerge.

It could be called a spell formation, or perhaps, a door.

It was a door that led to the second level of this world.

It was a simple, unsophisticated door, and it was closed tightly. Outside the mouth of the gourd, Meng Hao waved his hand toward the seawater within. Instantly, it swirled into a whirlpool, which rotated faster and faster. The water, along with the hundreds of thousands of specters, roared as they transformed into a massive cyclonic power that shot toward the door leading to the second level.

The cyclonic power erupted with massive power as it slammed against the door. A boom could be heard as the door was smashed into countless pieces. All the seals and all the restrictive spells were completely destroyed.

When the door collapsed, fierce howls could be heard coming from within the second level of the world. Shockingly, two thousand Heavenly Pursuit Tribe members could be seen within. There were even several Nascent Soul Cultivators and totemic Sacred Ancients. However, as they charged out in attack, the Violet Sea poured in. The power of extermination exploded out, whereupon bloodcurdling screams could be heard.

The cries echoed out for a moment within the gourd, and then faded away. Soon the entire mountain was completely quiet.

The Heavenly Pursuit Tribe had been completely eradicated.

Even still, Patriarch Huyan was nowhere to be seen within the world of the gourd.

Meng Hao frowned, then gave a cold snort. He waved his hand toward the gourd mountain, causing the Violet Sea within to seethe. It rapidly transformed back into the Violet Sea Giants, which then began to strike at the mountain with their fists.

The ground quaked as more restrictive spells were destroyed. After the amount of time it takes half an incense stick to burn, the entire mountain began to fall apart and collapse. A huge roaring sound could be heard as it crumbled into ruin.

As of this moment, the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe's temple had been completely destroyed!

The collapse of the mountain caused dust to fly out in all directions. As Meng Hao hovered up above in mid-air, he slapped his bag of holding, causing massive amounts of corpses to appear. Shockingly, they all fell down onto the destroyed temple, collecting together into something like a small mountain.

A mountain of corpses!

The corpses of the members of the Heavenly Pursuit Sect all piled together to form a mountain that rose up over the land.

"Leaves return to the ground to become nourishment for roots. Rest in

peace. Although you said you would not rest until the Golden Crow Tribe was dead, as of this moment, your Tribe has been exterminated. All enmity is vanished.

“This place was your temple, now, your corpses will be buried here.” Meng Hao waved his sleeve, causing several huge chunks of the gourd mountain to fly up into air. He stacked them up around the corpses, transforming the area into... a tomb!

Heavenly Pursuit Tomb!

This tomb would stand here to time indefinite, a witness to all the Black Lands. For years and years, this place and this tomb would strike terror into the hearts all the inhabitants of the Black Lands.

It also bore witness to the rise of the Golden Crow Tribe.

The instant the tomb came into being, the surrounding streams of Divine Sense became even more serious than before. Meng Hao was fairly certain that the scene playing out here was probably being observed by more than half the Tribes in the Black Lands.

Actually, it was exactly as Meng Hao imagined. In almost all of the Tribes in the Black Lands, all Cultivators of the Core Formation stage or higher were using various precious treasures to watch Meng Hao.

As of this moment, Meng Hao's return to the Black Lands caused him to become thoroughly famous in the hearts of all Cultivators of the Western Desert and the Black Lands. He had long since risen to prominence; to them, he was no longer a mere Nascent Soul Cultivator in terms of seniority. No, he was a Patriarch.

How could the Black Lands not pay extra attention to him?!

Meng Hao looked at the tomb for a long moment before turning to stare off into the sky. There, off in the distance, was a black cloud, approaching with indescribable speed.

As the cloud neared, the previously bright sky instantly began to turn as black as night. Clouds covered the sky, as if the night was consuming the daylight!

“Meng... Hao....” As the night consumed the day, a deep voice rang, filled with a rancor that seemed to be etched upon the very bones of the speaker. It rang out like thunder from within the black night.

Meng Hao looked up calmly at the rapidly approaching darkness. A fierce glow appeared in his eyes, and the desire to battle raged up within him.

“Patriarch Huyan,” he said calmly, directly entering the Seventh Anima.
BOOM!

As the seven Nascent Souls combined, he grew taller by several heads. His body became stronger, his shoulders wider. His frame was slender, his long hair bizarre and Demonic. He radiated the air of an Immortal Devil, shocking and audacious.

The strength of his fleshly body caused the surrounding air to ripple and distort. It was as if the area around him was not compatible with the rest of the world

This intrepid fleshly body contained the battle prowess of sixty-four great circle Nascent Souls. Since ancient times, there had never been someone like this, and in the future, there likely never would. It was a path Meng Hao had forged, something unique and one of a kind in all the lands of South Heaven.

This was not a Perfect Nascent Soul, but was virtually exactly the same!

By now the sky was completely black. A cloud shot directly toward Meng Hao, who did not flinch back in the slightest. In fact, he stepped forward, performing an incantation with his right hand, and then pointing forward.

“Wind!” he said.

As he spoke, an unspeakable gale-force wind sprung up around him. It raged into spinning winds that seemed to stretch from the ground all the way up to the Heavens. From a distance, it looked like an enormous tornado raging around Meng Hao.

The spinning winds shook everything and caused a huge roaring to rise

up. It picked up countless huge boulders and endless amounts of dust which instantly shot toward the incoming cloud.

During his battle with Patriarch Huyan's clone, he had used magical items as well as the Blood Immortal divine abilities. However, he had not used his own creation, the magic of his seven Nascent Soul totems.

In some respects, the power unleashed as Meng Hao used them right now was much more appropriate for him than the Blood Immortal divine abilities.

That was especially so now that he was in the Seventh Anima. His power was thoroughly shocking in all respects.

Massive roaring spread throughout half of the Black Lands, shaking fully seventy percent of the Tribes, filling the hearts of the Cultivators with astonishment.

Chapter 555: Who is HE?

A glowing screen magically appeared on an altar in the great Demon Butterfly Tribe. Visible on the screen was Meng Hao fighting Patriarch Huyan's true self!

Duo Lan sat there, calmly watching everything that was happening. Her eyes glowed with a bright light as she focused especially on Meng Hao.

At the same time, in the great Wild Flame Tribe, a similar screen could be seen. It was the same in the great Cloud Sky Tribe, where Zhou Dekun and others were watching the proceedings.

Throughout the Black Lands, roughly seventy percent of the experts from the various Tribes were all paying close attention to the fight.

Virtually all of the Spirit Severing Patriarchs had sent out Divine Sense to circle around the region of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe to observe the battle. What they were most closely focused on were the various divine abilities and magical techniques being used, especially those of Meng Hao.

The sounds of booms rose up into the air. When Meng Hao's enormous tornado stretched high enough to touch the clouds of Patriarch Huyan's night, a huge explosion rattled out. The black clouds were torn apart, and the tornado collapsed.

In that instant, Patriarch Huyan suddenly appeared in mid-air. His face appeared ancient, filled with a sensation of age that was vastly different from the appearance of his middle-aged clone.

His clothes were white, seemingly spotlessly clean. As he looked at Meng Hao, the aura of a Spirit Severing expert exploded out from him.

Meng Hao glanced back at Patriarch Huyan. During the slaughter of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe earlier, Meng Hao had secretly collected some blood from various Tribe members. The blood was enough to cover five generations, which was enough for Meng Hao to conjure a Blood Clone. Were he able to collect some blood from Patriarch Huyan, then he would have enough to form a six generation Heavenly Pursuit bloodline Blood

Clone.

Although the Ji Clan Blood Clone was mighty, the opportunity he had now was not one that he would come by often. Naturally, Meng Hao would take advantage of the situation. His eyes flickered as he exploded out with the power of the Seventh Anima and sixty four great circle Nascent Souls. As he closed in on Patriarch Huyan, he waved his right hand and said:

“Metal!”

As the word left his mouth, a blinding golden light appeared within the night’s darkness. The area around Meng Hao was filled with a golden glow that spread out with intense Metal-type power. It instantly honed in on Patriarch Huyan.

Patriarch Huyan didn’t say a single word. His face was grim, and a cold, emotionless glow could be seen in his eyes as he raised his hand and then chopped it out toward the golden glow.

In response to the chopping motion, the air in front of him was filled with intense coldness. It seemed to be a coldness that could extinguish will and sever emotions. This attack was none other than Patriarch Huyan’s emotion severing!

Meng Hao’s eyes remained calm. However, the seven Violet Sea Giants around him lifted their heads up and roared. Instantly, their bodies collapsed and transformed into a Violet Sea, which then surged toward Meng Hao. It instantly enveloped him, then shrank down and stuck to his skin, forming into compressed water shield that formed a barrier against the emotion severing Domain.

At the same time, the black night consumed Meng Hao’s golden light, which vanished without a trace. Meng Hao raised his right hand and pointed again.

“Water!”

As the word left his mouth, blood and seawater, life and death, the will of extermination circulated around him. Patriarch Huyan snorted, then lifted his hand and performed an incantation. He touched the forefinger of

each hand to the thumb of the other forming a rectangle, then gestured forward.

Immediately, an intense power of expulsion shot out.

“BEGONE!”

The power of worldly expulsion echoed out, transforming into an attack that headed directly toward Meng Hao. It slammed into him, forcing him backward. Booms filled the air and he coughed up a huge mouthful of blood. When he finally looked up, his eyes were shining with a bright light.

He could tell that Patriarch Huyan’s true self was quite a bit more powerful than his clone. Divine abilities and magical techniques that the clone needed time to prepare, could be casually employed by his true self.

“However, I have power that I didn’t use in the fight with your clone!” thought Meng Hao as he retreated, his eyes shining with a strange light. He quickly performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then pushed his hands out forward.

“Metal. Wood. Water. Fire. Earth. Five elements totems! Wind. Lightning. Activate! Seven totems!” As he spoke, a huge green-colored tree appeared in the air, along with a reddish-violet sea, a myriad of golden weapons, a raging sea of flames, and a stretch of frozen Frost soil!

Next, a roc magically appeared, surrounded by raging winds. Up in the darkness above, countless snake-like bolts of silver lightning could be seen. The lightning bolts instantly transformed from silver into red as they congregated in mid-air.

This was the divine ability most suited to Meng Hao, what he himself had created, the Seven Souls Totem Transformations!

They were perfectly suited to his Seventh Anima. Having fully unleashed all of them, Meng Hao waved his hand forward, causing them to transform into seven bright beams of light that shot toward Patriarch Huyan.

Patriarch Huyan’s face flickered, and he suddenly stopped in his tracks. His eyes flickered as he performed an incantation in which he drew a large

circle in the air in front of him.

“Seven emotions and six pleasures. Dao of Thirteen Transmigrations!

“Happiness. Anger. Sorrow. Consideration. Sadness. Fear. Shock. Dao of Seven Emotions Transmigrations!” When the circle was completely traced in front of Patriarch Huyan, it shattered, becoming seven parts.

Each part was a different color, and radiated bright light as it floated through the air. Patriarch Huyan pointed forward, causing the Seven Emotions Circle to shoot directly toward Meng Hao’s Seven Souls Totems.

Meng Hao’s pupils constricted. This was a divine ability that Patriarch Huyan’s clone hadn’t used. However, Meng Hao wasn’t surprised. Patriarch Huyan was a cunning fox, and had held back moves in much the same way Meng Hao had. He was obviously well-prepared.

Seven Souls Totem Transformations. Dao of Seven Emotions Transmigrations. These two very different divine abilities shot toward each other in mid-air. Fundamentally speaking, the Seven Souls Totem Transformation could be considered the most ultimate powerful art of the Nascent Soul stage. That was especially so considering that the transformations were fueled by the power of sixty-four great circle Nascent Souls. Because of that, Spirit Severing power could even be sensed within it.

As for the Seven Emotions Transmigrations Dao, it was a Spirit Severing divine ability. It goes without saying that when the two slammed into each other, roaring filled the air and the ground shook. The black night was ripped apart and Meng Hao coughed up blood. Next, Meng Hao looked up and performed a double-handed incantation, then pointed forward.

“Seven totems combine!”

The seven totems merged together, magically transforming into one, a totem that was a mass of primordial chaos. It had no pattern, but if you looked closely, it almost looked as if it were formed from countless other patterns.

Meng Hao knew that the seven fused totems was most suitable for his

use in his Seventh Anima, when he combined seven Nascent Souls!

Inside of him were seven fused Nascent Souls. Outside were seven combined totems. As a result, a state could be achieved in which the interior and the exterior were in unison. As of now, the true battle prowess of his sixty-four great circle Nascent Souls could thoroughly explode out.

Other than his final use of the Agarwood or Dancing Sword Qi, this was Meng Hao's most powerful trump card.

This was also his first time unleashing the magic. He had rehearsed mentally in the past, but now that it was truly being employed, a roaring sound rose up into the Heavens. One totem, seven characteristics!

It was at this point that Meng Hao's eyes suddenly went wide as he noticed that the seven totem combination was somewhat unstable.

"Although this is my first time utilizing this art, I've employed it mentally on several occasions. Furthermore, considering that my seven Nascent Souls are merged, there's no reason for the totem combination to be unstable." His eyes flickered as he realized that although his five elements were at the great circle level, when he added in the wind and lightning, the combination was not at the great circle. That was the source of the instability and incompatibility.

When Meng Hao mentally practice with the Seventh Anima, he hadn't noticed this point. Now that the totem combination had truly appeared, though, it was immediately obvious.

Next, contrary to expectations, the wind and lightning suddenly changed. They stabilized, which caused Meng Hao's mind to fill with shock. Apparently the transformations in the five elements totems had been provoked by the wind and lightning.

This made it so that the combination of seven totems produced a completely unexpected transformation, a transformation that would shock the entire world!

Meng Hao's mind suddenly filled with sharp stabs of pain that instantly inundated him. His mind reeled and, even in the middle of this battle with

Patriarch Huyan, a blank look suddenly appeared in his eyes.

All of a sudden, he saw a battlefield in front of him, littered with countless corpses, the ground soaked with blood. It was impossible to tell how many years of battle had been fought in this place, but the corpses seemed endless.

Dead bodies filled the ground for as far as the eye could see.

The only thing that was different was directly in front of him; a gigantic coffin. It was fully thirty thousand or more meters long, and pitch black. Meng Hao was familiar with this coffin; it was exactly the same one that he had seen in the sky above the Tower of Tang in the State of Zhao!

Most shocking of all, he could now see that carved onto the surface of the coffin... were nine butterflies!

Nine butterfly carvings which were indescribably beautiful.

The instant in which Meng Hao saw the butterflies, a roaring sound filled his mind, and the vision disappeared.

At the same time, the black sky above seemed to be ripped apart. Throughout all the lands of South Heaven, including the Eastern Lands, the Southern Domain, the Western Desert, and the Northern Desert, a bizarre power seemed to be stirred into action by Meng Hao's Seven Souls Totems.

Outside of Planet South Heaven, the carved names on the Immortality Bestowal Dais began to flicker with shining light. Murmuring voices pulsed out and echoed around the Immortality Bestowal Dais.

"The five elements are fundamental. There is no sixth element in the world. Regardless of wind or lightning, both will turn the five elements upside down.... Except, this wind.... What is this wind? This is not a wind of the five elements, this is wind from the outside world!

"And what lightning is this? It is not lightning of the Nine Mountains and Seas. It comes from outside the Mountains and Seas!

"How could this be? What is happening...? Could it be that a life form

from outside the Nine Mountains and Seas has descended, bringing this wind and lightning with it!?!?”

The trembling of the Immortality Bestowal Dais affected all the regions of South Heaven.

A woman walked out of the Rebirth Cave in the Southern Domain and looked off into the distance.

In the Milky Way Sea was an ancient boat that had been floating there for tens of thousands of years. On the very top of the boat was a corpse wearing a set of decaying armor. Suddenly, its eyes opened.

In the Great Tang of the Eastern Lands, in the ancestral mansion of the Ji Clan was a young man with skin like jade, the same young man who had blocked the path of Meng Hao’s mother all those years ago, sitting on an altar made from a cauldron. His eyes opened slowly, and within could be seen hesitation and confusion as he looked off into the distance.

Throughout all the lands, as everything shook mysteriously. Back in the Southern Domain, deep within the Rebirth Cave, was an area that even the woman-form roc would not be able to reach. Laying there in the pitch-black darkness was a corpse.

This corpse... was none other than he who had gifted Meng Hao with Immortal Shows the Way. Choumen Tai! 1

He had been dead, but in this moment, his eyes suddenly opened. Within them was a sharp, glowing light that seemed capable of causing the starry sky to shake, and even crush the lands of South Heaven.

As of this moment, there seemed to be no weakness about him whatsoever; clearly he was at the peak of power.

“Well, I woke up quickly,” he said. “I came to this world to spread the Dao. I sent out millions of seeds of the Dao, and in two hundred years, only this person awoke!

“Perhaps, this kid really is the one I’ve been waiting for all these years... to bring HIM back to life!” The instant in which Choumen Tai said the word ‘him,’ his expression filled with a look of recollection, as he recalled

the image of a man looking at him and smiling.

*

1. Choument Tai was the corpse that fell from the sky in book 1. Meng Hao finally met him in person at the end of book 3. The most relevant interaction between them occurred starting in chapter 300.

Chapter 556: Shaking Huyan!

When it came to the incredible changes happening throughout the lands of South Heaven because of Meng Hao's Seven Souls Totem combination, Meng Hao noticed, but Patriarch Huyan didn't.

However, in the moment that Meng Hao regained consciousness, he looked at the combination of seven totems, the solitary primordial chaos totem, and a strange light appeared in his eyes. He could tell that some undetectable transformation had occurred to his seven Nascent Souls and seven totems.

As to whether the transformation was good or bad, it was impossible for him to tell. However, he had the faint sensation that it had caused him to take a first step down the true path of seven Nascent Souls.

Actually, up to now, whenever he entered the Seventh Anima, the seven Nascent Souls in his body appeared to be unhampered by anything. Obviously, he could enter the Seventh Anima and explode out with the power of sixty-four great circle Nascent Souls.

In truth, though, he had to force them to fuse together, which he could accomplish only because of his profound foundation. The instability of the combination of the seven totems caused Meng Hao to become aware of his oversight. However, a strange, unfamiliar aura had emerged from his seven Nascent Soul totems, causing them to bind together. Now the solitary totem was stable.

Somehow, Meng Hao was able to solve this problem that, in the future, would surely have led to great danger.

Right now, though, he was in the middle of fighting Patriarch Huyan, and had little time to think about the matter. He put the matter to rest in his heart and then performed a double-handed incantation. Instantly, the solitary totem in front of him began to pulsate with a shocking aura.

The totem had no shape, and was constantly changing. Sometimes it was big, sometimes small. The primordial chaos inside of it looked almost like droplets of water, but also like a sea of flames. It was blurry, and

impossible to see clearly.

However, the aura spreading out from within the blurriness only continued to grow more powerful.

Patriarch Huyan was astonished, as were the streams of Divine Sense from the Patriarchs of the other Tribes.

The instant the seven Nascent Soul totems combined, Patriarch Huyan's eyes flickered with shock. He once again drew circles in front of him, and then gestured forward sharply.

"The seven emotions are needed by the heart. But within the soul, there are only three types of emotion. Family love, friendship and romantic love. I severed family love, extinguished friendship, and cut off romantic love. From then on I was... emotionless!" With that, the seven circles of emotion shattered, transforming into a blade.

The blade was illusory, but was capable of extinguishing all types of life. Suddenly, the blade lifted high up into the air, and then descended down onto the solitary combination totem.

The chopping blow was imbued with an aura that could conquer mountains and rivers. This blade... was a blade of emotionlessness! All of the cultivation that Patriarch Huyan had practiced in his entire life transformed into a Spirit Severing blade that could shake Heaven and Earth. The entire world seemed to disappear in the face of the resplendently glowing blade that shot toward Meng Hao's combination totem.

The blade hit the totem. In the instant that they struck each other, an indistinct, unclear aura erupted out from the solitary totem. The aura caused all the wind and clouds in the area to stop moving. Everything up above and down below grew still.

A strange, otherworldly feeling spread out with incredible intensity.

When Patriarch Huyan sensed it, his heart filled with shock. This aura made him feel as if an incredible pressure was weighing down on him. His heart began to pound.

The feeling came so quickly that he had no time to do anything. Nor was he prepared for it; his mind filled with roaring, and blood oozed out of his mouth.

At the same time, cracks began to spread out across the blade that had chopped down onto the solitary totem. The cracks eventually joined together, and then a popping sound could be heard as the blade shattered into seven pieces that shot out in all directions.

The seven pieces represented the seven emotions, and their shattering caused a tremor to run through Patriarch Huyan's body. He coughed up a huge mouthful of blood, and his face went pale. He staggered backward more than thirty meters, whereupon he looked up with a face full of shock and disbelief.

He had long since ceased to look down upon Meng Hao. However, it was only at this moment that he suddenly realized that he himself... still didn't fully understand Meng Hao. The sight of Meng Hao combining seven totems into one, and the resulting aura that erupted out, left Patriarch Huyan profoundly shocked.

"What totem is that?! What is that aura?!"

It wasn't just Patriarch Huyan who felt his heart trembling. Equally shaken were the other Spirit Severing Patriarchs who had gathered to watch the battle.

One of those patriarchs was the red-robed boy from the great Cloud Sky Sect. His eyes shone with a strange light, and his stream of Divine Sense quivered. "Where did this guy come from?" he thought. "Even I would be shaken by that aura."

The Spirit Severing Patriarchs from the great Wild Flame Tribe and the great Demon Butterfly Tribe made an undetectable mutual communication. As of now, they dispelled any notion of joining forces to make a sneak attack.

The aura of Meng Hao's solitary totem was shocking, and they were unable to see through it.

At the moment, Patriarch Huyan was in full retreat. Meng Hao's solitary totem gradually faded away. It wasn't destroyed by Patriarch Huyan; in fact, his blade hadn't hurt it even in the least.

The reason it was fading was because, even in the Seventh Anima, Meng Hao was incapable of sustaining it for very long. At the most, it could last for the space of a handful of breaths. That was, in fact, a bit different from what he had estimated before actually combining the totems during this battle.

"Only three breaths of time!" he sighed, his eyes shining.

"Internally, seven Nascent Souls combine, allowing me to enter the Seventh Anima. Externally, seven totems combine to form primordial chaos, my solitary totem!

"Alone, either the internal or the external change can be sustained for a long period of time. However... when both the internal and the external reach a peak simultaneously, it can only last for three breaths of time!

"During those three breaths, my battle prowess...." Meng Hao was panting as he thought back to what he had experienced moments ago. However, just as quickly, he looked back at Patriarch Huyan.

Patriarch Huyan was breathing deeply. As he shot backward, he tapped his right foot down into the air. A boom rattled out as he stopped in place, finally diffusing some of the recoil power in his body. He looked at Meng Hao and smiled.

"A Nascent Soul Cultivation base that can shake the Spirit Severing stage. If you had enough time, who knows, you might actually be able to achieve Immortal Ascension in South Heaven.

"But I will use all the power I possess to smash you to death. Regardless of whether or not I succeed, the process will give birth to Dao Fruit. I can enjoy that flavor even in the yellow springs." Patriarch Huyan laughed and slapped his chest.

Boom!

The slap caused Patriarch Huyan's aura to explode out, growing more

and more intense. His hair was no longer white, but black. His skin were no longer old, but rather sleek and smooth.

He was now not an old man any more, but middle-aged, his countenance dignified. Then, his aura continued to become even more shocking. Now, he looked like a young man.

His robe was black, his eyebrows sharp and slanted, and his eyes shone as brightly as the stars. As of this moment, Patriarch Huyan seemed to have recovered his youth. His aura was intense, capable of shaking the Heavens, causing everything to dim and a huge wind to kick up.

Meng Hao's eyes narrowed as this indescribable, formless aura exploded out from Patriarch Huyan.

The handful streams of Spirit Severing Divine Sense were now all looking at Patriarch Huyan.

"The great circle of the First Severing!" said the Spirit Severing Patriarch from the Wild Flame Tribe. He was a tall, stalwart old man, within whose eyes could be seen an expression of intense concentration.

"Patriarch Huyan never reached the great circle before...." said the red-robed boy from the great Cloud Sky Tribe. "Oh, I understand. He used the eradication of his Tribe to complete the great circle. How cold-blooded, this Huyan Yunming!" Shocked, the boy looked at Patriarch Huyan with a frown.

Meanwhile, in the other Tribes in the Black Lands who were observing the goings-on, most of the Cultivators weren't able to tell the exact extent to which Patriarch Huyan's aura had grown. However, it was shocking to them nonetheless.

In the great Cloud Sky Tribe, Zhou Dekun's eyes went wide and his heart began to beat nervously. After learning that Meng Hao had returned, he had felt happiness, but even more so, worry.

In the great Demon Butterfly Tribe, Duo Lan sat quietly off to the side, gazing at Meng Hao. A stubborn gleam could be seen in her eyes. During the past more than one hundred years, she had learned a lot about Meng

Hao. She was a Chosen, and although she hated to admit it, the distance between the two of them was vast.

The moment in which Patriarch Huyan's Cultivation base exploded up to the great circle of the First Severing, everyone who was watching, be they Spirit Severing Patriarchs or Cultivators from other Tribes in the Black Lands, were thoroughly shaken.

Within Meng Hao's eyes, a strong desire to battle was suddenly ignited.

A moment later, though, he frowned.

Deep within his bag of holding, he could sense the Demon Spirit emanating an intense teleportation power. It seemed that it could teleport him away at any moment.

Meng Hao couldn't do anything about, but neither could he ignore it. He slapped his bag of holding, producing the blood-colored mask, which he slipped on his face. At the same time, the mastiff lifted its head up and howled. It transformed into a red beam of light which shot toward Meng Hao.

The red light fused into the mask, causing Meng Hao's robes to whip about and his hair to float up. His aura instantly burst out violently.

Such eruption instantly caught the attention of the Spirit Severing Patriarchs, as well as all the observers from the other Tribes in the Black Lands.

Amidst the roaring sound, Meng Hao's robes became blood red, as did his hair. A glow of blood surrounded him, and behind him, a red throne appeared. Seated there was a woman wearing a mask identical to Meng Hao's. As she became visible, she sat down coldly onto the throne.

The Blood Immortal!

In this moment the entire world was crimson. Even people who were merely watching the scene on a screen suddenly felt as if all the blood in their bodies wished to burst out.

Meng Hao looked up, and an oppressive glow could be seen in his eyes.

Chapter 557: Seizing More Spirit Severing Treasures

When Meng Hao looked up, the eyes of this youthful version of Patriarch Huyan glinted with killing intent. However, at the same time, hesitation could be seen.

That was because Patriarch Huyan had a Demon Spirit in his bag of holding as well. As of this moment, he also could sense the power of teleportation pulsing out. It instantly caused him to hesitate as to whether or not to continue fighting.

After all, now that he had reached the great circle of the First Severing of Spirit Severing, it meant that there were some incredibly important things for him to do in the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane.

There was little time to consider the matter, though. Meng Hao's aura was incredibly shocking. Their gazes locked and they both began to move.

Rumbling filled the air as they unhesitatingly slammed into each other.

Area fought Area.

Domain fought Domain!

Divine abilities fought divine abilities!

This was nothing like the fighting from before. This was Spirit Severing carnage! That was especially true of Meng Hao's Blood Immortal divine abilities. He had almost been able to slaughter Patriarch Huyan's clone with them. As of now, he instantly employed them. Deadly sundered clouds roiled out in all directions, filling the sky with rumbling sounds.

A blood rain fell, and a Violet Sea raged.

Even more shocking to Patriarch Huyan was that Meng Hao's battle prowess was actually greater than when he had fought his clone.

Furthermore, in the middle of all his mightiness, Patriarch Huyan could, for the first time sense... faith power!

It was at this point that he recalled that the person in front of him was a Cultivator, but at the same time... a totemic Sacred Ancient who could absorb faith power!

This faith power made Meng Hao's battle prowess even more explosive, absurdly powerful. It was powerful enough that it could fight back against the First Severing.

"Dammit, I forgot that he's a totemic Sacred Ancient who can absorb faith power," thought Patriarch Huyan. "This time, he's much closer to his Tribe, not far, far away like last time. That means the faith power is much stronger!

"Before, in the Violet Sea, the great distance made the faith power incredibly weak!!

"The best place to kill him would be a place where he can't absorb faith power...." Even as he mused in shock over these matters, they continued to fight back and forth. Patriarch Huyan relentlessly employed divine abilities, used emotion severing, his Spirit Immortal, and various magical techniques.

At the same time, the Spirit Severing spectators could also sense the faith power in Meng Hao, which caused them to gasp. Their minds could not help but be shaken.

"Even I overlooked Meng Hao's other identity," said the red-robed boy, a strange look gleaming in his eyes. "He's a totemic Sacred Ancient!" He suddenly had an idea. A person like Meng Hao was someone he should make friends with. The best thing to do would be to send charcoal during snowy weather, so to speak, and provide some timely help. That would be the best way to forge deeper ties.

All of the Spirit Severing experts in the area were having similar thoughts. In fact, all of the Cultivators in the seventy percent of the Black Lands Tribes who were watching were nervously thinking the same thing.

Xu Bai of the Black Dragon Tribe was now an old man. After the Black Dragon Tribe broke away from the Golden Crow Tribe, they joined the great Demon Talisman Tribe. As of this moment, the majority of the

Demon Talisman Tribe was gathered in their public square, watching the proceedings on a large screen. Xu Bai sighed inwardly.

Standing next to him was an effeminate man, a male Cultivator who was gentle and soft, but also cold. This was none other than that Chen Mo of the great Demon Talisman Tribe, who was one of the ones who fought over the Demon Spirit that year in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins.

“Having second thoughts?” he asked. “This Meng Hao.... He truly supersedes all of us.”

Xu Bai was silent for a moment. Finally, he nodded his head and said, “Perhaps. As I look back, I don’t think I made the right decision.”

In the great Demon Butterfly Tribe, Duo Lan’s wide eyes were fixed on Meng Hao.

In the great Cloud Sky Tribe, Zhou Dekun was panting. Next to him was Zhao Fang, another member of the great Cloud Sky Tribe. He had a similar expression to Zhou Dekun.

Roaring filled the air as the raging fight continued.

Even as the two of them fought back and forth fiercely, each of them could sense the other’s Demon Spirit. In fact, whenever they got closer to each other, the power of teleportation grew stronger.

Patriarch Huyan’s eyes flashed with killing intent. The power of teleportation was pulsating out of his Demon Spirit with increased frequency, almost as if it were urging him to finish the fight more quickly. The desire in his heart to kill Meng Hao had reached its pinnacle. He suddenly raised his right hand up into the air and pointed to the sky.

“Heavenly Pursuit!” he roared. As the words echoed out, a crackling like that of thunder could be heard in the sky.

“Heavenly Pursuit!!” he roared a second time. Shocking claps of thunder could be heard, and his body grew slightly indistinct. A savage and unmatchably brutal aura roared out of him.

“HEAVENLY PURSUIT!!!” he shouted a third time. The sky up above

suddenly seemed to rip apart as a colossal three-headed anaconda bored out from within the void.

The anaconda was fully thirty thousand meters long and was violet in color. The three heads radiated cruelty and had forked tongues that flicked in and out. Furthermore, each head sported a long horn.

The instant it appeared, intense pressure bore down onto the Black Lands.

This was not a Spirit Severing aura. Nor was it the aura of Dao Seeking. This was... the aura of an Immortal!!

This violet-colored, three-headed beast was shockingly equipped with Immortal will!!

Its appearance instantly filled the land with thunderous roaring.

Conversations instantly broke out.

“Heavenly Pursuit Dragonsnake!”

“That’s the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe’s bloodline ancestor, the Heavenly Pursuit Dragonsnake!”

“According to the legends, every Western Desert Tribe has a bloodline that traces back to an Immortal. As the legacies get passed down through the generations, there is always a small chance to set off the bloodline and be able to summon the ancestor!”

The surrounding Spirit Severing experts were not shocked by this development, but when the Cultivators from the other cities in the Black Lands saw, most were completely astonished.

As roaring filled the Black Lands, Patriarch Huyan began to bleed from his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. The summoning he had just performed had put quite a strain on him.

It was as if this world did not consent to the appearance of such a beast as this. As the three-headed anaconda approached, an enormous illusory net appeared around it. This net appeared to be some sort of natural law, something seemingly unbreakable and unblockable!

The Heavenly Pursuit Dragonsnake roared and struggled, and blood sprayed from Patriarch Huyan's mouth. Finally, for a fourth time, he shouted:

“Heavenly Pursuit!”

BOOM!

The six eyes of the Heavenly Pursuit Dragonsnake glittered. With a mere glance, they sent Meng Hao's mind completely reeling. At the same time, the centermost head suddenly bit down on its own tail and then ripped it off.

The severed tail suddenly began to blaze with fire. In the blink of an eye, the burning power broke through the enormous illusory net. Even as the giant net tightened around the Heavenly Pursuit Dragonsnake, it flung its tail directly toward Patriarch Huyan.

It burned as it flew through the air, scorching away the flesh and blood, purifying the tail until it was only bones. By the time it reached Patriarch Huyan, shockingly, it had transformed into... a violet-colored bone whip!!

It floated there in mid-air, just waiting for Patriarch Huyan to take control of it. It undulated slowly, sending out ripples into the air along with cracking sounds. The air around the whip continuously shattered in successive layers. A terrifying, almost infinitely powerful aura instantly exploded out from the snake tail.

All of this takes quite some time to describe, but actually only five breaths of time had passed during the fight between Meng Hao and Patriarch Huyan.

Patriarch Huyan reached out excitedly toward the floating whip to grab it.

The whip was obviously a precious treasure. Meng Hao and the surrounding Spirit Severing experts in Divine Sense form could all sense this. The streams of Divine Sense undulated greedily.

However, their greed quickly vanished, to be replaced with pity. This particular precious treasure might be mighty, but it was a bloodline

treasure. Objects such as that could only be used by members of the Heavenly Pursuit bloodline.

Furthermore, even ordinary bloodline members would be unable to use it. Only people in whose veins the blood ran thick and pure would be able to, and that was only after reaching the Spirit Severing stage. Anyone else who attempted to do so would receive grievous injury.

With so many restrictions on the snake bone whip, the precious treasure became an object of little value to spectators, as valuable as chicken ribs.

However.... When Meng Hao saw it, his eyes shone with a strange light. While others might view it as nothing more valuable than chicken ribs, that was not the case with him. Meng Hao had not just eradicated the entire Heavenly Pursuit Tribe. During the slaughter, he had retrieved some blood samples.

That blood contained five successive generations of Heavenly Pursuit Tribe members. If he could get some blood from Patriarch Huyan, then he would have six generations of blood, and could create a six generation Blood Clone. Furthermore, it wouldn't be an ordinary Blood Clone but, rather, a Blood Spirit. If he could get nine generations of blood, it would be a Blood Divinity with the potential for Ancestral Awakening.

Whatever happened, if he made such a Blood Clone, then it would be able to wield the snake bone whip!

After all these thoughts passed through his head, he finally said, "I have to risk it!"

As Patriarch Huyan reached out to grab the snake bone whip, Meng Hao's eyes began to glow with a light that would make anyone who saw it feel a sense of danger. He took a step forward and raised his hand. Filled with determination, he pointed at Patriarch Huyan.

"Demon Sealing, Eighth Hex!"

When the divine ability appeared, it caused Patriarch Huyan to be entwined with invisible Demonic Qi. Instantly, a tremor ran through him.

"This move again!" said Patriarch Huyan, his face growing dark. He had

considered many methods for dealing with the strange divine ability, but none were truly capable of standing up against it. The only thing he could do was to be on the lookout for it. At the moment, he was sealed, but it would only last for half a breath. Then, the strands of Demonic Qi would begin to fall apart.

Blood sprayed from Meng Hao's mouth. In half a breath's worth of time, he was only able to get within a few dozen meters of the snake bone whip. Patriarch Huyan, on the other hand, was only about seven inches away, well within reach!

The surrounding Spirit Severing experts as well as the other observing Cultivators were watching closely as Patriarch Huyan seemed about to lay his hand onto the snake bone whip,. There were many who had already guessed what Meng Hao was trying to do. Some still hadn't figured it out, and were slightly confused.

It was in this exact moment that Meng Hao suddenly opened his mouth. A black light flew out at incredible speed, kicking up a powerful wind. The black light immediately transformed into a black colored wheel.

This was... the Wheel of Time.

At the same time, Meng Hao's Wooden Time Swords appeared and began to rotate around the wheel. Rumbling sounds could be heard as the Wheel of Time began to spin.

Instantly the power of Time reversal erupted out. A tremor ran through Patriarch Huyan's mind. His face twisted, and he was about to struggle against it when suddenly his body, completely beyond his own control, began to move backward.

It was as if time were reversing. Even as Patriarch Huyan fought back against the power, Meng Hao once again used his Demon Sealing powers, injuring himself in the process.

BANG!

Patriarch Huyan's body trembled as he suddenly lost his Cultivation base. It was only for a moment, but that, combined with the time reversal,

pushed him half a meter away from the snake bone whip.

As for Meng Hao, he transformed into a green smoke. Coughing up blood the whole time, he appeared in front of the snake bone whip. Eyes filled with determination, he reached out and grabbed it!

Chapter 558: In One Thousand Years, One Person Can Reach Immortal Ascension

“How dare you!!” roared Patriarch Huyan. His body flickered as he shook off the power of the time reversal and then shattered Meng Hao’s Eighth Demon Sealing Hex.

Patriarch Huyan’s eyes were filled with scorn. He actually wasn’t worried about the snake bone whip being taken away. It had been refined from a bloodline ancestor of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe. Other than people of that particular bloodline, no one could use it.

Even back in the time before the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe had been eradicated, Patriarch Huyan would still have been the only one qualified to activate the bloodline power to use the precious treasure.

There was no need to even mention the current circumstances.

Therefore, Patriarch Huyan wasn’t anxious at all. In fact, he acted a bit playfully, ignoring the snake bone whip and instead raising his right hand to summon a divine ability which then shot directly toward Meng Hao.

Backlash from the Wheel of Time and the Eighth Hex slammed into Meng Hao, causing blood to spray from his mouth. His face was pale as his Blood Immortal Spirit Severing state vanished. The blood-colored mask fell off of his face, and the weakened mastiff appeared. Meng Hao’s Cultivation base dropped from Spirit Severing back into the Seventh Anima.

However, the expression of determination and resolve on his face did not lessen, but rather, grew more intense. He closed in on the snake bone whip and then grabbed it, the first person to have ever done so.

The instant he touched it, his heart trembled. An intense tremor ran through his body, the source being the snake bone whip. Having examined him and found that he didn’t possess the requisite bloodline to control it, it seemed to feel as if it were tainted. The entire whip filled with a shocking, explosive power of destruction.

“Looking to kill yourself, huh?” said Patriarch Huyan, his scorn deepening. His divine ability spread out, clearly on the verge of slamming into Meng Hao.

The surrounding Spirit Severing experts were all confused. When the Cultivators observing throughout the Black Lands saw what was happening, expressions of disbelief appeared on their faces.

“What is he doing?” thought Duo Lan. “Why would he possibly decide to do that?!”

Zhou Dekun was growing increasingly nervous, and was almost unable to restrain himself from shouting out. “Junior Brother, what’s wrong with you? Aiiiii, how could you be so insensible! Of what use is that whip to you?”

Xu Bai’s eyes were wide and Chen Mo’s pupils constricted. They exchanged a glance, and could instantly see the confusion in each other’s eyes.

“From what I know of him,” said Xu Bai in a resolute voice that could sever nails and chop iron, “he never takes action unless he’s confident of success!”

A tremor ran through Chen Mo’s heart. “Don’t tell me... he actually has a way to use the Heavenly Pursuit snake bone whip!?” Such a possibility seemed inconceivable. “Even if he does, how could he possibly evade Patriarch Huyan’s current deadly counterattack?”

Even as everyone was shocked, even as the backlash from the snake bone whip surged, even as Patriarch Huyan’s divine ability closed in... Meng Hao suddenly slapped his bag of holding to produce his Demon Spirit.

He violently crushed it, causing the Demon Spirit to explode into innumerable dots of glittering light that spread out to cover his body. As for the parrot and meat jelly, they had disappeared into the copper mirror as soon as the fight began, so the light also covered them as well.

It spread out to the mastiff too, and they all began to turn transparent.

The backlash from the snake bone whip pierced through the air, passing completely through Meng Hao. Patriarch Huyan's divine ability actually reached him, but by that time, he was illusory, so it passed directly through.

The surrounding streams of Spirit Severing Divine Sense were thoroughly shaken. They watched as Meng Hao rapidly vanished, along with the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe's precious treasure.

The experts from the other Black Lands Tribes who were watching on various screens all gasped. Strange light shone from their eyes. All of a sudden, they were struck even more deeply than before by Meng Hao's methods.

"So, that was his plan!" said Chen Mo, his eyes narrowing. Inwardly, he had to admit that Meng Hao's tactics were excellently planned.

Xu Bai said nothing, but inwardly, he mused, "Maybe he simply wanted the whip. Or, more likely, since he knew the battle was about to end, he took it as a means of ensuring the safety of the Golden Crow Tribe."

Zhou Dekun breathed a sigh of relief. As for Zhao Fang of the great Cloud Sky Tribe, he was mentally shaken and his expression flickered. He looked down at his bag of holding as his own Demon Spirit flew out. It transformed into dots of flickering light which began to surround his body.

A Demon Spirit also flew out in front of Duo Lan. The glittering lights slowly spread out over her body, causing her to fade away. The power of teleportation emanated out all around her.

Meanwhile, back where Meng Hao and Patriarch Huyan were fighting....

As Meng Hao slowly disappeared, he looked at Patriarch Huyan and calmly said, "Patriarch Huyan, it would be impolite of me to refuse your gift. You also have a Demon Spirit. I'll be waiting for you in the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane to continue our battle!"

Patriarch Huyan glared at him with bloodshot eyes. His desire to kill grew even more intense. The Heavenly Pursuit snake bone whip was a

precious treasure of the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, and had been intended as a trump card for use in the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane.

In fact, one of his main goals in the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane had been to find a similar article that could be used alongside the whip. Together, those two items would help him to begin looking for clues regarding his Second Severing.

By now, Patriarch Huyan's fury was at a pinnacle, and his hatred had seeped into his bones. Not only had Meng Hao stolen the Wheel of Time from his clone, but had also stolen this precious treasure from his true self.

For these things to happen to a Spirit Severing Cultivator, and in front of all those other Cultivators from the Black Lands, was a galling shame and a deep humiliation.

He suppressed his rage and coldly said, "Taking my treasure? I'll eradicate your Golden Crow Tribe!"

"Too late," replied Meng Hao coolly. Patriarch Huyan's face flickered as, of its own volition, his Demon Spirit flew out of his bag of holding, radiating rapid pulses of light. It transformed into countless dots of glittering light which enveloped Patriarch Huyan and caused him to begin to fade away.

"By the way," continued Meng Hao, "contact with the Demon Spirit makes the teleportation power activate faster."

Patriarch Huyan breathed in deeply, his expression calm as he stared deeply at Meng Hao. Without another word, his body flickered as more power of teleportation surged. Then, in the blink of an eye, he activated the teleportation, transforming into a beam of light that shot upward and then disappeared amidst a surge of teleportation ripples that spread out in all directions.

The look he gave Meng Hao before disappearing caused Meng Hao's brow to furrow.

It was at this point that a voice transmitted by Divine Will could be

heard in Meng Hao's mind. It came from the direction of the streams of Spirit Severing Divine Sense, and belonged to none other than the red-robed boy from the great Cloud Sky Tribe.

"Fellow Daoist Meng, please proceed without worry. I will watch over the Golden Crow Tribe for the time being."

By this point, Meng Hao's body was more than half faded. He was unable to control the speed with which he moved upward, so he was forced to look down toward the collection of Spirit Severing Divine Sense streams.

"I've grown old," said the voice, "and I've long since given up on the thought of performing my Second Severing. I just hope that the great Cloud Sky Tribe will continue on as long as I live, and that I will have the chance to see someone else reach the Second Severing."

"I'll help you by taking care of the Golden Crow Tribe. With me around, no one will dare to provoke them. However, you must promise me that while you are in the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane, you will take care of my... Holy Son Zhao Fang!"

Meng Hao was silent for a moment. Then, just before rocketing up into the Heavens, he responded via Divine Will: "I will take no responsibility for his death if the situation exceeds my capabilities!"

"Just take care of him as best you can," responded the red-robed boy, his tone casual. "I trust that you will keep your word."

Meng Hao didn't respond. He would by no means refuse such an offer. A rumbling sound could be heard as he was propelled up at high speed into the boundless sky. In the last moment before he disappeared, he looked back down at the lands beneath.

He could see the Black Lands, including the area occupied by the Golden Crow Tribe. At the same time, he could also see four bright beams of light shooting up into the air at high speed.

One of those beams of light contained Zhao Fang of the great Cloud Sky Tribe. Another was Duo Lan of the Demon Butterfly Tribe, with whom

Meng Hao was somewhat familiar. The third was an old man.

There didn't seem to be anything special about the old man, but, shockingly, he was of the Spirit Severing stage. Strangest of all, he was not flying up from the Black Lands, but rather, a position in the Southern Domain where it bordered the Black Lands!

The fourth beam of light came up from some distance away in the Western Desert Violet Sea. Meng Hao couldn't see who was inside, but in his estimation, it was most likely Zhixiang.

He looked away. It was at this moment, just before he disappeared, that a tremor ran through his mind as he looked toward the Southern Domain.

From that direction, Meng Hao could see a fifth beam of light. However, it was so far away, that he was unable to see clearly who was inside.

However, he had the faint sense that there was not just one beam of teleportation light rising up from the Southern Domain. There were more.

"I wonder who from the Southern Domain will be going to the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane...." Meng Hao was curious, even excited at the prospect of encountering some of his old friends. It was at this moment that he completely vanished.

Although Meng Hao couldn't sense it, people were teleporting from more regions than just the Southern Domain and the Black Lands. In the vast Eastern Lands, beams of light were also visible, shooting up into the sky.

Three came from... the Fang Clan!

In the beams of light shooting up from the Fang Clan were two men and one woman. The woman was none other than the one who had left a deep impression on Meng Hao. It was violent-tempered, overbearing... Fang Yu!

1

In the Ji Clan ancestral mansion, an illusory youth stood atop the highest point of the main temple, looking down at a group of nine people, five men and four women, all of whom wore expressions of deep respect. A sparkling Demon Spirit glow was currently beginning to surround them.

The power of teleportation rumbled loudly, but the gaze of the illusory youth prevented them from moving upward even a bit.

“The Primordial Demon Immortal Plane opens once every thousand years,” he said. “Because of the Western Desert Violet Sea, only Cultivators from the lands of South Heaven can participate, not anyone from the other three planets. The opening of this ancient plane also indicates that the millennial struggle for Immortality has begun.

“According to the rules of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, on each planet, every one thousand years, one person is permitted to achieve Immortal Ascension!

“When the struggle for Immortality begins, the Immortality Bestowal Dais will slowly awaken. It will automatically suppress the various Dao Seeking experts, using the threat of death to prevent them from engaging in battle for the path to Immortality. Of course, there are always bound to be fish who slip through the net, people who risk their lives to fight for their goal.

“Although the path to Immortality exists in front of all of you, you will face opponents. Those opponents are not just fellow Cultivators of your own generation. There will also be members of the older generation, Spirit Severing and Dao Seeking experts. All of them wished to tread the path of Immortal Ascension during these thousand years.

“The coming millennium will be very interesting. Many people will fight. All will fail except for one. That one person will achieve Immortal Ascension!

“Those who gain fortune in the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane will be a step ahead of the others on the path to Immortality. It is my hope that during this thousand years, the person to achieve Immortal Ascension will be from the Ji Clan!” With that, the youth waved his hands. The bodies of the nine others trembled as power of teleportation exploded out, and they surged up into the sky.

All of the members of the Ji Clan who were on their way to the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane were Chosen. However, these were not

Clan members like the one Meng Hao had killed that year, of the Quasi-Array. Rather, these were full Array Chosen.

Teleportation beams could also be seen above the Northern Desert.

Obviously, the opening of the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane was not exclusive to the Western Desert. It was a matter of extreme importance to all the lands of South Heaven. It was a grand gathering of Chosen from the Southern Domain, Western Desert, Eastern Lands, and Northern Reaches! 2

This indicated that as of this moment, the path to Immortality had opened!

*

1. Meng Hao met Fang Yu in the events surrounding the Immortal's corpse in chapter 309. She reappeared in chapter 425 and 426, after Meng Hao's Karma was almost severed by Ji Nineteen.
2. I'm imagine there will be questions about this so I will answer right now. From this point forward, what was previously referred to as the Northern Desert will be changed to Northern Reaches. Er Gen changes the term in Chinese, with no apparent explanation for the time being.

Chapter 559: So We Meet Again.... Ah, Karma!

Multiple beams of teleportation light shot up from the great lands of South Heaven, causing ripples to spread about in all directions. The sky trembled. Light of teleportation spread out, filling the firmament with brightness and causing the clouds to churn.

For three full days in South Heaven... there was no night!

For three days in the Southern Domain, Black Lands, Northern Reaches, and Eastern Lands, even in the Milky Way Sea, Patriarchs in various Sects and Clans all looked up into the sky.

All of them knew full well that as of this moment, the path of the struggle for Immortality... had fully opened.

After the three bright days passed with no night, many people could sense that the spiritual energy in the lands of South Heaven was suddenly stronger. With the exception of the Western Desert, the spiritual energy in almost all locations increased by triple!

There were even some places which experienced an explosive tenfold increase in spiritual energy, and other extremely special locations where the increase approached the level of being terrifying. The lands of South Heaven were now vastly different than they had been before. The strength of the spiritual energy made cultivation easier. In fact, throughout the land, more than a hundred Spirit Springs were restored from states of being dried up to that of explosive abundance.

The strengthening of spiritual energy wasn't the only thing that happened. The natural law of Heaven and Earth seemed to have been diluted to the point where it almost seemed as if it could be rewritten. Although reaching such enlightenment would be very difficult for Cultivators, the change made it so that it was easier to personally brand such shapeless laws.

Most shocking of all was that when the night returned, the starry sky up

above had changed slightly. Stars were in different positions, almost as if the starfield up above was a different one than before. When people looked up at it, they had the feeling they were back in ancient times.

This was the true starry sky, and its appearance seemed to indicate that some sort of seal had been removed. As of now... Immortals could appear in the lands of South Heaven!

All of these various changes caused a huge stir among the Cultivators of South Heaven. Most of them were either confused or pleasantly surprised. It was only in the eyes of some of the most powerful of experts that intense stubbornness suddenly shone forth.

It was important to them too, that this path to the struggle for Immortality had opened. All of them had lived longer than a thousand years, and had experienced the previous struggle for Immortality a thousand years ago. After failing, they had no choice but to continue to wait until this day.

There were even some among them who had lived, not for a thousand years, but for thousands!

Those people weren't anxious. Having lived for so long, they knew that after the path to the struggle for Immortality opened, the natural laws of Heaven and Earth would only continue to grow weaker as the end neared. Immortals would appear, and chances of success would grow greater.

Therefore, although they were filled with expectation, they were not anxious!

The great lands of South Heaven were thoroughly shaken!

While all those things were happening down below, up in the boundless starry sky was a great river. The river was composed of innumerable, resplendent stars that surged through the sky.

The stars that made up this great river were actually made up of uncountable motes and fragments. Within those motes and fragments were an assortment of a few dozen who were... Cultivators being teleported from the lands of South Heaven.

Meng Hao was one of them. However, his eyes were closed, and he wasn't moving. All of the other people in the river of stars were in exactly the same state.

None of them could see each other, and therefore didn't know... who exactly made up the group that would enter the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane.

An unknown period of time passed. The starry sky was calm and quiet. There was no aura, only the flowing river of stars. The group of people left Planet South Heaven and gradually grew near to a place where Meng Hao had been before, the Bridge of Immortal Treading.

This collapsed Bridge of Immortality hung there among the stars just as it always had. It did nothing as the river of stars neared it, then began to pass it by.

However, as the river of stars passed, suddenly... countless dots of light appeared on the surface of the Bridge of Immortality. They spread out throughout all the areas of the bridge, growing thick and dense, seemingly without end. However, their flickering seemed to be in accord with some pattern. Somewhere deep within the Bridge of Immortality, on a chunk of broken rock that no one could see, were two particular shining lights among the masses of others that bore the semblance of eyes.

Imagine that you could solidify all of this into a physical picture, and then zoom in on the Bridge of Immortality. What you would notice is that the vast chunks of rock were actually something like continents or land masses. If you zoomed in again, then you would see that in the very center of it all was a mountain. On top of that mountain were two dots of light that looked almost like electricity. Shockingly... they were two people!

A man and a woman!

The man was scholarly and refined. He wore a green robe, and his expression was, for the most part, indifferent and blank, although it would occasionally shine with clarity of mind. The woman stood with her arms wrapped around the man. The blankness in her eyes was occasionally dispelled by a faint smile.

This man was none other than Han Shan!

Reborn Demon Emperor Han Shan!

In this moment, his eyes suddenly became clear. He looked up into the sky, and apparently, could see that within the river of stars drifting past, among all the countless fragments of light that it contained, was a familiar face.

“So we meet again,” he said, his voice both light and hoarse. “Ah, Karma!” Although there was no loneliness to him any more, he was just as bleak and desolate as before. Yet, when he looked down at the woman next to him, the bleakness would transform into tenderness and... a lack of regret.

Han Shan lifted up his right hand and waved it toward the sky above. Instantly, all of the Bridge Slaves in the entire Bridge of Immortality lifted their heads up and roared a soundless roar.

No outsider could hear the sound of their roars. Nonetheless, the sound shaped together into something completely shocking. It shot out from the Realm of the Bridge ruins, out of the Bridge of Immortality, and up toward the river of stars.

It pierced into the river, shooting through the countless fragments of light and motes of dust until it found... Meng Hao!

“Wake up!”

“Wake up!!”

“WAKE UP!!!”

The roaring of the innumerable Bridge Slaves echoed about in Meng Hao’s mind, transforming into thunderous roar capable of splitting Heaven and Earth. It filled his mind, his heart, to the point of explosion.

The explosion originated in the sound created by the countless Bridge slaves. It transformed into vast amounts of sharp thorns that pierced all of Meng Hao’s body. The provocation filled his brain and caused tremors to run through his body. After eight such tremors, Meng Hao’s eyes suddenly

snapped open.

At first, his eyes were lit with confusion. The voices of the Bridge Slaves had been cut off without a trace.

As of this moment, Meng Hao was the only person who was awake within the river of stars. He looked around in confusion for the space of three breaths before his gaze shone with clarity.

In the moment he gained clarity, Meng Hao realized that he couldn't move. It was as if he had been awakened with only enough power to open his eyes. His Divine Sense was being suppressed intensely, and was restricted to a space about thirty meters.

Even paralyzed, he could still see the stars, and the countless fragments of light and dust speeding along. Then he noticed someone off in the distance, floating there with his eyes closed. It was none other than Zhao Fang, who the Spirit Severing Patriarch of the great Cloud Sky Tribe had entrusted him with protecting.

"Am I the only one awake? But... why...?" Meng Hao suddenly caught sight of the Bridge of Immortality. When that happened, the image of Han Shan suddenly flashed through his mind.

Meanwhile, back on the Bridge of Immortality, the countless dots of light were beginning to fade away. The lights that represented Han Shan and his wife gradually disappeared.

Meng Hao's eyes gleamed with understanding as he realized that the reason he had awoken was most likely... because of Han Shan.

Although he couldn't be absolutely certain what had led to this state of clarity, Meng Hao couldn't help but ponder how it might be useful to him in the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane. In any case... there couldn't be a downside. In fact, now that he was clear-headed, he was sure that there must be a way to use this opportunity to get an advantage.

"If I can seize some unique opportunity, I might be able to get ahead. Perhaps this simple awakening of mind will have a big influence on other matters." Meng Hao's eyes gleamed as the river of stars passed the Bridge

of Immortality and then shot out into the star-studded sky behind it.

As it passed into this region of the starry sky, an intense roaring sound echoed out. Meng Hao's body shook, completely beyond his control, and the entire river of stars trembled. He slammed into countless motes of dust, although none of them harmed him in the slightest.

Ignoring the fact that he couldn't control his own body, Meng Hao fixed his eyes up ahead.

He could just barely make out what was happening. Apparently, as it entered this particular area, the river of stars had slammed into an invisible barrier, causing everything to shake as if it were sustaining an attack.

At the same time, Meng Hao could sense that the river of stars... had actually slammed through the barrier, almost as if it had entered into another world.

When that happened, Meng Hao noticed that all of the dust motes around him suddenly stopped moving. Even he was suddenly motionless. Outside of the river of stars, a variety of bright colors could be seen shining.

What was strangest of all to him, while he was stuck in this state of motionlessness, a woman had appeared off to the right, although he had no idea when exactly it had happened.

She wore a long, blue gown, and was quite pretty. Her eyes were closed, and her features were so delicate it seemed as if a gentle breeze could shatter her. In addition, she seemed to be filled with a certain coldness.

This woman was unfamiliar. Meng Hao looked at her for a moment, then glanced away toward the colorful lights outside. Time passed. The river of stars was motionless, and yet somehow, Meng Hao felt the sensation of movement.

He pondered this point for a while as he looked around at this world of silence. After a bit of time passed, he suddenly came to an understanding. The river of stars wasn't moving. What was moving... was Time!

Time was moving. Not forward, but rather, in reverse! Time... was moving backward!

This discovery caused Meng Hao's mind to tremble. As he looked at the brightly colored lights, he suddenly had the intense premonition that if he could gain enlightenment regarding this strange place, he would have a much more profound understanding of Time, as well as matters relating to the usage and branding of Time treasures.

He also knew that such an opportunity... was exceedingly rare.

After much time passed, Meng Hao's mind grew blank as he immersed himself in enlightenment regarding the reversal of Time. By combining this new information with what he had observed regarding the changes to Time in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, his understanding grew deeper.

Suddenly, the river of stars shook again. Again it felt as if it had struck up against some invisible obstacle. After passing through, Meng Hao suddenly caught sight of a shocking world!

In the same instant in which he caught sight of the world, all the dust motes and fragments of light within the river of stars trembled. The movement suddenly caused the closed-eyed woman off to the right to bump into Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's head, his face, was suddenly touching something very soft.... A delicate aroma washed over his face.

Chapter 560: Ancient Demon Immortal Sect!

Meng Hao felt a bit awkward.

However, the matter was completely out of his control. The woman had floated over and bumped into him, and there was nothing he could do about it. Most vile of all was that she was blocking his view.

Now, he couldn't see even a bit of the world outside.

She smelled wonderful, and her body was supple and lithe. Meng Hao's face slowly pressed down into softness, which almost completely buried him.

His eyes went wide as he realized that, just barely visible when he looked down, was an exquisite sight that he rarely had a chance to gaze upon. And yet, the only thing that existed in Meng Hao's mind was fury.

What he wanted to look at was not this woman, but the world behind her. Being able to observe that world ahead of time was the entire source of his advantage. However as of this moment, his advantage... was being ruined.

"This is ridiculous!" Meng Hao grumbled to himself. Then, he took a deep breath of the wonderful fragrance surrounding his face.

"Extremely ridiculous!" He wanted to lift his head up, but was incapable of moving his body at all. All he could do was breathe in that fragrant aroma. Meng Hao now existed in a world, not of a starry sky, but of this delicate fragrance that, regardless of whether he wanted it to or not, was permeating deep into his soul.

Meng Hao had no other option than to do his best to commit to memory the image of the outside world that he had seen briefly. Gradually, a picture appeared within his mind.

The picture was all based on his memories. It depicted a mountain range that stretched farther than the eye could see. Mountains rose and fell,

actually growing taller in height as they stretched off into the distance.

It seemed as if this mountain range was actually an entire world. If he remembered correctly, there were actually seven mountain peaks. The last of them seemed high enough to connect Heaven and Earth.

The tallest mountains Meng Hao had ever seen in the lands of South Heaven were tens of thousands of meters high. However, even the smallest of these seven mountain peaks were so much grander that the two things could not be compared.

Cultivators could be seen on the mountains; they looked as small as ants.

Between each of the seven mountain peaks stretched staircases that connected the countless luxuriously decorated buildings. Innumerable pagodas and temples could be seen. All of it was filled with a deeply archaic atmosphere. It was completely silent, deathly still, as if it was a tomb.

There was no life.

This was the image that floated in Meng Hao's mind, based on his single glance. This was his opportunity.

Even as he grumbled, the river of stars once again trembled. The trembling caused Meng Hao to suddenly regain some control over his body. His heart filling with joy, Meng Hao used his head to push against the softness in front of him.

What ended up happening was that his face merely sank further into the softness. However, the softness seemed to have a shocking bounciness, causing the woman to finally move away from him. It was hard to tell whether it was because of the force of Meng Hao's action, or the shocking bounciness, but... the woman seemed to frown as if in pain.

Meng Hao cleared his throat and then quickly looked out at the outside world. Ancient mountains rose and fell. Mountain peaks stretched up loftily. The image of the seven mountains was not very much different than what had existed in his memory. Meng Hao looked out again, and

this time, he noticed that there was not a scrap of vegetation in the entire mountain range. They were completely bare, and emanated a strong aura of death that pervaded all of the mountains....

Everything was in ruins. Buildings were collapsed. The elegant structures were decrepit. There were no weeds present; clearly, the passage of time ensured that they turned into nothing more than dust, along with all other life.

The entire place was in complete ruins. The ruins of a Sect!

The sight of it caused Meng Hao to take a deep breath. It took some effort, but he managed to lift his head, whereupon he noticed that, carved onto the first mountain were three characters!

These three characters were red, as if they had literally been painted with blood.

Demon Immortal Sect!

The moment Meng Hao saw those characters, his heart and mind trembled. Although he had long since speculated regarding the final destination, he could now be certain.... This place was the Demon Immortal Sect. Or, more accurately speaking... the ancient Demon Immortal Sect.

And this place was naturally the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane!

A whole Sect. An entire world!

Unfortunately, the Sect had been completely destroyed. This once majestic Sect of the Ninth Mountain and Sea had long since disappeared into the river of history, a Sect that at one time had been occupied by more than a million disciples!

Meng Hao began to pant as he noticed that atop the first mountain peak could be seen the corpse of a Flying Rain-Dragon. However, this dragon was far, far bigger than the one he had seen back in the Reliance Sect. It was nearly ten thousand meters in length, and was incomparably shocking in appearance.

Meng Hao had a special affinity for Flying Rain-Dragons. As he looked at this one, he felt somewhat at a loss for a moment before recovering and looking at the second mountain peak.

When he looked at the second peak, his mind trembled, and he once again began to breathe heavily. Earlier when he had glanced over the mountain peaks, he hadn't studied them carefully. Now, he noticed that there was an enormous corpse on this mountain as well.

This corpse was human-shaped. However, its frame was enormous, and on its back... were wings!!

It was impossible to see what color the wings were, because the corpse was directly facing Meng Hao. The facial features of the corpse were not clear. However, in that instant, the image of the Black Bat suddenly rose up in Meng Hao's mind!

On the third mountain peak were three corpses, which for some reason seemed familiar to Meng Hao. Suddenly, his mind reeled. These corpses were half human and half beast, and looked exactly like the creature he had taken the third wooden sword from in the Golden Crow Holy Land!

On the fourth mountain peak was... an enormous dragon, fully thirty thousand meters long!

The dragon was nothing more than a corpse, but it was still thoroughly shocking.

Dragons were legendary creatures, even in the Cultivation world. Meng Hao had seen them in the form of magical techniques or divine abilities. However, as for an actual dragon, he had never seen one with his own eyes.

The fifth mountain peak was quite a distance away from Meng Hao, so he couldn't clearly see the corpse which lay atop it. However, the shock he felt even from just seeing the first four mountains was completely and utterly unprecedented.

He suddenly had the feeling that he had some very strong connections to this Primordial Demon Immortal Plane!

“Three wooden swords. Don’t tell me... they all came from here?” Having seen this enormous Demon Immortal Sect, Meng Hao could only imagine how intrepid it must have been in ancient times.

Even as his heart and mind trembled, his pupils suddenly constricted. That was because... he had just caught sight of a person on the fourth mountain!

It was a middle-aged man whose back was turned to Meng Hao. He seemed to be filled with infinite ancientness, as well as deep loneliness. Meng Hao was sure that the man was standing there on the peak of the fourth mountain, but when he blinked, the man was gone. This caused Meng Hao’s eyes to glow brightly.

Suddenly, this once intrepid Demon Immortal Sect, which was now nothing more than ruins, began to grow blurry. It was as if a vast mist had begun to cover over the entire world.

Even Meng Hao and the river of stars also began to grow blurry. Meng Hao’s heart began to pound.

He now had the feeling that the most critical point in the journey to the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane had arrived.

His eyes were fixed on the world up ahead as he rotated his Cultivation base. However, everything was just as blurry as before. Meng Hao clenched his jaw as he then employed the Celestial Vision technique that the parrot had taught him.

Suddenly, he could see!

What he saw caused his mind to be filled with shock. What existed beyond the blurriness was still the Demon Immortal Sect. However... it was no longer in ruins, but rather... bustling with activity!

Countless figures could be seen flying back and forth within the mountains. There were innumerable Cultivators practicing cultivation on the mountains, and the glow of magical techniques spread out in all directions. In the azure sky, countless elegant Immortal Beasts could be seen flying about.

The Flying Rain-Dragon on the first peak lifted its head up and roared. It suddenly moved, causing a huge gale-force wind to spring up. However, to this Flying Rain-Dragon, all it had done was stretch its neck.

When he saw the second mountain peak, Meng Hao had thought of the Black Bat. Sure enough, there was an enormous black-colored bat there now. It was shocking in appearance, and emanated an intense aura. As soon as Meng Hao saw it, he was shaken to the core.

The entire world, the entire Sect, contained not even a scrap of an aura of death. Everything was bursting with life. Off on the fifth mountain, voices rose and fell, as if sermons were being given regarding scriptures.

A bridge-like rainbow spanned the sky, glowing radiantly. People sat cross-legged in all locations, listening to scriptures being recited or gaining enlightenment of the Dao.

These Cultivators all had different appearances. Some were people, but others... were Demons!

Even as Meng Hao reeled with shock, he suddenly looked over at the fourth mountain peak. Yet again, he saw the same man, standing with his back toward him. He radiated ancientness, and caused Meng Hao to begin to breathe heavily.

It seemed almost as if the man could sense Meng Hao looking at him. He slowly turned to look at Meng Hao.

He couldn't clearly see what the man looked like, but Meng Hao's brain filled with roaring nonetheless. Suddenly, the world he was looking at began to shatter, layer by layer. It quickly vanished, like smoke into thin air. Instead of the flourishing Sect of ancient times, everything was now wreckage and ruins.

At the same time, the river of stars flowed toward the ruins of the ancient Demon Immortal Sect. As it swept across the ruins, all of the dust motes spread out and then began to descend down onto the enormous Sect.

Meng Hao was among the falling dots, as were the several dozen

Cultivators from the great lands of South Heaven. All of them were scattered into different locations.

Meng Hao, of course, was the only one among their number who was awake. His mind spun as his body, completely out of his own control, shot down toward the ruins at incredible speed. The mountains in front of him grew larger and larger. An aura of death and rot blasted against his face, and then, he was shooting toward the second mountain peak. A roaring sound could then be heard, and it was in this instant that Meng Hao suddenly regained control of this body. The power of his Cultivation base exploded out, and he lifted up his right hand.

He landed onto the ground on one knee. Dust shot away from him in all directions, and his hair whipped about. When he looked up, his eyes were gleaming.

Chapter 561: The Old Friend He Least Wanted to Run Into

Meng Hao knew that all of the others had not awakened the way he had. As of the state they were in now, it was impossible to tell. Without hesitation, Meng Hao sent out his Divine Sense sense to scan the area.

Moments later, his face grew grim. In the outside world, his Divine Sense had a range of 29,999 meters. Here, however, it was only 299 meters. It had been reduced down by a full one hundred times.

“The Primordial Demon Immortal Plane opens once every thousand years. The Chosen from other Sects will no doubt have inside information, and therefore understand the area quite a bit better than me. My understanding, on the other hand, will be significantly less in comparison.

“Right now, I need to do everything possible to understand the situation as it is. Then I can go look for some fortune.” His eyes glittered as he looked up into the air. After a moment of careful consideration, he did not rashly fly up into the air, but rather proceeded forward on foot.

The ground in the area was covered with crack-filled limestone. Ancient bloodstains could be seen that had clearly been there for countless years. There were also corpses lying about, the sight of which left Meng Hao shocked.

There were collapsed buildings, broken pillars, and occasionally, deep craters. At first, it seemed as if this place were relatively close to the second peak, but soon, Meng Hao realized that he was actually quite some distance away.

In a short period of roughly two hours, Meng Hao saw thousands of corpses. Some were large, some were small. Some were complete, some were not. Some were Cultivators, some were Demons.

As far as bags of holding were concerned, he saw several dozen. However, when he scanned them with Divine Sense, they instantly turned into ash. Clearly, they had long since decayed during the years that had

passed since primordial times. The items inside those bags of holding became ash as well.

“That these bags of holding turned into ash shows what an incredible amount of time has passed since the ancient Demon Immortal Sect still existed. However, these corpses, although merely broken remains, are still here. I wonder if there is something special about them?” He squatted thoughtfully down next to one particular corpse that was half human, half beast. Although this Cultivator had been dead for ages, Meng Hao was still able to sense incredible power within its fleshly body.

Muttering to himself, he reached out with his right hand to grab the corpse’s arm. He exerted a bit of pressure, then more, until he was using all the power he possessed within in the First Anima. Despite that, he could not move or damage the corpse’s arm in any way.

This left Meng Hao visibly shaken. His eyes flickered as he jumped directly into the Fourth Anima. He twisted on the arm again, and the result was only a tiny crack.

Meng Hao left the Fourth Anima and stood up thoughtfully. Then he quickly headed off. As he proceeded, he would stop to inspect every corpse he came across.

By the time he had inspected roughly a thousand, he finally sighed, and his eyes shone with a strange light.

“For one corpse to possess an incredible fleshly body is one thing. Maybe you could take it to be unique. But all one thousand of these corpses are the same! There wasn’t a single exception.

“The cultivation practiced by this ancient Sect is clearly very different than the cultivation practiced today. They didn’t just practice internal cultivation, but also cultivation of the fleshly body. Even after being dead for such a long time, these corpses can even cause problems for my Fourth Anima. There were even a few that I think could resist my Sixth Anima without being damaged.

“If they were alive... I wouldn’t be a match for them even in the Seventh Anima. Such incredible power! And there are thousands just like this,

perhaps even tens of thousands. Or hundreds of thousands....” Meng Hao smiled somewhat bitterly as he finally realized just how fearsome the disciples of this ancient Sect were.

Most relevant of all, these people had died during a vicious attack that had actually caused many of the bodies to be split up into pieces. From the look of them, these were not Inner Sect Disciples. Most of them were... ordinary disciples.

Meng Hao’s eyes began to shine brightly, and his interest in the ancient Demon Immortal Sect continued to increase rapidly. Originally, he had chosen to come here because of Zhixiang, and Demon Weapon Lonelytomb.

Now, though, there was something else that drew him to this place. He wanted to know what technique these Demon Immortal Sect disciples cultivated, and whether related legacies still existed.

“If I could acquire a legacy from ancient times....” Meng Hao’s heart was palpitating with eagerness. His eyes flashed as he continued onward at top speed. Time passed. When Meng Hao had arrived here, it was around noon. By now, evening was falling.

Looking up, Meng Hao was unable to see any similarities between this sky and the sky of South Heaven. It really seemed as if he were in a different world, a world that belonged solely to the ancient Demon Immortal Sect.

As he walked along, Meng Hao would occasionally look up at the darkening evening sky, or around at his surroundings. “The entire Sect is a world. I wonder how many majestic Sects like this exist in Heaven and Earth, or out in the starry skies....”

Perhaps because the ancient Demon Immortal Sect was so incredibly large, or maybe for other reasons, Meng Hao did not encounter any other South Heaven Cultivators. The only thing he saw was collapsed temples and corpses.

The richly ornamented buildings were long gone. The once luxurious and elegant halls were now nothing more than ruins. There were some

locations that clearly were covered by restrictive spells. Although many years had passed, the power of those spells was still shocking enough to give Meng Hao pause.

According to his speculations, even someone as powerful as Patriarch Huyan... would be instantly killed beyond the shadow of a doubt if he touched those spells.

“The Demon Immortal Sect... has the character Immortal in it. Don’t tell me that all the members of the Sect... were actually Immortals?!?!” The mere thought of that possibility shook Meng Hao. His eyes glittered as he proceeded on cautiously. He continued to see more and more restrictive spells. Some were more powerful, some were weaker. However, even the weakest were enough that Meng Hao had no chance against them.

At one point he caught sight of an Immortal’s cave that seemed to be completely intact. However, the sense he got from the incredible restrictive spell was similar to that he had sensed from the eight Immortals he had encountered when going to the Realm of the Bridge Ruins.

Evening was fading into the darkness of night when Meng Hao suddenly stopped in place. He looked off into the distance, toward a crumbled palace. Shockingly, on opposite sides of the palace ruins, two women could be seen.

One of them was the exact same blue-robed woman within whose bosom Meng Hao’s face had encountered such incredible softness. Even when her eyes were closed, she had seemed cold. Now that her eyes were opened, they flashed with killing intent.

When Meng Hao saw the woman next to her, he frowned. Other than Zhixiang, there was no woman in existence whom he would rather see less.

Fang Yu!

This exceedingly violent young woman had left a deep impression on Meng Hao that year. The quaking and craters left behind by her punch, the intense desire to do battle which shone in her eyes, all caused Meng

Hao to feel as if a frigid air was washing over him.

This was not only the most violent woman he had ever met, but also the person he least wanted to run into again in his entire life!

Meng Hao cleared his throat, and subconsciously began to back away. He didn't want to face either of these women. One had blocked his line of sight like some tall mountain, the other was a Cultivator who, without speaking even a single word, could transform into an explosive dragon.

However, in the exact same moment in which Meng Hao caught sight of them, they both turned to look at him.

The icy woman in the blue gown glanced him over. Seeing that he was at the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, she looked away disdainfully to stare once again at Fang Yu.

In her opinion, the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage was definitely beyond ordinary. However, in the Ji Clan, a Cultivation base like that, although it could get you into the Array, would put you in one of the lowest positions possible. This woman, although she was not truly of the Spirit Severing stage, had performed half of a Severing. She was one of the nine people in the Ji Clan in the last thousand years who had the most hope of breaking through into the Immortal realm.

Her main competition, other than the other eight members of her own Clan, was the Chosen of the Fang Clan, against whom she faced this moment.

When Fang Yu caught sight of Meng Hao, she gaped in shock. Regardless of anything, she would never have possibly guessed that she would run into Meng Hao in this place.

As soon as she saw that he was backing up, she quickly called out, "Don't go anywhere!"

If she hadn't said anything, he wouldn't have left. However, as soon as she spoke, he turned on his heel and began to flee.

"You really dare to disobey me!?" she cried, her eyes wide with anger. She was just about to offer pursuit, when the icy-cold woman, who had

just been watching in shock, gave a cold laugh and then vanished. When she reappeared, she was blocking Fang Yu's way.

"Ji Xiaoxiao, you slut, why don't you go screw off!" Fang Yu pulled her arm back and then slammed a fist down into the ground. A shocking boom rattled out, causing the ground to shatter in successive layers. A shockwave attack proceeded to blast out in all directions. 1

As Meng Hao fled, he felt the explosive discharge of energy coming from behind him, and he instantly increased his speed. He had no desire whatsoever to exchange blows with this explosive dragon, and it had nothing to do with a question of who was strong and who was weak. There was no enmity between the two of them, and if they started fighting, it would be of no benefit to Meng Hao or his plans in this place.

Roaring echoed about as the attack spread out. The land in the area was destroyed, and as ripples of power spread out in all directions, the cold woman waved her hand to block. As for Fang Yu, she glanced at fleeing Meng Hao for a moment and then got even angrier. Gritting her teeth, she instantly produced a glove from her bag of holding which she slipped onto her hand. She then viciously smashed her fist out toward the other woman.

She shot forward, punching the entire time. The air filled with a red glow, and the cold woman's face instantly fell. She dashed backward, waving her hand to resist the power of seven or eight punches before finally vanishing. She reappeared some distance off, blood oozing from her mouth.

"Fang Yu, are you insane? We might not like each other much and I did steal your jade pendant back in Chang'an. But that doesn't mean you have to go all out the instant you see me!"

"SCREW OFF!" roared Fang Yu, her anger raging as she shot off to chase Meng Hao. Apparently she didn't care at all about Ji Xiaoxiao.

Ji Xiaoxiao gaped in astonishment as she looked off in the direction which Meng Hao had fled. Suddenly, she smiled. When she did, her icy prettiness seemed to blossom into shocking beauty.

“Fang Yu has always been proud and arrogant. She has a bad temper, but I don’t think I’ve ever seen her so mad at a man. I wonder what sort of relationship she has with him....

“Hmph. Ever since we were small, it’s been the same. Whatever the two of us see, we end up fighting over it. Well this time, it’s no different!” Ji Xiaoxiao’s eyes were like crescent moons that shone with radiant beauty. Her slender frame flickered as she shot off in pursuit.

*

1. Ji Xiaoxiao’s name in Chinese is 季笑笑 jì xiào xiào – Ji of course is the surname Ji from the Ji Clan, which literally means “season.” Both of the xiao characters in her name mean “smile” or “laugh”.

Chapter 562: Call Me Big Sis!

Meng Hao fled at top speed, sighing inwardly at his own bad luck. The fact that the cold woman had completely disregarded him was actually somewhat excessive. However, he was used to such things. Under normal circumstances, he would have just dealt with the situation; it wasn't really that bad.

After all, it wasn't intentional on her part. Therefore, it could be forgiven.

Meng Hao knew that as a scholarly person, he should be magnanimous and tolerant.

However, how could he have imagined that he would actually run into Fang Yu? When he thought of her violent disposition, he took a deep breath and pushed himself even faster.

Behind him, he heard a whistling sound nearing him. A mighty whirlwind was approaching, and in the middle of it was the furious Fang Yu.

Fundamentally speaking, Fang Yu had a beautiful voice. To Meng Hao, though, she currently sounded more like an evil poltergeist. "Meng Hao, you stop this instant! Do you really dare to disobey me!? I'm gonna beat you to death, do you hear me!"

Boom!

The ground off to the side suddenly exploded, smashed by a fist blow from Fang Yu. The explosion turned into an attack of its own which instantly slammed into Meng Hao. Without hesitation, he entered the Second Anima, increasing his speed dramatically.

He sighed. "Stop chasing me. There is neither gratitude nor grudge between us. Why are you acting like this? Besides, there's no guarantee that you could win out over me."

"What did you just say?!?!" she roared. She suddenly slapped her bag of holding to produce a bottle of medicinal pills. She popped one into her

mouth, and her body erupted in flames. At the same time, her speed increased dramatically. Yet again, her fist descended. Although she was furious, this strike was not a deadly one. It slammed through the air in an attempt to get Meng Hao to stop.

However, even as the power of the fist strike descended, Meng Hao entered the Third Anima. As his speed exploded, he transformed into a green smoke and shot off into the distance. Fang Yu's fist attack struck nothing. She stared for a moment, then suddenly chuckled.

"You little bum. In all the years I haven't seen you, it seems you really have developed some skill."

Even as she spoke, she continued to pursue him. They moved with incredible speed. Every time Fang Yu got close, Meng Hao would explode out with even greater speed. It made it impossible for her to actually catch up to him.

However, it also served to allow her temper to cool down. Eventually a happy smile appeared on her face. She would throw out occasional punches, and, seeing Meng Hao increase his speed even more, she finally started laughing.

Fang Yu laughed happily. Meng Hao smiled bitterly.

"Why did I have to end up pissing off a girl like this?" thought Meng Hao. "A hundred years have passed and she's actually... almost in the Spirit Severing stage!" As far as Meng Hao was concerned, it just didn't seem fair. He had spent a hundred difficult years in secluded meditation, had transmigrated into the Violet Sea, had formed seven Nascent Souls, had experienced multiple Heavenly Tribulations, and had slowly achieved Perfection.

Even despite all of that, he was still only halfway to Spirit Severing. And yet, Fang Yu... was the same as him.

"Chosen of the great Clans are all like this," he sighed. Then he realized that even when he saw her more than a hundred years ago, her level of power had been incredible, and things seemed a bit more balanced.

Even as the two of them proceeded along, one pursuing, one fleeing, they began to near the second peak. Suddenly, a beam of green light appeared in mid-air and shot toward Fang Yu.

The speed with which it moved caused Fang Yu's face to flicker. She immediately turned and punched out with her right hand.

A bang could be heard, and then Fang Yu retreated backward several paces. The green beam of light was sent spinning backward, during which time it transformed into a whip. Simultaneously, a man appeared out of thin air. He was tall and thin, with long hair and a handsome face. A long mark could be seen on his forehead that glittered brightly. It almost looked like lightning.

He wore a green-colored robe, and upon his shoulder perched a crow. The crow was bizarre in appearance; it had three eyes, all of which were staring coldly at Fang Yu.

In addition to the crow, a white-colored wolf stood next to the man, emanating a piercing aura as it stared around coldly.

The instant the man appeared, eight pillars of light suddenly rose around Fang Yu. They shot up with incredible speed, causing the entire sky to fill with colorful lights.

"Eight Point Illumination!" the green-robed man said, his voice cool. The eight pillars of light immediately transformed into a seal, which firmly locked Fang Yu in place.

"Ji Mingfeng!" said Fang Yu, her face falling. A cold snort could be heard from behind her. It was none other than Ji Xiaoxiao, who approached slowly, her phoenix-like eyes flickering with killing intent. 1

"Don't tell me your Fang Clan ancestors neglected to tell you that you can't simply run around wildly in the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane?" said Ji Xiaoxiao. "Fang Yu, did you really forget that Ji Clan Dao Children are adept at augury arts?"

"The fact that we ran into each other was coincidental. If you had left immediately, then I couldn't have done anything. Instead, though, you

gave me a chance to notify Mingfeng. With his skill in augury, pinpointing your position was no problem!”

Meng Hao had stopped moving already, and was observing coldly from off in the distance. Seeing that Fang Yu had been ambushed and sealed, he frowned.

“Do you really dare to hurt me?” replied Fang Yu calmly. There was no anger visible in her eyes; rather, a fearsome aura emanated out from her which continued to grow more and more intense.

“Hurt you? Why?” said Ji Xiaoxiao with a slight smile. “The Fang Clan might be all alone here in the lands of South Heaven, but on Planet East Victory, they are the most illustrious, number one Clan. We don’t need to hurt you, just trap you for three days. Then your path back into ancient times will be cut off. Preventing you from finding a host body is good enough.”

Off to the side, Ji Mingfeng was also smiling. He said nothing, but even from his position off in the distance, Meng Hao could tell that he was much more dangerous than Ji Xiaoxiao.

In fact, when looking at Ji Mingfeng, Meng Hao felt as if there was a needle poking into his back.

Ji Xiaoxiao looked at Fang Yu for another moment and then turned to look at Meng Hao. She smiled broadly and said, “Many thanks, Fellow Daoist. It seems we were fated to meet this day. Unfortunately, there’s no time to properly entertain you today, but if Karma wills it, we will meet again one day.”

Ji Mingfeng glanced over at Meng Hao, smiled and nodded. However, Meng Hao could clearly see the scorn in his gaze.

Fang Yu also looked over at Meng Hao.

He stood there silently for a moment before turning to leave. He had no desire to participate in what was happening. Fang Yu’s being sealed didn’t put her life in danger. Considering she was neither kith nor kin, it would not be worthwhile for him to take any action.

Besides, he wasn't completely confident in being able to take on two members of the Ji Clan at the same time. That was especially so considering that Ji Mingfeng gave Meng Hao the same sense of danger that Patriarch Huyan had.

As he turned around, the smile on Ji Xiaoxiao's face grew even wider. Her smile right now made her seem vastly different than the cold version from earlier. When she saw the complex emotions in Fang Yu's eyes, the despair and the pain, she grew even happier. She looked at Meng Hao walking away, and admiration could be seen in her eyes.

The thought suddenly popped into her mind that in the future, she could use him to continue to provoke Fang Yu.

Meng Hao took three steps, then suddenly looked back at Fang Yu.

He saw the despair and complex emotions in her eyes, as well as the pain. There was nothing romantic about the pain; actually it seemed to be more the type of pain one might feel when being abandoned by a family member. The look caused Meng Hao's mind to suddenly tremble.

He said nothing, but his eyes suddenly began to shine brightly. For some reason, he couldn't just brush aside the pain he saw in her eyes. He wasn't sure why, but in that instant he made a decision. The killing intent inside of him instantly shot up.

Ji Xiaoxiao frowned. Next to her, Ji Mingfeng's lips turned up in a cold smile.

It was in this moment that Meng Hao entered the Seventh Anima.

BOOM!!

His body instantly swelled. His hair grew longer and his aura rocketed up. Two times, eight times, sixteen times... all the way until his battle prowess was equivalent to sixty-four great circle Nascent Souls. A brief instant was all it took for the explosive power to cause a whirlwind to scream into existence, filling the entire area with clouds of dust.

Meng Hao was now several heads taller. He was taller, and his demeanor was thoroughly that of an Devil Immortal.

Ji Xiaoxiao's face fell, and Ji Mingfeng's pupils constricted.

Fang Yu's eyes began to glow brightly.

A roaring sound exploded out from Meng Hao as he shot forward with all the speed he could muster.

He was upon them in the blink of an eye. Ji Xiaoxiao lifted up her hand and pointed forward, causing an enormous bubble to appear in front of her. It instantly shattered in Meng Hao's face.

BAM!

The shattering of the bubble caused Meng Hao to tremble, but it didn't cause him to pause even the least bit. As he pressed forward, Ji Mingfeng casually pointed out, causing the white wolf to lift its head up and howl. As it pounced toward Meng Hao, the mastiff turned into a beam of red light that suddenly appeared at Meng Hao's side. It lashed out toward the white wolf, which instantly started quivering. Before the wolf could do anything in reaction, crunching sounds could be heard as the mastiff chomped it up into its mouth.

Everything happened so fast that Ji Mingfeng could only gape in astonishment. Next, intense killing intent appeared in his eyes.

Ji Xiaoxiao was flabbergasted; the mastiff's Spirit Severing aura caused her face to fall immediately.

At the same time, Meng Hao reached the seal which was holding Fang Yu. He glanced at her, and she back at him, and they almost seemed to be communicating. Fang Yu clenched her hand into a fist, and then her aura exploded up as she punched directly toward the seal.

Meng Hao's fist also slammed down. Their fists simultaneously punched down onto the exact same pillar of light, in exactly the same position!

The pillar immediately began to shake. Cracking sounds echoed out, and in the blink of an eye, the pillar exploded.

In response to the explosion of the first pillar, the other seven pillars began to automatically reinforce themselves. Fang Yu, filled with rage,

instantly shot out from within.

She charged toward Ji Xiaoxiao, punching her before she could even react. Ji Xiaoxiao fell back, blood spraying from her mouth. Ji Mingfeng gave Meng Hao a deep glance, then smiled and turned, taking Ji Xiaoxiao with him as he headed off into the distance.

Fang Yu was about to give chase when Meng Hao blocked her way.

She turned to look at him and, her tone one of rebuke, said, “What are you holding me back for?! You have no respect for your elders! And don’t you know that showing off your full power so early will lose you any advantage you have!?”

Meng Hao shook his head and smiled wryly. “Fine, Fellow Daoist Fang. If you want to chase after them, I won’t stop you.”

“Don’t take that tone with me!” she said, glaring at him. “And what kind of address is that!? Call me big sis!”

Meng Hao gave another wry smile. He suddenly had the feeling that rescuing her had been a mistake.

“Not gonna call me big sis?” she said. Her hands clenched into fists, and cracking sounds could be heard. A dangerous glow could be seen coming from her face, as if she might turn into an explosive dragon at any moment.

“Big sis!!” he said with a sigh, backing up a few steps. “Happy...?”

“That’s better. Doesn’t hurt, does it?” As she spoke, her eyes slowly began to fill with gentleness, although her tone of voice still seemed angry. Meng Hao had no idea where that anger came from. “Alright,” she continued, “forget about that for now. How did you end up here? Did you decide which host body you’re going to pick?”

*

1. Ji Mingfeng’s name in Chinese is 季明风 jì míng fēng – Ji is of course the Ji of the Ji Clan. Ming means “bright” or “clear.” Feng means

“wind”.

Chapter 563: The Extraordinary Ancient Demon Immortal Sect!

“Host body?” said Meng Hao, gaping. It was the second time he had heard such a term, the first being when Ji Xiaoxiao said it. His eyes glittered as he suddenly thought of the Resurrection Lily’s parasitic existence.

Unfortunately, he wasn’t sure if that had anything to do with the term ‘host body’ mentioned by Fang Yu. He intentionally made his expression one of confusion, but inwardly, he was extremely vigilant.

Seeing his expression, Fang Yu frowned for a moment. Then she reached her hand up as if to smack him on the head. The movement seemed incredibly practiced, as if it was something she did all the time. Without even thinking about it, Meng Hao backed up a few steps. Fang Yu glared at him, but eventually lowered her hand.

“You don’t know anything,” she said angrily, “and yet dare to come to the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane? You....” After a moment, she finally started to explain to him what she meant by ‘host body.’

As he listened to her explanation, his eyes slowly began to glow brightly.

According to her description, every time the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane opened, it meant fortune for those who entered. However, the extent of that good fortune depended on how far any given participant was able to get into the various planes.

“When the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane opens,” Fang Yu explained, “there are initially two different planes. The First Plane is where we are now, the ruins of the ancient Demon Immortal Sect. Here, virtually all the locations which contain good fortune are protected by restrictive spells. This plane will only remain open for seventy-two hours!

“In the First Plane, none of the participants will find any techniques or legacies. Nor will they find even the tiniest treasure. Well, that’s not a hard and fast rule, but basically, considering how many times the

Primordial Demon Immortal Plane has opened, anything that could have been taken away has long since disappeared into the hands of people in the past.

“The only thing we can do here is related to the fundamental purpose of the First Plane. And that is... we have to find a proper host body. Such host bodies are none other than the corpses you see around you! Each and every one of these corpses could be a host body!

“Seventy-two hours is all the time we Cultivators have to find a proper host body!

“After the seventy-two hours, the Second Plane will automatically open, and we will be able to recall ancient times!” Seeing that Meng Hao seemed to be paying rapt attention to her, Fang Yu couldn’t help but smile. She continued on to explain in further details, not concealing anything at all from Meng Hao.

What she didn’t know was that Meng Hao was actually only half paying attention to her. The other half of his attention was focused on Fang Yu herself, as he tried to determine why exactly she was expending such special effort to help him.

“Uhhh... she couldn’t possibly have fallen in love with me, could she?” he thought. He suddenly felt an icy feeling tingling up his spine. The more he thought about it though, the less likely it seemed. Nonetheless, he couldn’t help but subconsciously rub his right hand as he thought about the first time the two of them had met.

“The Second Plane is sort of like a hallucination that we will all experience at the same time,” Fang Yu continued. “However, it’s incredibly realistic. During that time, we will enter the once flourishing Demon Immortal Sect. As for which specific era we visit, that cannot be determined.

“It will be almost as if we have actually returned to ancient times. Furthermore, when inside the ancient Demon Immortal Sect, we will not be ourselves. Instead, we will assume the identity of whichever body we have chosen as a host. Using that person’s identity, we can search for good

fortune in the chimerical version of ancient times.” Fang Yu’s eyes began to gleam with anticipation.

“Therefore, one’s choice of host body is extremely important. If the host body’s status is high, then naturally you will be presented with better opportunities, maybe even Heaven-defying ones! The host body is the key to it all! With the right status, the good fortune you can acquire defies imagination!” By this point, the anticipation in her eyes was incredibly strong.

Having heard the explanation up to this point, Meng Hao’s eyes flickered. “An ancient dreamland?” he said. “If it’s just a dreamland, then can there really be so much good fortune?”

“The fact that it is a dreamland has been confirmed by those who entered in the past,” Fang Yu said earnestly. “Also, once inside... anything is possible!”

“The existence of the Demon Immortal Sect spanned many years,” replied Meng Hao. “Also, there is a vast different between the ages of the various disciples. Some might have just joined the Sect at the time of their death, others might have been around for ten thousand years. Since that’s the case, how could it be possible for everyone to enter the same era?”

Hearing this question caused Fang Yu’s eyes to gleam with admiration. She was obviously quite pleased to hear such a question.

“It all depends on your luck. In past generations, people who got unlucky ended up selecting host bodies of disciples that didn’t exist in ancient times. Unfortunately for them, they were unable to enter the Second Plane, and were cast out early.

“Therefore, it doesn’t matter whether you are worried about your chances of seizing good fortune, or even just the opportunity to enter the Second Plane, you have to find a corpse that had been around a long time before dying.”

Meng Hao thought about this for a moment.

“It’s just like I said before,” Fang Yu went on, “selecting a host body is

incredibly important. You might as well forget about getting a host body of a Sect Elder or Priest, or one of the seven incredible Elite Apprentices. That likelihood is incredibly small.

“It’s even rare to find a Conclave disciple; even if you went looking, you wouldn’t be able to find one except by chance. The best thing to do is to fight for one of the Inner Sect disciples.

“Throughout the years in which the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane has opened, the Ji Clan has come to occupy the best position. They have located the corpses of five Inner Sect disciples, and one Conclave disciple.

“As for the Fang Clan, we have only been able to locate four Inner Sect disciples.

“Most of the rest of the Sects in South Heaven,” she said calmly, “only have records of one or two Inner Sect disciples.”

Meng Hao took a deep breath. Now he fully understood the importance of the host body. A host body with a high status meant better chances for good fortune in the Second Plane. Some ancient legacies and techniques would only be available to people with special positions.

“Furthermore,” said Fang Yu, “upon entering the Second Plane, all of us will temporarily lose all of our memories. For a short period time, we will believe ourselves to be whoever the host body is. However, based on the skill and ability of each individual, we will awaken within a matter of hours or days.

“That period of time is the most dangerous!” When she reached this point, Fang Yu’s voice was very serious. “The reason is because if you wake up too slowly, you lose out on certain opportunities. Furthermore, your life will be in danger because of others who wake up before you!

“The Second Plane is where the true dangers of the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane begin. However, the benefits to be gained are enormous. According to the legends, the ancient Demon Immortal Sect has one thousand types of Daoist magic, one thousand orthodoxies, and one thousand heterodoxies. In total, there are three thousand great Daos. Each one of these divine abilities and Daoist magics are a legacy.

“Throughout the years, the greatest legacy ever acquired was when a Ji Clan member acquired the identity of a Conclave disciple and thus, the Underworld Seance Magic. By gaining enlightenment, he was able to take the technique out with him. Such a divine ability is well suited to the Ji Clan Dao of Karma.

“In the ranking system of the 3,000 great Daos of the Demon Immortal Sect, the Underworld Seance Magic is listed as number 408. That means there are four hundred even more powerful divine abilities. That is especially true of the top ten, each of which can be described as a great Dao!

“According to the legends, the top ten are powerful enough to rock the Heavens and shake the Earth.”

When Meng Hao heard this, his expression was the same as ever, but his heart pounded wildly. He looked at Fang Yu and asked another question. “You’re talking about the Ji Clan of South Heaven?”

Fang Yu hesitated for a moment and muttered to herself. Finally, she replied, “In the Ninth Mountain and Sea, the Ji Clan has five branches. The branch on South Heaven is not the main branch, but rather, one of the subsidiary branches.”

“Okay,” said Meng Hao. Seeing that Fang Yu apparently didn’t want to talk about the Ji Clan, he decided to ask a question about something else he was curious about. “So, about those top ten divine abilities and Daoist magics. What exactly are they?”

“I’m not sure,” replied Fang Yu, shaking her head. “I just know that the number one position is occupied by... the Mountain and Sea Scripture!” As soon as she spoke the words ‘Mountain and Sea Scripture,’ her eyes began to glow with a brilliant light. “However, even if you had some Heaven-defying good luck, it would be impossible to achieve enlightenment regarding it and then take it out. By the way, if you don’t achieve enlightenment regarding a given Daoist magic, then it’s impossible to brand it, and therefore impossible to remember. Once you leave the dreamland, you would completely forget it.”

When Meng Hao heard her mention the Mountain and Sea Scripture, he recalled what the parrot had spoken of. According to the parrot, the origin of the three classic scriptures was none other than something called the Mountain and Sea Scripture.¹

At this point, Meng Hao asked yet another question. “You’ve mentioned a First Plane and a Second Plane. Could it be that there is also a Third Plane?”

“Yes. However, according to the Clan records, the most probable likelihood is that we will not be able to meet the requirements to open the Third Plane. At a certain point in the Second Plane, the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane will close, we will all be teleported back to the lands of South Heaven.

“Throughout history, there have only been five occasions in which the requirements were met and the Third Plane appeared!”

Meng Hao watched her closely as she continued her explanation.

“The Third Plane occurs after awakening from the Second Plane. All of the restrictive spells throughout the ancient Demon Immortal Sect will become unstable and even disappear. During that time, anyone can enter those previously sealed areas to acquire treasure left over from the ancient Demon Immortal Sect!

“When entering the Third Plane, the previous identity of the host body will vanish. However, according to the various legacies and techniques learned in the Second Plane, it would be possible to remove some of the restrictive spells from places that still have them, and acquire shocking good fortune.”

Meng Hao took a deep breath. He was now much clearer about the various matters regarding the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane. The First Plane was about preparation. The Second Plane was a place to acquire the good fortune of immaterial techniques and legacies.

The Third Plane was a place to take advantage of the good fortune and preparation from the first two Planes to acquire physical treasures.

Everything was connected!

“So, now you understand what will happen in not so many hours. Right now, time is limited. During the seventy-two hours that the First Plane is open, people will be using information from the secret records of their Sect or Clan to find various corpses.

“You come with me. I’ll take you to one of the Inner Sect Disciples that the Fang Clan knows about. You hide yourself there and wait for the Second Plane to open.” With a final look at Meng Hao, Fang Yu turned and sped off.

Meng Hao stood there thoughtfully for a moment. Based on his analysis, about eighty percent of what Fang Yu had told him was probably true. He was still a cautious person, and was aware that gullibility was a weakness. However, in the end, he chose not to refuse her offer.

The two of them sped off toward the second mountain peak.

Time passed, and the sky grew darker. Meng Hao continued to glance around cautiously, but the ancient Demon Immortal Sect was simply too big. They didn’t run into anyone else. At this point, Meng Hao started to think about who else might have come to the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane from... the Southern Domain.

“Xu Qing. Elder Brother. Fatty. Chu Yuyan. And then there are the Dao Children from the three great Clans, as well as the other Chosen from the Sects. I wonder who I might run into here.” He thought about these things as he and Fang Yu continued to speed along until dawn of the following morning. By this time, they had traversed about thirty percent of the path between the second and third peaks.

Everywhere they passed, they saw wreckage and corpses, as well as areas with restrictive spells that glowed brightly in the darkness. The dangerous, flickering auras of the restrictive spells were things that even Fang Yu would not be immune to.

At one point, Fang Yu said something that caused Meng Hao’s eyes to go wide.

“Ever since we were small, Ji Xiaoxiao was always trying to compete with me. That’s why I yelled out to you earlier, to get her to notice you. If my plan works, she’ll definitely take a liking to you.

“Heh heh. Little bro, you have to help me turn the tables on her and screw her over royally. Of course, if you don’t want to, I won’t force you.”

*

1. The Mountain and Sea Scripture was mentioned in chapter 338.

Chapter 564: Where Good Fortune Lays

Meng Hao felt as if a cold wind had just gusted down his throat. He coughed dryly a few times and looked up ahead at Fang Yu. Inwardly, he felt even more assured that this woman was someone he should not provoke in the future.

She might be overbearing and have a fiery temper, but those things didn't matter. Just now, she... had set up a huge con for Ji Xiaoxiao to fall into, all without letting out a single hint or clue. It immediately caused Meng Hao's back to feel ice cold.

Throughout his years of Cultivation, Meng Hao had conned people left and right, starting from the very beginning in the Reliance Sect. Of course, he actually had no idea how many people would gnash their teeth in hatred whenever they thought of him and how he had conned them.

What was even more frightening was that Meng Hao's lack of awareness regarding this point meant that he didn't really think of himself as conning people. To him, conning people had become a habit, and then that habit had turned into instinct.

For such an instinct to appear led to a fearsome outcome... as soon as he encountered an opportunity to con someone, he would immediately begin to do so....

"That's... uh, big sis, that's probably not a good idea," he said, clearing his throat.

"No need to be bashful," she said with an enigmatic smile. "Do you really think your big sis didn't notice what part of Ji Xiaoxiao you looked at when you saw her for the first time?" Meng Hao almost felt as if he were being stabbed by her words.

He wanted to explain himself, but he knew that the more he tried to explain matters, the more it would make them worse. He finally just gave a wry smile.

"You help me con her," she said, her eyes shining more brightly than

ever, “and you won’t be sorry. Ji Xiaoxiao may be a shameless, narrow-minded, devious, vicious tart, but... she’s still quite pretty and also self-respecting. She would make a good concubine for you. I have to admit that I approve.” She really seemed to think her plan was a good one. Then she noticed Meng Hao’s wry smile, and her eyes went wide. “Fine, it’s settled, we’re doing it!”

“I...” Meng Hao was about to respond when Fang Yu shot off up ahead, leaving Meng Hao behind in the dust. A complacent smile could be seen on her face, and her eyes shone brightly. The more she thought about it, the more she felt that she truly was shrewd and intelligent. She really had set up that damnable Ji Xiaoxiao to be viciously conned....

Meng Hao continued to smile wryly and pretend that he hadn’t heard what she said in the end. He sped along after her, his expression amiable, but inwardly on guard. After all, he had long since learned to hide his true state. Instead, he usually kept a light smile on his face to prevent others from knowing what he was truly thinking.

“She truly isn’t on guard against me at all,” he thought. “Or is that just an act?” A thoughtful look appeared in his eyes as he thought back to the scene from outside the Rebirth Cave that year.

Again, he subconsciously looked down at the back of his right hand. More uncertainties bubbled up in his heart.

“Maybe everything will be made clear once we arrive at this corpse. I can make my final decision then.” An imperceptible gleam flickered within Meng Hao’s eyes.

Dawn had fully broken, and the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane was no longer dark. Rays of sunshine climbed up into the sky as Meng Hao and Fang Yu reached a stretch of ruins that existed in the middle of the second and third peaks.

The damage to the place was considerable. Corpses lay about everywhere, and a pervasive sensation of ancientness filled the air, along with an aura of decay that seemed unwilling to depart.

The limestone that covered the ground had long since been crushed into

countless pieces. The richly ornamented buildings looked as if they had been shattered by some giant palm slamming down from up above. The force had completely shattered the buildings, and then turned into a shockwave which caused everything for tens of thousands of meters in all directions to be destroyed.

“Okay, we’re here,” said Fang Yu. “Only three members of the Fang Clan came this time. I’ll notify the other two not to select this place. This is the corpse of an Inner Sect disciple with a relatively high position. Although it’s not a Conclave Disciple, the previous generations of Fang Clan Cultivators who came here said that this person had a lot of friends. If you play your cards right, you should be able to find some good fortune.” With that, she took out a jade slip and handed it over.

“Recorded in this jade slip are seven paths taken by various members of the previous generations of the Fang Clan. Everything they did and said is inside. Because the time period we’re traveling to is not set, the contents will most likely not relate directly to you. However, you might want to study it nonetheless.”

With that, Fang Yu looked around, studying the area before proceeding forward. As they moved, Fang Yu explained everything in detail.

“Pay attention to the path I take. For example, see there? That’s a protective spell formation which is very difficult to penetrate. It should actually keep you safe.

“Oh, don’t touch that! There’s a hidden restrictive spell in there!

“Don’t touch this either.

“You have to wait here for the amount of time it takes an incense stick to burn. Pay attention to the shadows on the ground.”

Meng Hao nodded in response to her explanations. Inwardly, his suspicions continued to increase as he realized that Fang Yu really wasn’t concealing anything from him.

They took a circuitous route into the center of the ruins. A few hours later, when it was afternoon, Meng Hao suddenly stopped in place and

looked off into the distance. There, in the middle of some wreckage, was a jade slip that emanated a bright blue light. It was floating above the ground, surrounding by countless streams of magical symbols.

At first glance, it was extremely beautiful.

Surrounding it for dozens of meters in all directions was the glow of a restrictive spell.

“Don’t even think about it,” said Fang Yu. “From the Fang Clan’s very first records of the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane down until now no one has been able to get past that restrictive spell. If you pay attention closely, you can sense that the Daoist magic contained in that jade slip is definitely in the top one thousand legacies and divine abilities.” She sounded as if she viewed this to be quite a pity.

“See all the corpses around the glowing light? Quite a few of those are people from past generations who got greedy and tried to break through the restrictive spell....” When Meng Hao heard this, he nodded calmly. He had long since noticed that some of the corpses in the area looked different than the corpses of the members of the Demon Immortal Sect.

“How many times has the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane opened?” he asked suddenly. “Is it possible that there are still members of the Sect left alive in here?”

“Impossible,” replied Fang Yu, shaking her head. “Everyone is dead. Other than a few people who managed to escape before the calamity struck, everyone died. Although everything happened long, long ago, the ancient records offer clear proof that the entire Sect was wiped out.”

“If it opens every thousand years, isn’t it possible that people returned and then stayed?” he followed up, his eyes flickering.

Fang Yu didn’t seem to be the least bit fazed by Meng Hao’s question. “The only people who can stay behind are the dead. Anyone else who enters gets expelled when the plane closes. It’s no coincidence that I happen to know this. I was curious about the very same thing, and the person who answered my question happened to be the only remaining elderly member of the Clan who had been to this place.”

Meng Hao asked no more questions. He turned back and followed Fang Yu as she proceeded forward. This time, they walked for about two hours before they finally reached one particular house that was only half collapsed. After looking around for a moment, Fang Yu produced a jade slip which she then crushed. Immediately, a blurriness surrounded the house. When the blurriness faded into clarity, the house was gone. In its place was an enormous crater.

This didn't surprise Meng Hao at all. During the course of their journey, he had watched Fang Yu do this same thing about seven or eight times. She had also done other things to ensure that they weren't being followed.

In the middle of the crater was a corpse. Upon nearing, it became clear that the muscles and blood had long since faded away. What remained was essentially a mummified corpse, with its head turned to look up into the air. It seemed that before it died, it had been looking up into the sky. Despite the long passage of time, the look of fear and aloneness on its face was still clear to Meng Hao.

"His name was Xu Long, and he was a member of the Demon Immortal Sect for a long time. He started in the Outer Sect to eventually be promoted to the Inner Sect. He ended up sacrificing his life during the calamity.

"Were it not for the calamity, he may have eventually become a Conclave disciple." Fang Yu held out her hand, in which could be seen eight jade slips, all of which contained information regarding the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane. One by one, she handed them over to Meng Hao.

"It won't be much longer now," she said. "You should be safe here. I'm going to go find a corpse in a different location." Fang Yu gave Meng Hao a deep look, making no attempt to hide the thoughtfulness in her eyes.

Meng Hao looked at the jade slips and then watched as Fang Yu turned and made her way off.

After a long moment, he took some time to examine his surroundings. Clearly... there were no real dangers in the immediate vicinity. Obviously,

this was a place that few people came to in search of a host body.

“Don’t tell me that she really didn’t have any ill intentions,” he murmured softly. He turned to look at the corpse, then walked over thoughtfully and squatted down to examine it closely.

Gradually, his expression changed, and it was clear that he was moved inwardly. This corpse was actually far, far more powerful than any of the ones he had seen before. Even after entering the Seventh Anima, he couldn’t even put the tiniest crack in its skull.

This caused his mind to reel. He was even able to sense a slight pressure emanating off of the corpse, which caused his hair to stand on end. His entire body felt as if it were filled with coldness, and an indescribable weight pushed down onto his heart.

After a long moment, he awoke from his reverie and stepped back a few paces, cold sweat dripping down his face. He looked down at the corpse, his face grim.

“So this is an Inner Sect disciple of the ancient Demon Immortal Sect.... It’s completely different than the other corpses I inspected. It’s far, far more powerful! That must mean that all the corpses I saw on the way here were nothing more than Outer Sect disciples.” He took a deep breath as he sat down cross-legged.

“Fang Yu really didn’t have any evil designs. Interesting. Well, as of now, there are only about forty hours left. If I stay here, then there is a high likelihood that I will be able to get into the Second Plane. However....” His eyes glittered as he looked in the direction of the third and fourth peaks.

There was no way that he could forget everything he had seen after awaking in the river of stars as it made its way here to the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane, especially the man he had seen on the peak of the fourth mountain.

He wasn’t sure how many times the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane had opened in the past, nor how many Cultivators had entered it through the generations. Among those people, had anyone ever woken up in the manner that he had? If there were, it would certainly have been an

incredibly rare occurrence. After all, he was very much convinced that he had only awoken because of the help of Han Shan.

Furthermore, even if there really were people who had awoken in the past, it didn't necessarily mean that they would have seen the same man that he had.

It was entirely possible that Meng Hao himself was the only person to have ever stayed awake and then seen the man.

"That is my advantage, the place where my unique opportunity lies. If I wait here, I might be out of danger, but that means I'll be giving up my chance to seize a unique chance." He felt hesitant.

"That person on the fourth peak... Who was he...?" After a long moment's thought, Meng Hao's eyes filled with the glow of determination.

Chapter 565: Meeting an Old Friend

Meng Hao stood up and looked at the corpse of Inner Sect Disciple Xu Long for a moment. Then, he didn't hesitate any longer. He turned and, following the same path he had to get to this location, sped away.

He just could not resign himself to ignoring that strange person.

The Primordial Demon Immortal Plane might be a dangerous place, but he was here. Picking a path of danger was well in line with the expression, 'rewards come only with risk.' The only way to continue to maintain an advantage in the Second Plane was to make a difficult choice such as this right now.

If he was more concerned with safety, and unwilling to take risks, why had he come to this place to begin with? To stare at a mountain of treasure while wringing one's hands would cause even mortals to sigh in regret, let alone Cultivators!

Meng Hao would much rather go all out in risk than worry about safety, especially when he had a chance to fight for good fortune!

Who could possibly settle for mediocrity? Members of the Fang Clan had long since experimented with the identity of Inner Sect Disciple Xu Long, and of course acquired good fortune, although they had not done so perfectly.

Regarding the potential different time periods, and the seven paths taken with Xu Long as a host body, all of that information was recorded in the jade slip. After glancing it over, Meng Hao wasn't certain that he could do any better than the others had. Therefore, if he chose to go with this Inner Sect disciple's identity, all he might acquire was Daoist magic that the Fang Clan had long since already acquired.

Anything else would be very difficult. Many times, one's starting point will determine one's final destination.

The successive generations of the Fang Clan were clearly intelligent, and had already done all that could be done. Any further gain would come only

from good luck. As far as that was concerned, Meng Hao would rather rely on his own luck to gain his own opportunity.

Therefore, he chose to abandon the path of Inner Sect Disciple Xu Long. There wasn't a single scrap of hesitation as he used Fang Yu's method to safely leave the area. It took him about four hours before he was finally clear. Without even looking back, he headed toward the fourth peak.

After calculating the time, he thought to himself. "I still have thirty-four hours left." Employing all the speed that was possible, he cautiously made his way through the various ruins and corpses.

Time passed. Ten hours later, he was at the third peak. He didn't see anyone the entire time, which didn't cause him any pause for thought. More than half of the seventy-two hour period had passed, and presumably, most of the other had already found the host bodies they were looking for, and were waiting there.

"Twenty-four hours left," he thought, looking toward the fourth peak far off in the distance. He pushed himself faster.

Ten more hours went by, and he had already passed the halfway point between the third peak and the fourth peak. Suddenly, a rumbling broke the silence. Based on how faint it was, it was obviously coming from quite some distance away. However, Meng Hao could feel it instantly.

Mixed in with the sound were pulsating ripples of divine abilities and magical techniques. By the time they reached Meng Hao, they were very weak, but he was still able to sense a familiar aura within them.

He stopped in his tracks for a moment and then frowned. After examining the aura further, his frown deepened. He knew who this aura belonged to.

"Zhao Fang of the great Cloud Sky Tribe." He looked off in the distance, a thoughtful look in his eye. Currently there were only fourteen hours left until the First Plane closed.

He could tell that he needed ten hours just to get from his current location to the fourth mountain. That meant he only would only have four

hours to get to the top of peak. Time was tight, and he couldn't afford to waste it.

He proceeded forward. However, after going about three hundred meters, he suddenly turned and headed in the direction of Zhao Fang's aura, his expression extremely cold. He had made a promise to Patriarch Cloud Sky, and they had a deal. The extent to which he followed up on his promise was the extent to which the other party would respect the agreement.

There was no one around to police the arrangement, but it existed in his heart.

Conducting oneself properly often amounts to maintaining a clear conscience.

He shot through the air at top speed for the amount of time it takes half an incense stick to burn. Soon he caught sight of two Cultivators locked in battle in the ruins up ahead.

One of them was Zhao Fang. He was clearly in a very poor position. His expression was one of fury. His clothes were stained with blood and his face was pale. Clearly, he had been injured.

He was fighting a man who wore a white robe and had long, voluminous hair. He was slender and handsome, and was clearly the type of man whom any woman would cast glances at. Three flying spikes circulated around him, leaving behind trails of colorful lights as they flew through the air. They also emanated a penetrating aura that made the white-robed man seem even more elegant.

Actually there weren't just two people up ahead. About thirty meters or so behind the white-robed man was a woman in a violet garment. She was beautiful, with a shrewd smile and an intelligent air to her. Anyone who looked at her would instantly be able to tell that she was cunning and resourceful.

She watched the magical combat with a smile on her face. She made no move to attack, but when she looked at the white-robed man, a profound look occasionally flickered within her eyes. It was not romantic

admiration, but... something else.

“This host body belongs to the great Cloud Sky Tribe!” Cried Zhao Fang. “You want to steal it from me? Despotic!”

Another boom could be heard; Zhao Fang coughed up a mouthful of blood and staggered backward. He glared at the man in the white robe, killing intent flickering in his eyes. As he had said, the great Cloud Sky Tribe had discovered this location. However, almost as soon as he had arrived, this man and woman appeared and attacked him.

Obviously, they wanted to take control of the location. If it weren't for the fact that the woman had ceased hostilities after her initial sneak attack, he would surely have been dead already.

“Nobody owns anything in the Demon Immortal Sect,” said the white-robed man coolly, looking at Zhao Fang with a look of coldness and disdain. “If you insist that I, Wang, am stealing it, then so be it. Why don't you just screw off? If you attack me one more time, I'll kill you.”

Zhao Fang had the most latent talent of anyone in the great Cloud Sky Tribe. Although luck was important in the ancient Demon Immortal Sect, so was latent talent. The greater the latent talent, the easier it would be to gain enlightenment regarding various techniques and legacies.

Before being sent here, Zhao Fang was in the mid Nascent Soul stage. Just before leaving, though, the Patriarch had personally used various magical techniques to temporarily raise him to the peak of the late Nascent Soul stage, a state which would last for three months.

The corpse that he was defending was no ordinary Inner Sect disciple. It was much rarer, a disciple who was half way into the Conclave status. The reason was that this particular disciple had a relative of the elder generation who was already a Conclave disciple.

The information regarding that relationship was something the great Cloud Sky Tribe had expended much effort to acquire.

Zhao Fang's eyes were bloodshot. Unfortunately, the man he faced up against currently really was of the late Nascent Soul stage, whereas he

himself had reached that level only by the use of force. He could fight back, but his opponent had too many magical items, and he knew that he wasn't a match.

That was not even to mention the woman. Although she was only at the early Nascent Soul stage, Zhao Fang sensed something even more threatening about her than the man. It was a strange feeling that filled him with shock.

Just as Zhao Fang was gritting his teeth and angrily resigning himself to the fact that he would have to leave, a popping sound could suddenly be heard. Dust was kicked up in all directions, followed by a pulsating pressure that caused the white-robed man's face to fall and his eyes to widen.

The violet-robed woman's beautiful face was also filled with a look of shock. She cocked her head to look of into the distance.

Zhao Fang gaped as a green smoke shot through the air, within which was a black moon. It moved with incredible speed as it approached.

As soon as he caught sight of the black moon, Zhao Fang nearly went wild with joy. In the last moments before leaving for the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane, Patriarch Cloud Sky had transmitted information to him regarding Meng Hao's agreement to help.

"Elder Brother Meng, please help me!"

Almost in the same moment that his words rang out, the green smoke and black moon arrived. The moon vanished and the smoke dissipated to reveal Meng Hao, wearing a green robe. He stood there looking around coldly at the three people present.

When the violet-robed woman saw Meng Hao, her eyes went as wide as saucers. A look of astonishment and disbelief appeared on her face, as well as something that rarely could be seen on her features; intense emotion and confusion.

"Meng... Meng Hao?" she said, her voice hoarse. Her mind filled with great waves of roaring.

When the white-robed man saw Meng Hao, he also stared blankly. Apparently he found Meng Hao's features to be familiar, but couldn't place where he had seen him before. However, when he heard what the woman said, he suddenly realized who Meng Hao was.

Zhao Fang's heart was pounding, not having expected these two to be familiar with Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's expression was one of indifference as he looked over at the violet-robed woman. After a moment, he smiled.

"Long time no see, Fellow Daoist Han Bei. You look as graceful as ever."
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This violet-robed woman was none other than the bizarre Han Bei of the Black Sieve Sect. She stood there breathing heavily, a look of disbelief on her face when she heard Meng Hao's words.

"Is it really you?" she said. She had been left with a profound impression of Meng Hao all those years ago. In her memory, he had brought about one miracle after the next. First, there were the events inside the square cauldron in the Black Sieve Sect's Blessed Land, then his activities within the Black Sieve Sect itself as Grandmaster Pill Cauldron, and finally what happened outside the Rebirth Cave when he killed the Li Clan Dao Child and the Quasi-Array member of the Ji Clan. All of these things caused great waves of change to sweep across the Southern Domain.

Each one of those events had left Han Bei completely in shock. Although many years had passed, the impression left was still deep and intense. Of course, much of that had to do with the warnings and analysis of the soul of the Han Clan Patriarch.

"Your... your Cultivation base!!" she said, her mind spinning. The shock she felt after sensing the level of his Cultivation base was even more intense than before. Meng Hao was actually of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage!

She well knew that of the current generation of Dao Children in the Sects and Clans of the Southern Domain, most were of in the early Nascent Soul stage. A few were in the mid Nascent Soul Stage, and only

Wang Clan Dao Child Wang Lihai was of the late Nascent Soul stage, although he concealed that fact most of the time, and had revealed it only in the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane.

Once word spread into the Southern Domain, Wang Lihai's status would be propelled to the number one person of his generation.

And yet, here stood Meng Hao. Han Bei was shaken and could scarcely believe her eyes.

Meng Hao looked over at the white-robed man, who looked just as shocked as Han Bei. Considering how much this man's face resembled that of Wang Tengfei, Meng Hao instantly knew who he was.

This was Wang Tengfei's older brother, Wang Clan Dao Child, the person who had feigned death in the Blood Immortal Legacy tournament!

Wang Lihai! 2

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1. Han Bei was first introduced in [chapter 143](#) when she delivered a medicinal pill to Meng Hao. She was mentioned subsequent times, but didn't become an important character until [chapter 155](#), when the mission into the square cauldron began. She appeared in the story again prominently starting in [chapter 245](#), when Meng Hao went back to the Black Sieve Sect disguised as Fang Mu. She also made minor appearances in the Song Clan, when Fang Mu revealed his identity as Pill Cauldron, and during the events outside the Rebirth Cave.
2. Wang Lihai was first introduced in [chapter 119](#) in the Blood Immortal Legacy tournament arc, although it was actually his clone who appeared and subsequently died in the tournament. He later appeared in [chapter 264](#) and subsequent chapters during the Primordial Dao Geyser arc, in which he was soundly defeated by Meng Hao in the guise of the "Faceless Azure Hero".

Chapter 566: That is... Xu Qing!

Meng Hao was no longer a novice in the Cultivation world. He now understood a lot more about the Dao Children and Chosen of the Sects and Clans. Although his understanding wasn't absolutely correct in terms of every single detail, he now had a general understanding of what a Dao Child was and what a Chosen was.

Actually, 'Dao Child' and 'Chosen' were merely titles, an indication of approval and status. Such approval was evidence of that person's ability to maintain their strength within the Sect. It was also proof to the outside world as to the future good prospects of the Sect itself.

If a Sect had many Chosen, it would be possible to predict that it would experience incredible growth in the future.

Regarding Dao Children, that was a title given to the most illustrious of any given stage of Cultivation within a Sect or Clan. They would represent the Sect or Clan when it came to dealing with most affairs on the outside.

Every Sect and Clan would have three Dao Children and no more; a Foundation Establishment Dao Child, a Core Formation Dao Child, and a Nascent Soul Dao Child.

There could only be one Dao Child in any given stage, and because of their special status, Sects and Clans would usually dispatch powerful Dao Protectors along with such individuals when they ventured outside.

In the outside world, Dao Children were incredibly impressive, even famous. They had a status that would cause all other Cultivators to be endlessly envious.

However, when a Dao Child entered a new stage, then it meant two Dao Children existed, which would result in brutal competition. Generally speaking, unless the original Dao Child of that particular stage ceded their position, it would be difficult for the newcomer to maintain their status. Because of this reality, Dao Children were proud and arrogant when in the outside world. However, within the Sect or Clan, they had to tread as carefully as if they were walking on thin ice.

If a Dao Child wanted to maintain their status, they would constantly be forced to take advantage of Cultivation resources from other Cultivators. They might even need to rely on the power and influence of other experts within the Sect to improve their Cultivation base and become more powerful. That was the only way to maintain their position above other members of their generation, and perhaps even exceed their predecessors.

Regarding Chosen, the competition was even more ruthless. The grandeur of their status in the outside world was second only to that of Dao Children, and they received more and better resources from their Clan or Sect. At the same time, they had to deal with the possibility of being stripped of their title due to falling behind in the rankings or not advancing fast enough in their Cultivation. Also, they had to compete with other experts of the same stage for resources.

Because of all of that, Chosen also found themselves treading on thin ice, and had no other choice but to work as hard as possible to grow more powerful.

Naturally, all Sects and Clans had different rules. However, the general situation was always one of competition. Of course, killing was strictly prohibited.

Wang Lihai was, of course, a Dao Child of one of the three great Clans of the Southern Domain, the Wang Clan. He was a patient person, and didn't make a practice of showing off in his cultivation. Back when rumors of his demise were circulating in the Southern Domain, he was the Foundation Establishment Dao Child of the Wang Clan. Upon reaching Core Formation, he actually lost his status. However, after patiently waiting for many years, he suddenly made his comeback, defeating the Wang Clan's Nascent Soul Dao Child in a single blow. When he reclaimed the position of Dao Child, it caused quite a commotion in the Southern Domain.

Currently, Meng Hao held a jade slip in his hand. The moment he had decided to intervene in the situation, he had pulled out this very jade slip to make a record of everything that was happening. He looked over Wang Lihai and thought back to the events outside the ancient Dao Geyser,

when he had challenged this very same Wang Clan Dao Child. He actually looked much the same as he had back then, except that the feeling of time on his body was much stronger.

When Meng Hao looked at him, Wang Lihai's mind trembled, and he felt jittery with fear. Were it not for his iron will, he would have already lost control of himself.

His pupils constricted as he stared at Meng Hao. His heart felt anything but calm. He now recognized who Meng Hao was, and he also thought back to their battle all those years ago. A battle he had lost.

Of the three times in his life that he had lost a fight, that was the first. It was also one of the reasons he had been so persistent in his practice of cultivation over the years. Before, he had viewed himself as powerful enough to sweep over anyone in the same stage as him. He thought that he was at the pinnacle, above even the other Dao Children in the Southern Domain, the number one person.

But now that he saw Meng Hao, and felt the power of his Cultivation base, Wang Lihai's mind began to spin.

His pride crumbled. His self-confidence felt as if it were being crushed. He took a deep breath, then clasped hands and bowed to Meng Hao.

"It's been years, Elder Brother Meng. You look as dignified as ever."

Off to the side, Han Bei, although she had regained some of her composure, was still breathing heavily. Images of past encounters with Meng Hao floated in her mind. Their initial encounter, their meeting in the Song Clan when they had almost touched faces. There were other things too, all of which made it impossible for her to stay completely calm.

Meng Hao stood there, his long, green robes rippling like water. His expression was one of indifference as he looked at Wang Lihai, and then nodded.

"Since we're old friends, I'll allow you to take your leave," he said calmly.

Han Bei breathed in deeply. She clasped hands, bowed, and then looked Meng Hao deep in the eyes. Her expression was one of shrewdness, and

her eyes flickered with beauty.

“Elder Brother Meng, we’ve just met and you’re already sending us away?” she placed her hand over her mouth as she chuckled. “You really don’t want to chat about old times with me? Very well, then. I’ll take my leave.” Completely ignoring Zhao Fang and Wang Lihai, she turned and flew up into the air like a beautiful swallow.

“Elder Brother Meng, the news about Fellow Daoist Zhao’s Tribe finding the location of this corpse had already spread far and wide. Even if the two of us leave, it’s hard to say whether or not others will come.” The softness of her voice seemed to indicate that she had completely recovered from her shock from earlier. As she began to fly off into the distance, she added another thought.

“One more thing, Elder Brother Meng,” she said, her voice filled with a strange tone. “I have a final gift I’d like to give you. I’m not too sure who else came here from the Southern Domain. However, there was one person who came with me. That is... Xu Qing.” Chuckling, she disappeared off into the distance.

Meng Hao seemed surprised, but didn’t say anything. He looked back at Wang Lihai.

Wang Lihai stared at Meng Hao, and as their gazes met, Wang Lihai’s eyes suddenly flickered with the desire to do battle.

He took a step forward, and his aura exploded up. He looked at Meng Hao, clasped hands and bowed. “Elder Brother Meng, considering your words, I naturally rescind any claim on this place. However, multiple sixty-year cycles have passed since our match that year. Since we happen to have run into each other again here, Elder Brother Meng, I hope you can give me some pointers!” With that, his aura shot up with even more intensity.

Meng Hao frowned. Time was limited, and he didn’t have much to spare. Almost the same moment in which Wang Lihai expressed himself, Meng Hao flicked his wide sleeve and took a step forward. The incredible pressure of the great cycle of the Nascent Soul stage instantly shoved

down onto Wang Lihai.

Boom!

Wang Lihai instantly fell back seven or eight steps, his face pale. With a final deep look at Meng Hao, he turned and left.

Meng Hao watched Wang Lihai leave. The man had left quite an impression on him, this Wang Clan Dao Child.

“My First Anima puts me an entire phase above someone in the late Nascent Soul stage,” mused Meng Hao thoughtfully. “His face paled, that was it. No blood. It seems Wang Lihai’s battle prowess is actually equivalent to someone of the great circle.” Finally he turned to look at Zhao Fang.

Zhao Fang immediately began to get nervous. He knew how fearsome Meng Hao was; after all, he could hold his own against Patriarch Huyan. Could it be possible that the tiger, having driven away the wolf, would now eat the man?

Stepping back a few paces, Zhao Fang began to speak, choosing his words carefully. “Senior Meng, many thanks for your kindness in saving me. I of the younger generation will definitely report this matter to the Patriarch. He will assuredly reward you handsomely, senior.” Of course he didn’t dare to refer to Meng Hao as ‘Elder Brother,’ and thus chose a more respectful form of address.

Meng Hao understood the meaning behind Zhao Fang’s words. However, considering that Meng Hao had abandoned the Inner Sect disciple provided to him by Fang Yu, he certainly wouldn’t be interested in the corpse here, even if it was slightly higher in status. “I promised Patriarch Cloud Sky to take care of you as best I could. It seems I’ve already accomplished that task. This place isn’t safe. If you chose to stay here, you need to prepare to defend your own life.”

Zhao Fang hesitated for a moment, and then steeled himself. “Many thanks for your concern, senior. I know my limits, and the Patriarch also helped me to make some special preparations....”

Meng Hao look at Zhao Fang for a moment, which made Zhao Fang feel even more nervous.

Meng Hao finally nodded. "I can't stay here. If that's your decision, then do your best to take care of yourself." With that, he put away the jade slip. Within was a complete record of everything that had happened, which he would provide later to Patriarch Cloud Sky as proof of what had occurred.

Paying no more attention to Zhao Fang, Meng Hao turned and made his way off.

Seeing that Meng Hao had truly left, Zhao Fang breathed a sigh of relief. He looked around the area cautiously, and a bit hesitantly. Finally, he clenched his jaw and decided not to leave. He would stick to his original plan and methods to conceal himself near the corpse and wait nervously for time to pass.

Meng Hao continued on without pause toward the fourth peak. Han Bei's words continued to echo out in his head. A warm light suddenly appeared in his eyes.

"Is Xu Qing really here too...?" Meng Hao looked around thoughtfully at the Demon Immortal Sect and then increased his speed.

Several hours later, the third day was almost gone. There were now only four hours left until the First Plane closed. It was at this point that Meng Hao reached the foot of the fourth mountain.

He looked up toward the towering mountain in front of him. It was huge, so big that he couldn't see the top. He was like a tiny insect, completely insignificant. However a brilliant light glowed in his eyes. He took a deep breath and then began to ascend the mountain.

Most of the locations within the First Plane of the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane contained restrictive spells. Simply touching one would give birth to deadly danger. As he ascended the mountain, Meng Hao encountered many such an area, forcing him to take a meandering route. More than two hours later, he finally caught sight of the peak of the mountain.

“I still have one hour left....” he said. He was currently standing on a crag that jut out from the side of the mountain, looking up at the peak. He suddenly felt a bit of hesitation. Time was almost up, and as of now, he wasn’t sure if he had made the right choice.

If it was the wrong choice, everything was for naught. Before leaving the corpse of Xu Long, he had attempted to physically bring the corpse with him. However, he had quickly discovered that the corpse was apparently locked in place permanently. Nothing he did could move it even a bit.

“What’s mine is mine completely. I won’t accept things from others even if begged. At the very least, I won’t have any regrets.” He let out a casual laugh, and then stopped worrying about matters of gain or loss. He used his last hour to continue on toward the top of the mountain. As he moved, he looked around at the ruins, taking in all the former grandeur of the Demon Immortal Sect.

Because he wasn’t worried about winning or losing, he no longer felt nervous, and took his time. By the time he reached the top of the fourth peak, there were only one hundred breaths of time left!

Chapter 567: Ke Jiusi

He stepped onto the stone dais located at the top of the fourth peak. From a distance, this part of the mountain looked sharp and pointed, but in actuality, it was flat.

It was like a large square, surrounded by nine huge cauldrons, all covered with fissures. In the direct center of it all was a wooden coffin. The coffin was lidless, and was carved, not with magical symbols, but with ancient depictions of auspicious clouds and beasts. There were also mountains and rivers, even a vast starry sky.

At first glance, the carvings seemed very complicated, but after closer inspection one could find simplicity within the complexity.

It gave one an indescribable feeling of both contradiction and harmony.

Meng Hao approached the coffin and, nearing the side of, looked down inside. It was empty. There was no corpse. No remains. Nothing.

There was no host body here.

As of this moment, only eighty breaths of time remained until the opening of the Second Plane. Meng Hao stood next to the coffin and looked down silently at the emptiness. Then he sighed.

It would be impossible for him to say that he wasn't disappointed. He had abandoned the Inner Sect disciple host body provided by Fang Yu. He had stuck with his own ideas, and the brutal reality made it so that he could only sigh and stand there with complex emotions filling his heart.

Silently, he turned his gaze to the scene below the mountain. There were now only seventy breaths of time left. There was no way he would be able to find another suitable corpse now. On his way here, he found that about halfway up the mountain, there were absolutely no corpses to be seen.

From his vantage point atop the mountain, he could now see that the entire mountain was covered with dense restrictive spells. They were so tightly packed that it almost seemed as if the entire mountain were covered with one gigantic restrictive spell that would prevent anyone from

reaching the top.

Any one of the various restrictive spells would have completely destroyed Meng Hao had he even touched them. The sight of the densely packed spells caused Meng Hao to feel somewhat confused.

“How did I actually make it up here?” It was the first time he had considered the question. During the journey up the mountain he hadn’t really paid attention. The four hour trip up from the foot of the mountain had seemed relatively easy.

Now that he looked back down, though, the entire mountain seemed like a forbidden zone that no one could even enter.

He could see that it would take astonishing luck to be able to traverse a path successfully and not trigger even a single restrictive spell.

“Unless there was someone that allowed me to come here....” he thought, his eyes glittering. As of this moment, only thirty breaths of time remained. Meng Hao looked away from the fourth peak toward the temple on top of the distant first peak.

According to what he remembered after waking up, he was now standing in the same position as the man he had seen. He looked off in the distance, his hair and robes fluttering gently in the wind.

When only ten breaths of time remained, determination appeared in Meng Hao’s eyes.

“You let me see you,” he said, “and you... allowed me to successfully reach the top of this mountain. Perhaps your identity isn’t even important at this point.” Five breaths of time remained. He turned and strode over to the coffin. After taking a deep breath, he crawled in calmly, laid down, and closed his eyes.

Three breaths. Two breaths. One breath....

RUMBLE!!!

A massive rumbling sound suddenly filled the air of the ancient Demon Immortal Sect. It far exceeded the sound of thunder as it rolled about the

entire world. Ripples suddenly spread out from the sky, covering everything as far as the eye could see.

With the exception of Meng Hao, everyone else who had come to this world sat closed-eyed and cross-legged next to the various host bodies they had selected. When the ripples reached them, the corpses began to glow. Ghost images of both the host bodies and the Cultivators sprang up and then began to superimpose and merge together.

As for Meng Hao, he lay there with his eyes closed. As the rumbling filled the sky, he lost consciousness. The ripples that spread out throughout the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane did not seem to affect him at all.

However, it was at this moment that a white-robed man appeared, standing in exactly the same spot Meng Hao had just been standing, which was also the same spot Meng Hao had noticed when he awoke in the river of stars.

The man's hair was disheveled, and his long white robe was spattered with bloodstains. His hair covered his face, making it was impossible to see his facial features. The only thing that was possible to distinguish was that he was not a woman.

As the wind blew, his hair lifted up a bit, revealing two ancient eyes filled with both perplexity and regret.

The aura of decay that rose up from him seemed to fuse with that of the entire Primordial Demon Immortal Plane, making it impossible to distinguish between the two.

The man looked over in the direction of the fifth peak. His eyes awash with memories of the past, he softly said, "Night... let him in, okay?"

As the words left his mouth, the entire ancient Demon Immortal Sect trembled.

A droning voice suddenly echoed out. It sounded almost as if it weren't awake, like the words were spoken by someone who was dreaming. "That does not conform with the rules."

“He is the only person to see me after all these years. Perhaps it is some destined Karma. Allow him... to represent me in the past. Allow him to speak those words to the old man... the words that I didn’t understand how to say back then.” The white-robed man’s voice was hoarse, and his eyes were warm. However, within that warmth was an ancient thoughtfulness, a yearning and deep regret that he clearly could not free himself from.

“I’ve been keeping those words buried in my heart for ninety thousand years already,” the old man said softly.

The entire world was quiet for a very long moment. Finally, the droning voice could be heard once again. The sound of the voice rose and fell like the waves of the ocean. “He has no identity.”

“Give him my identity,” replied the white-robed man.

The world once again went silent.

“Make time pass back into that year....” The white-robed man closed his eyes, covering over the pain that lay inside. Unfortunately, he was not able to cover the sorrow and longing within in his heart.

RUMBLE!!!

Each bit of light in the world suddenly came from all directions to pour into Meng Hao. He gradually grew transparent, and then disappeared. In that instant, a huge sound, like endless thunder, echoed about.

At the same time, a warm glow spread out to fill the entire ancient Demon Immortal Sect. Suddenly, a new world became visible within the glow, a world that was a memory of ancient times!

The manner in which Meng Hao vanished was entirely different from that of the other Cultivators from the lands of South Heaven. All of them fused with host bodies whereas Meng Hao... actually entered the Second Plane with his own body!

The others were merely borrowing the identity of someone else. As for Meng Hao... he was not borrowing another identity. He was acquiring it!

Borrowing and acquiring are two very different things.

As the light spread out to fill the ancient Demon Immortal Sect, the white-haired man stood in place, back toward the first peak, just like before. What he saw in his mind's eye was an old man, looking at him with a smile on his face.

I can see in your eyes that you will forgive me of anything, forgive for any mistakes I make. It's as if you are always watching over me, waiting to silently correct all of my blunders.

Back then, if I made a mistake, one word of criticism from you would send me into a rage.

Back then, I ran amok with the silkpants and acted tyrannically. I never saw the wrinkles in the corners of your eyes, nor the look of disappointment in your gaze. 1

Back then, I unhesitatingly gave a precious Sect treasure to a woman, but didn't notice that your once proud head was now bowed in shame toward the rest of the Sect.

Back then, I would polish my sword to flaunt my identity. I never noticed that you had suddenly grown old.

Finally one day, you passed away in meditation. Your body turned into ash. I cried. My heart broke. My world was gone. Heaven and Earth were no more. Father... you were gone.

I can see your aged face, and I can see how you doted upon me. I can see that throughout all the years, it didn't matter what mistakes I made, you always forgave me. I realize now that... I have always owed you a certain commitment. I have always owed you... some special words.

Those words, have been waiting with me for ninety thousand years.

....

The sky in ancient times was blue.

When Meng Hao opened his eyes, the first thing he saw was that blue sky. Then he saw white cranes flying about. Auspicious beasts circled

about in the air. A din of conversation and activity could be heard everywhere, echoing about.

He saw countless enormous pillars of light rising up into the sky. Everything was bright and colorful.

Beams of light shot through the air in all directions.

Off in the distance was a mountain. It was green and full of life and vigor. It was at this point that Meng Hao suddenly heard an ancient voice ringing out to fill the world.

“I give a sermon regarding the Dao every ten thousand years. This time, I will speak to you of a legend. The legend tells of a true spirit whose name is Night. When he closes his eyes to sleep, the world is his dream. When he opens his eyes, he awakens from the dream. Heaven and Earth are boundless....”

The ancient voice slowly grew softer. It seemed as if it was only a murmuring in the ear, but at the same time, echoing throughout the world.

“Time is like a dream. It’s impossible to tell what is true and what is false. When you dream, you see others. Perhaps in the world of others, the dream version of you appears.

“Or perhaps our lives are like an invisible bubble that could pop at any time, and cause us to awaken. Who dreams of you, and who you dream of... this is truly a difficult riddle to explain....”

The voice of a young woman could suddenly be heard in Meng Hao’s ears. “Eldest Brother?”

The voice sounded both astonished and anxious. “Eldest Brother!”

A tremor ran through Meng Hao’s body, as if his soul were suddenly returning from outside. When it slammed into him, he felt as if he were being torn apart. Pain pulsed through him, and ghost images sprang up everywhere.

He panted as the sensation went on for the space of several breaths.

When it vanished, the sky was blue again, and the world... once again appeared.

“Eldest Brother, what are you doing?!” In front of Meng Hao stood a young woman wearing a long, pink garment. Her eyes were wide and filled with confusion. She appeared to be both puzzled and also furious as she looked at Meng Hao.

He looked down at himself. He was wearing a white robe and had long hair, and was seated cross-legged on top of an altar that was located at the peak of a mountain. He was surrounded by nine cauldrons, from which green smoke slowly ascended.

This was the very top of the Fourth Peak!

Meng Hao’s mind trembled. Although his head was filled with splitting pain, his eyes shone brightly. As of this moment he knew that he... had entered the Second Plane. What caused him the most shock, however, was that he actually... had not lost his memories the way Fang Yu said would happen.

Furthermore, a voice suddenly rang out in his mind, announcing his identity as clear as day.

“Ke Jiusi... of the Fourth Peak... one of the seven Elite Apprentices of the Demon Immortal Sect!” 2

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1. “Silkpants” is a term in Chinese similar to “silver spoon” in English. It refers to spoiled rich kids.
2. Ke Jiusi’s name in Chinese is 柯九思 kē jiǔ sī. Ke is a surname which also means “stem.” Jiu means “nine” and Si means “to think.” Literally it could be interpreted as “Ke Nine Thoughts” or “Ke Think Nine Times.”

Chapter 568: Think Three Times Before You Act....

Meng Hao sat cross-legged at the top of the Fourth Peak, wearing a long white robe. He rubbed the bridge of his nose for a moment. It felt as if extra memories were suddenly available inside his head. The memories were not his, and were rather obscure. The addition of these new memories caused Meng Hao's head to ache and be filled with an intense muddle-headedness.

A gentle breeze pulled at his hair and caused his robes to ripple. However, he was unable to dispel the incredible shock that filled him, nor the absent-mindedness he felt because of this new identity.

One of the seven great Elite Apprentices!

He remembered from what Fang Yu had told him that acquiring an identity like this was virtually impossible. In the Demon Immortal Sect, a person with a status like this could summon wind and rain, so to speak, and stir up a lot of trouble. They were above other disciples in all ways, and even wielded the power over life and death!

From the very beginning of the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane until now, no one had ever acquired such a fearsome identity. Regardless of who it was in the past, the very highest identity ever acquired was that of a Conclave disciple.

However, in the face of the identity Meng Hao currently possessed, Conclave disciples... were like insects!

Such an identity only existed in legend, and really was impossible to acquire. The Demon Immortal Sect had Legacy Apprentices, which were also referred to as Elite Apprentices, seven of them in total.

Elite Apprentices actually outranked Sect Elders, and were second only to eminently respected Grand Elders and Sect Priest Paragons of the various peaks!

Meng Hao's heart trembled. He truly had never imagined that he would

be able to acquire fortune such as this. He now possessed an identity that was fearsome to the extreme, had never been acquired before in the past, and most likely never would be again in the future. It was absolutely one-of-a-kind!

Elite Apprentice of the Fourth Peak, Ke Jiusi!

“Apparently, that person I saw before was none other than... Ke Jiusi!

“Even after the Demon Immortal Sect was destroyed, he didn’t die. He gave me his identity, but for what purpose I wonder...?” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered and his throat felt tight.

“Elldesstt Brootherrrrr!!!!!!!!!!” Based on her tone of voice, the woman seemed extremely irritated. She was almost screaming by the time she finally interrupted Meng Hao’s train of thought. He raised his head to look at her.

Seemingly completely dissatisfied with his reaction, the woman stamped her foot and then turned to leave.

Her leaving didn’t faze Meng Hao at all. He was still in shock regarding his identity. After a long moment passed, he sighed and looked around.

The mountain peak was beautiful, covered with lush vegetation. The blue sky up above looked almost like lakewater. The air was filled with thick spiritual energy, and countless disciples could be seen, meditating, dueling, and chatting. The entire place was buzzing with activity.

Up in the sky, an enormous, resplendent Flying Rain-Dragon flew back and forth. Everywhere it passed, wind gusted. There were all sorts of Immortal Beasts that soared about. It truly looked like a place of Immortals.

Far off in the distance an old man was visible, floating cross-legged in the air above the Third Peak. He was giving a sermon regarding the Dao, and speaking of truths of various scriptures.

It all looked exactly like the blurry scene he had witnessed earlier when entered the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane. The only difference was... Meng Hao’s pupils suddenly constricted.

He had just noticed that high up in the sky, shockingly... three inverted mountains could be seen!

Each of these three mountains almost seemed bigger than all the lands beneath. Unless you looked at them from a distance, you wouldn't be able to take in the entire sight. Green vines hung down from them, and each of them seemed like three worlds unto themselves.

"This is...." He had seen nothing similar to them in the First Plane. Upon first glance, all he could do was gape in astonishment.

Of the three mountains, one appeared to be an ice mountain covered with frost. Another looked like a lava-filled volcano. The third mountain... was crimson, almost as if it were a mountain of blood!

Meng Hao once again kneaded the bridge of his nose. The three mountains were bizarre, and his memories were fuzzy and mixed. He couldn't quite get himself to think straight at the moment. Muttering to himself, he looked away.

"The Demon Immortal Sect.... I wonder what unforeseen things might happen because of my status as a Demon Sealer...? Also, I wonder if Demon Weapon Lonelytomb exists in this era." A mysterious glow flickered deep within Meng Hao's eyes.

"Eldest Brother, what's wrong? Have you thought back to what you did?" Apparently, the young woman who had left earlier had returned. She stood in front of him, seeming to be a bit unwilling to be there.

Meng Hao took a deep breath to collect his thoughts. With a smile, he said, "Thought back to what I did? Uh, I'm not really sure. I think I was dreaming just now."

"Dreaming? Of what?" she responded, sounding even more curious.

"Now that I've woken up, I can't remember," he said. Seeing that the woman was about to ask more questions, Meng Hao looked at her with a solemn expression and said, "You are about to reach a critical point in your cultivation. I think you need to go meditate."

Hearing his words caused the woman's eyes to go wide. "You dare to

lecture me?! Humph! You've got yourself into a lot of trouble this time. The Sect Priest sent me here to ask you if you'll admit your mistake!"

With that, the woman gave him a wink, then turned to leave.

Seeing the woman making her way off, Meng Hao frowned. He actually understood her deeper meaning.

"Fang Yu said that when people enter the Second Plane, they don't awaken for a few hours at the soonest, and sometimes even a few days.

"In the time before everyone else wakes up, my advantage is virtually limitless!" He rubbed the bridge of his nose as he thought no more regarding what the woman had said just now, and instead thought about this ancient, illusory world.

"Considering my status, none of the others are even close to being a match for me. If I find any of them, I could see them dead with a mere thought!" A cold glow appeared in his eyes. Regarding the exact rights enjoyed by an Elite Apprentice, the chaos of his memories made it impossible for him to recall all the details clearly. However, he had a general sense.

"Unfortunately, I'm not sure what host bodies were selected by the others. Although, I do know that the best one would be that of the Ji Clan, the Conclave disciple. In that case... I'll go find that one, and bring that person to ruin!" With that Meng Hao stood up. However, in the instant he rose to his feet, thunderclaps filled the sky as eight lightning bolts shot down toward him. Instantly, they slammed into him.

The lighting fell too quickly, causing his entire body to tremble as he coughed up a mouthful of blood. He instantly fell down onto the ground, a look of shock on his face. The intense power of the lightning was fearsome. Despite the fact that this world was illusory, he still felt a sense of deadly crisis that caused him to gasp.

"What's going on?!" he thought. He quickly looked up into the sky. It was as blue as ever, except... the area surrounding him was filled with various disciples of the Demon Immortal Sect. Some were human, other had the bodies of Demons. All of them wore strange expressions.

Some of them even appeared to be gloating in his misfortune. Those ones also appeared to be stifling rage, although they apparently hoped that he wouldn't notice. They quickly put looks of indifference on their faces and then departed.

Meng Hao gaped. Something didn't seem to be right. After hesitating for a moment, he gritted his teeth and then quickly rose to his feet. Instantly, the surrounding nine cauldrons began to emit a buzzing sound. Nine chains of lightning appeared, quickly binding Meng Hao and then raising him up into the air.

Meng Hao's scalp went numb. Up in mid-air, eight lightning bolts boomed down to slam onto him. Blood sprayed from his mouth and his face went pale. It was at this point that he noticed all of the Demon Immortal Disciples in the area staring at him.

Each one wore a strange expression. Some seemed to be enjoying themselves. Others appeared to be venting their anger. All of them seemed quite happy to watch him be struck with lightning. Some even looked like they were on the verge of bursting into applause.

"Dammit! What the hell is going on?!?! Aren't I an Elite Apprentice? What's happening?!" By this point Meng Hao was really starting to get scared. The power of the second round of lightning was such that his body felt as if it were on the verge of exploding.

Suddenly, he recalled what the woman had said earlier about thinking back to something he did. She had also mentioned he'd gotten himself in a lot of trouble. At the moment, he really did seem to be in a lot of trouble. In fact, it seemed quite apparent that he was being punished!

At the moment, quite a few Cultivators were now approaching the Fourth Peak at top speed.

Hundreds of people arrived, all of them looking quite nervous, even pained. When they saw Meng Hao, they all began to talk.

"Eldest Brother, don't fight back. You're really in a lot of trouble this time. You... you still won't admit it, huh...?"

“Yeah, Eldest Brother. The Sect Priest is really furious this time. Ai, you really should not have gone through with it. I can’t believe you dared to steal the precious treasure of the Sixth Peak to give to that Demoness of the Zhao Clan!”

“Nonsense! Eldest Brother was obviously seduced into wrongdoing by that Demoness. The person in the wrong isn’t Eldest Brother, it’s the damned Demoness!”

As their voices drifted out, Meng Hao’s mind spun. All of a sudden, memories began to awaken in his mind. Now that the memories were clear, Meng Hao understood that originally, Ke Jiusi of the Fourth Peak didn’t always have that name.

Some people think three times before they act 1. However, Ke Jiusi’s father, in his fury, had changed his son’s name to Jiusi, which meant ‘think nine times.’ He had hoped that changing the name would remind his son to thoroughly consider all matters before taking action.

Clearly, though... a change of name did not have any effect whatsoever on Ke Jiusi. In the Demon Immortal Sect he was an arrogant silkpants who ran amok at will. Even if you changed his name to Ke Jiubaisi, ‘think nine hundred times,’ it still wouldn’t do any good.

Yes, he was an Elite Apprentice. However, he had the lowest Cultivation base of all the Elite Apprentices. Furthermore, of all the Elite Apprentices, he was the one who embraced his silkpants lifestyle the most. There wasn’t a single person in the entire Demon Immortal Sect who didn’t know that he had a violent temper, got into fights easily, acted tyrannically, and was known as the number one Demon Immortal Sect bully.

He had earned such a reputation that his name alone was enough to cause any Outer Sect disciple to drop to the ground and kowtow. Even Inner Sect disciples became terror-stricken when hearing of him, and Conclave disciples would tremble. The other Elite Apprentices frowned because of him, and all the Elders in the Sects, as well as the seven great Sect Priests, all felt headaches coming on whenever they heard his name

mentioned.

His life up to now had been filled with countless preposterous events. The things he did forced his father, Ke Yunhai, Sect Priest and Paragon of the Fourth Peak, to constantly be remedying his blunders. All of the disputes caused by him ended up being mediated by his father.

A few days ago, he had stolen a precious treasure from the Sixth Peak, and given it to an outsider. The matter could be considering poking the Heavens in the eye. Even his father had been unable to do anything but let go of his pride to smooth the matter over.

Meng Hao could only smile bitterly as the lightning chains once again pulled him back down to the center of the platform. After a moment, the chains vanished. However, Meng Hao knew that if he dared to stand up again, the movement would cause more lightning to fall.

“Little Patriarch, Eldest Brother, just admit your fault. Don’t butt heads with the Sect Priest....” The other disciples neared, looking at Meng Hao with expressions of pain on their faces. Although Ke Jiusi ran wild on the outside as a silkpants, in the Fourth Peak, he was viewed almost like a child. Everyone held deep feelings for him.

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1. There is a common Chinese saying that goes just this way: “think three times before you act”.

Chapter 569: Ke Yunhai

More and more disciples were rushing toward the Fourth Peak to try to convince Meng Hao of what to do.

His face was pale, and he suddenly felt deeply depressed. How could he ever have imagined that things would end up in this way?

“You think you can convince me to say I’m wrong? Forget about it!” But then, Meng Hao’s eyes filled with determination. He quickly took a deep breath, and then hurriedly continued, “Jiusi was wrong! This time, Jiusi really was wrong!”

The words instantly caused everything to go quiet. Everyone’s eyes went wide as they stared in disbelief at Meng Hao. Although they had all been trying to convince him to admit his fault, they were well aware of the Little Patriarch’s temperament. He would rather die before admitting he was wrong.

And yet, he just had.

It wasn’t just them who were staring in shock. Suddenly, a violent wind whipped down from mid-air in the shape of a gigantic illusory hand. The hand reached down to grab the shocked Meng Hao, wrenching him up toward an Immortal’s cave on the Fourth Mountain.

At the same time, an ancient voice, filled with wrath and even pain, echoed out throughout the Demon Immortal Sect.

“Old Sixth, my son admitted his fault. From now on, if anyone breathes even half a word of this matter, don’t blame me for flipping out!”

The voice was filled with an intensely domineering air as it rumbled out in all directions. The gigantic wind hand dragged Meng Hao into a spacious Immortal’s cave, then slammed him violently onto the ground. When he landed, however, the power dissipated so that, although he tumbled a bit, he wasn’t hurt at all.

His eyes rolled around, and his brain spun in circles. Inwardly, he was worried that his cover might be blown. However, after reminding himself

that this was an illusory world, he felt a bit more at ease. Dusting himself off, he stood up and looked around.

The Immortal's cave was so simple that it couldn't possibly be any more simple. It was large, but only contained a single stone bed. Sitting cross-legged on top of the bed was a middle-aged man.

This was the Lord of the Fourth Peak of the Demon Immortal Sect. He was one of the Paragons of the First Heaven, a person famous in all the Ninth Mountain. Ke Yunhai. 1

Next to him was an oil lamp that flickered brightly, completely illuminating the entire Immortal's cave. If you looked closely, you would be able to see that the wick of the lamp was, shockingly, a phoenix, shrunk down so small that it was roughly the size of a finger!

The oil lamp was not crafted from bronze, but rather, was made of a shrunk down golden dragon. This was a real golden dragon, its mouth open, its whiskers undulating. The entire dragon had been transformed into an oil lamp!

With a dragon as the lamp and a phoenix as the wick, were an object like this to be revealed in Meng Hao's era, it would cause a huge commotion throughout all the lands of South Heaven. It might even cause shock among the starry skies.

The man sitting on the stone bed had handsome features. It was obvious that when he was young, he had been even more dashing. Right now, his expression was dignified, and he wore a long gray robe. Currently, he was frowning a bit helplessly at Meng Hao.

"Did it hurt?" he asked softly.

Meng Hao hesitated for a moment and then, with great caution, nodded his head.

Seeing Meng Hao's response caused Ke Yunhe to give an exasperated chortle. "Do you know anything about fear? Isn't there anyone you're afraid of? Quit pulling this kind of crap with me!

"Fine. For the time being, don't go near the Sixth Peak. And keep a low

profile, too. Jiusi, stop fooling around so much! You're not a kid any more. Soon, it will be time to find you a beloved and pass on the Daoist magic of mine that you've mastered. Got it?!?!" The more he spoke, the more angry he seemed. However, when he looked at his son, he couldn't help but sigh. His gaze softened, and his anger passed.

"Very well," he said, his tone warm. "I want you to demonstrate some of the Daoist magic I've passed on to you. Go ahead, show it off."

Meng Hao swallowed hard. He was actually very nervous at the moment, so nervous that he couldn't control himself. As far back as he could remember, he had never felt such nervousness. As he looked at the middle-aged man in front of him, he couldn't help but think of his own father.

The memories were blurry, but still there.

"What's wrong?" asked Ke Yunhe, frowning.

"I... I forgot," replied Meng Hao, bracing himself. There was really nothing he could do. Ke Jiusi's memories really did not contain any Daoist magic.

Ke Yunhai stared at Meng Hao for a very long time before sighing again. His eyes flickered with disappointment. However, seemingly worried that his expression would hurt Ke Jiusi, he caused a warm look to cover his face.

"Jiusi, you can't be like this...." As he spoke, he waved his finger through the air, causing the spiritual energy in the area to condense together. It formed into countless magical symbols in front of him, which then transformed into a jade slip that came to hover in front of Meng Hao.

"This is the Soul Divergence Incantation. Go gain enlightenment regarding it. Go." As Ke Yunhai stared at him, Meng Hao's heart began to beat rapidly. He thought about his identity, and all the good fortune that was available within this ancient Demon Immortal Sect. How could he ever have imagined that he would receive some so quickly?

He took the jade slip, then bowed his head and clasped hands. When he

turned to leave, Ke Yunhai's voice could suddenly be heard again, filled with exhaustion and an indescribable feeling of age.

"Lord Li's Heavenly decree dictates a limit on the longevity of living things. Your father... will not be able to accompany you for your whole life. You need start acting a bit more sensibly...." The love in his words was palpable. Clearly, he carried deep longing that his son succeed in life.

Meng Hao stopped in place. For some reason, he felt moved inwardly. He looked back at Ke Yunhai and suddenly noticed that just in this short period of time, some of the man's hair had turned white.

"Go," said Ke Yunhai with a smile. "I'm fine. Go find those friends of yours and have some fun." He waved his hand dismissively. Meng Hao's heart trembled, and he left silently.

After emerging from the Immortal's cave, he looked off into the sky toward the temple of the First Peak. He suddenly had the feeling he understood why the man he had seen on the Fourth Peak of the ancient Demon Immortal Sect had allowed him to come here.

"Was it because of regret...?" he murmured. Moments later, a grim light flickered in his eyes that had nothing to do with Ke Yunhai or Ke Jiusi, but rather, the other South Heaven Cultivators.

"The world of the ancient Demon Immortal Sect is all about competition. Since I've acquired this identity, then I should do everything I can to anyone who might be a menace to me. Smother them before they have a chance to sprout.

"The only sad thing is that each one of the peaks has tens of thousands of Inner Sect disciples. It would be impossible to search all of them. However... the Ji Clan has a Conclave disciple, so I should be able to pick up on some clues." Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he recalled the brief scuffle involving Ji Mingfeng. Before leaving, he had smiled. However, apparently because Meng Hao had ruined his plans, a bit of killing intent had shone through in that smile.

"You want to kill me? Then you'd better hope I don't find you first," smiled Meng Hao. As he continued on his way, quite a few people came to

ask about his well-being. Eventually, he was surrounded by a group of more than thirty.

Meng Hao was unable to see the Cultivation base of any of these people. However, what he could sense was unbelievable power. Some of them even had strong killing intent.

Many of them had Demonic Qi which swirled around them freely. Some of them appeared to be ordinary Cultivators, while others were Demonic Cultivators. Those ones had bodies covered with scales or fur, and looked extremely fierce.

“Let’s go around to all the peaks,” he said suddenly. “There’s a Conclave disciple who offended me, and then got away. We’re gonna find him!” The surrounded crowd smiled, as if they didn’t find this strange at all. Obviously, they were used to such things. Rumbling filled the air as Meng Hao and his Junior Brothers and Sisters grouped together and shot up into the air toward the Third Peak.

En route, quite a few people flew out from the Third Peak, all of whom had arrogant and despotic bearings. Clearly very familiar with Meng Hao, they looked toward him and offered greetings, then joined the group. Meng Hao then thought back to what Ke Yuhai had said about finding his friends and having some fun. It seemed these friends of his... were other silkpants from the Demon Immortal Sect.

A young man with a fish scale on his forehead seemed eager to get into action. “Jiusi, should we call some others? I heard there’s a Conclave disciple who offended you. Who the hell does that moronic fool think he is to dare to provoke you?”

Meng Hao immediately nodded in agreement. “Call everyone! Just now when I was getting struck by lightning, he was laughing the hardest!”

The Cultivator from the Third Peak instantly smiled and waved his hands. Immediately, an enormous white lotus appeared up above in the sky, radiating light.

As soon as the white lotus appeared, all of the disciples in the Demon Immortal Sect who saw it felt their hearts trembling. They immediately

ducked their heads down as if they had important matters to attend to, and then headed back to their residences.

They understood that when the white lotus appeared, the silkpants fiends were about to appear....

Simultaneously, seven or eight beams of light appeared coming from each of the mountain peaks of the Demon Immortal Sect. There were men and women, all of whom wore luxurious garments. They were people with incredible status, each one of different appearance. Some had wings on their backs, others had enormous swishing tails, and some were incredibly beautiful or handsome Demons. Each and every one of them had ancestors who were powerful experts within the Sect.

When they saw the white lotus, smiles appeared on their faces and they headed in its direction.

Back on the Fourth Peak, Ke Yunhai sat cross-legged on his stone bed. He looked up, saw the white lotus, and shook his head. His expression grew a bit more weary, and his hair, a bit more white.

Not too much time passed before seventy or eighty people neared Meng Hao. He was shocked by this, but it didn't last long. His eyes glistened as he looked over the people who were under the sway of his power. As of this point, he knew that he really did have the qualifications to sweep over the other South Heaven Cultivators who had come to this place.

"Here, with Ke Jiusi's identity," he thought, "even getting the Mountain and Sea Scripture... does not count as an impossibility!" He instantly started to breathe heavily, and his eyes glowed.

"However, the Demon Immortal Sect has three thousand Daoist magics. With the exception of the top 100, the rest can be acquired by performing meritorious service to the Sect. Deeds such as that... are not easy to accomplish." All of this information resided within the memories of Ke Jiusi that existed within his head. He had quite a good understanding of the Demon Immortal Sect.

The Daoist magics he referred to were not weak, and thus required deeds of merit to acquire. Unfortunately, unless a war was going on, even a

Conclave disciple who accumulated merit for years would perhaps be able to acquire two or three at the most.

As far as Inner Sect disciples, it didn't matter how many meritorious deeds they accumulated, they would never be able to acquire anything other than fundamental techniques.

“If it's difficult for me, then others will find it even harder,” he thought. “It seems the Second Plane of the Demon Immortal Sect all depends on meritorious service in order to get techniques and legacies.” He continued to think about the matter as he led the group closer to the Third Peak.

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1. Ke Yunhai's name in Chinese is 柯云海 kē yún hǎi – Ke is the same family name as Ke Jiusi. Yun means “cloud,” and Hai means “sea”.

Chapter 570: Killing a Son of Ji

In the vast stretch of land between the Fourth and Third Peaks, there was an enormous pit in the ground that emanated pulsing coldness up into the air.

As he flew through mid-air, Meng Hao noticed it immediately. Even more eye-catching were the numerous green vines that could be seen near the pit. They glowed almost like treasures, each one as wide as a person and bursting with incredible power.

“What’s in that pit, I wonder...?” he thought. Meng Hao wasn’t sure why, but when he looked in the direction of the deep pit, he suddenly felt a sensation that made it seem like the entire world was blurry and overlapping on itself. Although his mind quickly returned to normal, he was still left completely shocked.

Gradually, because of his identity as a Demon Sealer, and his sensitivity to Demonic Qi, he came to realize that the entire Demon Immortal Sect was filled with shocking Demonic Qi. Furthermore, the Demonic Qi in the giant pit was even more astonishing.

“Back in the First Plane, when I went from the Third Peak to the Fourth, I didn’t see any bizarre pit like that.” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered when he realized that Ke Jiusi’s memories also did not contain any information regarding the pit.

Flying next to Meng Hao was a young girl as pretty as silk, with pointed ears. Her eyes glittered with a charm that seemed capable of seducing any soul into wrongdoing. When she saw Meng Hao looking at the pit, she said, “Jiusi, don’t attract the attention of the Demon Chasm....”

Next to the young woman was a handsome young man with two black wings that flapped silently as he flew. Sighing, he said, “Last time we went to the Demon Chasm, we wasted a lot of treasures, but only managed to get the vines to extend a few thousand meters. Who knows how deep it actually is.”

On the other side of Meng Hao was a young man whose fingers

intermittently sprouted sharp claws. He shook his head and said, "According to legend, that pit is the dwelling place of the Demon Divinity who protects the First Heaven of the Demon Immortal Sect.

Meng Hao nodded thoughtfully. Everyone put thoughts of the Demon Chasm aside as they proceeded onward toward the Third Peak.

As they neared, the Third Peak silkpants immediately began to call out to the Conclave disciples. Regardless of whether or not they were willing, when the Sect's number one bully showed up, they had to come out.

Meng Hao glanced over the several thousand people in front of him, frowning slightly. He didn't recognize any of them as being the Ji Clan host body. Muttering to himself, he moved a bit closer. After looking them over one more time, he led his group on to the Second Peak.

Eventually, he reached the First Peak, but despite looking at thousands of Conclave disciples, he still had met no success, causing him to sigh inwardly. By this time, several hours had passed, and no doubt, many of the others were beginning to wake up.

Just in the moment when Meng Hao was about to make his way to the Fifth Peak, as he flew over the congregated Conclave disciples, suddenly, a weak rippling sensation appeared in Meng Hao's mind. He was instantly shaken to the core, and stopped in his tracks. He looked down toward all of the Conclave disciples.

He inched closer to them, and his gaze fell onto the body of one particular young man. His features were handsome, and he stood there, expressionless. When Meng Hao looked at him, he gaped back, seemingly apprehensive.

"That's the one!" cried Meng Hao. As he neared the young man, the faint feeling grew more noticeable. Although Meng Hao couldn't be sure of the details, he was sure the feeling had something to do with host bodies.

The young man's face was pale as he stammered, "Fourth Little Patriarch, I..."

Killing intent flickered in Meng Hao's eyes. However, the shadow of his

punishment earlier still loomed heavy around him. He didn't want to kill anyone out in the open; after all, Sect rules strictly prohibited such an act. It would lead to a lot of problems.

The young man suddenly started trembling, and a look of confusion appeared in his eyes. At the same time, a unique aura that no one else could sense suddenly seemed to awaken within him.

Meng Hao could instantly see a vague, shadowy image appear behind the young man. The image was that of a handsome man with a crow perched on his shoulder. The unique aura of the Ji Clan emanated off of him.

Meng Hao instantly recognized him. "Ji Mingfeng!" he thought. The killing intent suddenly flickered in his eyes as he realized that the man was about to wake up.

"There's no time," thought Meng Hao, looking at the man. "Once he wakes up, too many unforeseen circumstances could unfold.

"When it comes to the Ji Clan, killing two is no different than killing one. Ji Clan Dao Child, huh? Ji Mingfeng, you will have no chance to awaken!" Meng Hao acted with complete decisiveness. His body flickered, and in the blink of an eye, he was directly in front of Ji Mingfeng. To the shock of everyone watching, he instantly slammed his palm into the young man's chest.

Considering the level of Meng Hao's Cultivation base, a palm strike like this was fundamentally not capable of harming the host body. However, the image of Ji Mingfeng, which only Meng Hao could see, was trembling, and visibly struggling to open his eyes.

This was the Demon Immortal Sect!

Sect rules were strict and rigid. In the past, Ke Jiusi, despite being a silkpants, would never go beyond fighting someone in public. Although he had killed people, it was always in secret. If he had conflicts with people, he would use his status to get them outside of the Sect, where he would then kill them.

Therefore, Meng Hao's actions now led only to some cries of alarm. In fact, the over one hundred people who had followed him here were chatting and laughing, and did nothing to stop the goings-on. Even the other Conclave disciples of the First Peak simply frowned. They knew of Ke Jiusi's dark reputation within the Sect, and that he was someone who should never be provoked.

After all, any large Sect like this would have people like Ke Jiusi. It was something unavoidable. All Sects were the same.

However, when Meng Hao's palm landed on the Ji Mingfeng's host body, the young man trembled violently and tumbled backward. The faces of all the surrounding Cultivators instantly flickered.

They could tell that the soul of this First Peak Conclave disciple was on the verge of being destroyed. Such a thing left everyone completely astonished.

Destruction of the soul is different than the death of the fleshly body. When the soul is destroyed, the only thing left behind is a living corpse. In many ways, it is more terrifying than true death.

Meng Hao's eyes flashed with killing intent. He could see that Ji Mingfeng's soul was trembling violently, and that he was on the verge of opening his eyes. Meng Hao gave a cold snort, approached him again, and then struck out with another palm.

Booming rose up as Ji Mingfeng's host body once again shook violently. At first, it didn't seem to cause him any cause for concern. However, the illusory image of Ji Mingfeng's soul was now even more unstable. It trembled violently and let out soundless howls. It was apparently sparing no effort whatsoever in the attempt to wake up.

Meng Hao was about to strike out again when the other First Peak Conclave disciples moved to block his way. Even some of his own followers moved to hold him back.

"Jiusi, you can't do this."

"Jiusi, don't attack again. We can find a chance another time to pin this

guy down for good. Why kill him in front of all these people...?”

Meng Hao looked at the people trying to obstruct his way. The aura of Ji Mingfeng’s awakening soul was growing stronger and stronger. In fact, his eyes were beginning to glow with light.

Meng Hao’s eyes narrowed, and his voice grew cold. “This guy colluded with that Demoness to bewitch me! He tried to get me punished on purpose! I swear that I will not stop until he is dead. Today!”

The silkpants disciples behind him hesitated. After a moment, though, they ground their teeth and once again blocked his way.

As Meng Hao frowned at them, the dozen or so that were blocking his way transmitted messages via Divine Will.

“Are you sure he has to die?”

“He must die!” was Meng Hao’s resolute response.

“Fine. You just received punishment, but, regardless of why you need this guy dead, we’ll do it together!”

“It doesn’t matter if we get punished too. We’ll share the responsibility! That will be better than you taking all the blame yourself!” These dozen or so rogues were Meng Hao’s closest friends in the Sect. As soon as they made their decision, they turned and shot toward Ji Mingfeng.

Meng Hao gaped in astonishment for a moment and then moved to follow. They easily swept over the First Peak disciples who were blocking the way, and then appeared around Ji Mingfeng. The instant in which his soul’s eyes finally snapped open, booming sounds echoed out.

Both Ji Mingfeng and his host body instantly were inundating with roaring sounds. As for Ji Mingfeng, the moment in which he opened his eyes, he let out a piercing cry that only Meng Hao could hear.

His soul grew blurry, and his expression was one of confusion and fear. He stared around wide-eyed for a moment until his eyes came to rest on Meng Hao. In that instant, his pupils constricted.

“It’s you!!”

In that instant, roaring once again filled the air. The attacks slammed down like storm winds. Ji Mingfeng's host body exploded, transformed into nothing but ash by the astonishing divine abilities levied against it.

Ji Mingfeng's soul was being torn into shreds. The bloodcurdling scream which only Meng Hao could hear echoed about. Meng Hao's right hand snatched the soul and then crushed into into dust.

A popping sound could be heard as this Dao Child of the Ji Clan, a blazing sun of his generation, an Array member upon whom many hopes of the Clan rested, was thoroughly destroyed in this illusory ancient world, the Second Plane of the Primordial Demon Immortal Planes.

Death in this place, was true death of the soul!

In the moment in which Ji Mingfeng died, outside of the Demon Immortal Sect, back in the lands of South Heaven, in the ancestral mansion of the Ji Clan, was a tall altar. Sitting cross-legged on the altar was the First Patriarch of the South Heaven Ji Clan, the same youthful-looking Cultivator who had seen the Ji Clan members off to the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane. His closed eyes suddenly snapped open.

In that instant, bizarre clouds began to churn in the sky above the lands of all of South Heaven. Everything dimmed and changed color.

The young man slowly lifted his head up to look at the nine jade slips in front of him. He stretched his left hand out to grab the first one up, but before he could even touch it, cracking sounds could be heard, and the jade slip shattered.

The young man's hand stopped moving.

His face instantly grew incredibly dark. At the same time, lightning crackled in the air above the Eastern Lands, the Southern Domain, and the Northern Reaches. It was as if the changes to the young man's expression caused endless black clouds to roil up.

"Perished...." he murmured. His voice was hoarse, and his face slowly filled with disbelief. Considering his Cultivation base and position, such a change in facial expression was something that hadn't happened for a

very long time.

Chapter 571: Still Won't Cry Out?!

“How could he... have perished?” The young man’s face grew even grimmer. As he looked off into the distance, lightning seemed to dance within his eyes, as if his body was filled with roaring thunder and electricity.

“The Primordial Demon Immortal Plane isn’t very dangerous,” thought the young man. “There may be disputes in the First Plane when it comes to selecting a host body, but who is there that would dare to provoke the Ji Clan?” Based on the look in his eyes, it was clear that he truly didn’t understand. Also visible in his eyes were deep pain and fury.

Ji Mingfeng was the best of the best in the younger generation. Many hopes had been placed in him. Who could ever have possibly imagined that he would die in the Demon Immortal Sect!?

“The Second Plane is an illusory realm. It might seem dangerous, but the chances of truly life-threatening situations are extremely small, and could only come about by chance or coincidence. Hmmm, if my calculations are correct, the Second Plane should have just opened. Considering Mingfeng’s latent talent, he should have been one of the first ones to awaken. How could he have perished?

“Throughout the tens of thousands of years in which the Ji Clan has sent our Cultivators into the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane... no one has ever died!

“Mingfeng... how could you have perished?” The young man sat there silently, his eyes radiating such icy coldness that snowflakes began to fall upon the entirety of South Heaven.

Without speaking a word, he stretched out his right hand, within which appeared a Feng Shui compass. In the center of the Feng Shui compass was black-colored sun, which caused the compass itself to emanate a black glow.

He stared down at the compass as he used his left hand to make various adjustments. The glow of augury appeared in his eyes. Within the space of

a few breaths, his expression changed. A cracking sound could be heard from the Feng Shui compass as a huge fissure appeared on its surface.

The young man gasped, and a look of disbelief appeared in his eyes.

“An anomaly! The only thing I can determine is that in this particular instance of the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane... an anomaly has appeared which has never before existed within the last 90,000 years!

“This anomaly could possibly influence the passage of time! It might even affect events that have already occurred, and have flowed past in the great river of time!

“What could be the cause of this?!”

Meanwhile, back in the Demon Immortal Sect, in the Second Plane, on the First Peak....

Because of the death of Ji Mingfeng's host body, everything was absolutely quiet. All of the First Peak's Conclave disciples looked on silently, an icy glow rising up in their eyes. The people who had come with Meng Hao, but had not taken action just now, also looked on with expressions of shock, their minds spinning. Everything had happened far too quickly, such that they didn't even have time to think about what consequences might result because of what happened.

Then, their minds began to reel as they realized that the death of a First Peak Conclave disciple... was nothing other than... a complete disaster.

Meng Hao hovered there in mid-air, looking around at the dozen or so others who had joined him in the attack. They were all silkpants from the various other peaks, and were about the same age as Meng Hao. They were his gang of scoundrels, and after all their ridiculous antics throughout the years, a strong friendship had developed between them.

Meng Hao looked at them, and they looked back. Then they started laughing.

An hour later, bells tolled throughout the Demon Immortal Sect. At the same time, an enormous screen appeared in mid-air upon which could be seen a cage. In that cage were Meng Hao and the dozen or so of

his friends who had joined him, all of them bound up tightly.

All of the disciples in the Sect were watching the proceedings. Floating there in mid-air, his eyes closed, was a burly, bare-chested man. After the bells tolled a fifth time, the burly man's eyes snapped open. They shone with an oppressive glow as he lifted his right hand up into the air and made a grasping motion. A black whip suddenly appeared out of nowhere. It was fully three thousand meters long, and as it undulated, the air itself was shattered. Lightning danced on its surface, and it emitted astonishing crackling sounds throughout the entirety of the Sect.

"According to Sect rules, the punishment for murdering a fellow disciple is death," said the burly man, his voice cool. "However, considering the services rendered to the Sect by your various ancestors... you will be spared death, but not punishment!

"According to the orders of the seven great Paragons, Ke Jiusi will be stripped of his title of Elite Apprentice. Xu Tianhai, Chen Mingyun... all the rest of you sub-Elite Apprentices will be demoted to the Inner Sect. Your positions will not be restored for ten thousand years!

"You will also receive three lashes from the Purgatory Whip. Each lash could be fatal. This is your punishment! As for Ke Jiusi, he will receive four lashes!

"If such a crime should be committed again in the future, you will compensate with your lives!" As his words echoed out through the Sect, those who heard were shocked. Such a punishment was incredibly severe. Their titles were stripped for ten thousand years, although that could be considered secondary. Most severe of all was the Purgatory Whip; few people withstand more than two lashes from it!

In the memories of everyone present, a punishment of three lashes had not been doled out for a thousand years. As for Ke Jiusi's special punishment of four lashes, that type of punishment had not been seen... for at least three thousand years.

As of this moment, all of the disciples within the Sect were completely quiet. They looked up at the scene playing out in mid-air, especially those

from the First Peak, within whose eyes hatred flickered.

When Meng Hao and the dozen or so others heard the burly man's words, their faces immediately fell.

"What the fudge! This is messed up. Three lashes...."

"Hah! I was the one who struck the first blow. Three lashes? Who cares!?!?"

"Sub-Elite Apprentice? Psshhh. If I want some techniques or legacies or even treasures, all I have to do is ask. I don't give a crap about what level of disciple I am!"

"Jiusi, we're brothers, so we'll accept the punishment together! Those old fogies can only hurt our flesh, they can't really kill us. Although, you still need to tell me, why exactly did we have to kill that First Peak Conclave disciple?"

Meng Hao looked around at his dozen or so friends. He knew that this world was illusory, but he was still moved nonetheless. He could tell that these were the kind of people who would stick with him through thick and thin. It almost made him want to forget that this place wasn't real, and that he wasn't really Ke Jiusi.

Except... he wasn't sure exactly how to respond to the question. After a moment's thought, he gritted his teeth.

"That punk seduced one of my Junior Sisters!"

Strange looks filled the faces of the others. After a moment passed, they all started laughing.

As their laughter rang out, the burly man coldly said, "First lash."

With that, he raised his hand, and the whip flew out, causing distortions to ripple out in the air. A piercing crack rang out.

The sound of it was crisp and clear, and echoed back and forth at least ten times, accompanied by shocking rumbling like that of thunder.

One whip blow slashed across Meng Hao and the others.

Meng Hao's entire body shook, and it felt as if his soul were about to explode out of his body. Indescribable pain surged through him, stabbing into his mind, causing his vision to swim. At the same time, miserable cries could be heard around him.

Meanwhile, off in the distance, seven figures could be seen standing on the Seventh Peak. They looked like seven blazing suns. One of their number was Ke Yunhai. His face was somber, and his fury burned to the Heavens. His gaze was fixed on Meng Hao, who was being whipped to the point that it seemed as if he wanted to die.

Standing near Ke Yunhai was a middle-aged woman. Her body emanated a beautiful glow, and as she stood there, it seemed as if she were fused with Heaven and Earth. She was the Paragon of the Sixth Peak. Her expression cool, she turned to Ke Yunhai and said, "Lord Li is sleeping now, but we are all still subject to his Heavenly will. The Dao Realm is sealed, and cut off from us. However, momentous events will soon occur. If you are too kind, Elder Brother Ke, then in the future, your son will definitely fall into great calamity."

The Paragon of the Third Peak was an old man with a long face. His entire person radiated ancientness as he shook his head and said, "Elder Brother Ke, your son really is... well, if he wants to break Sect rules, that is his concern, but why does he have to get others in trouble too? I guess that's just his character...."

The Paragon of the First Peak was a handsome young man with long, narrow eyes. His body emanated a golden light that made it seem as if he were surrounded by countless swords that in turn transformed into a bright sun. His voice itself sounded like sharp, stabbing swords as he calmly said, "This kid is clearly a deviant at heart. For years now he's bullied his way around. There have been at least ten or more disciples who have died by his hand. The only reason we didn't go after him for those deaths was for your sake, Elder Brother Ke. For him to brazenly kill someone in the open, though, that is far too excessive!"

After the three other Paragons spoke, Ke Yunhai's enraged voice could be heard.

“Rebel!! REBEL!!

“The instant I let him go, he goes and does something completely devoid of conscience! I don’t care if he gets whipped to death! At least I wouldn’t have to deal with this only son of mine!

“If he doesn’t die, then he’ll drive me to my death eventually! Because of Lord Li’s Heavenly decree, living creatures all have lifespan limitations. The Dao Realm cannot be tread. My longevity is withering away, and the time of my death approaches. Fellow Daoists, your patience regarding my deviant son has not been forgotten.

“Let him die. Because of the endless slaughtering which occurring in the nine wars of the Mountains and Seas, of my fifteen sons, only he is left. His entire life, he was spoiled, so it’s no wonder he turned out to be a disaster.

“Forget it. Just forget it. Let him die!” Ke Yunhai turned away, and as he did, his entire body seemed to age. The death aura which spread out all around him grew even stronger.

The other six Paragons stood by silently. The Paragon of the Seventh Peak was an ancient, white-haired man with the bearing of a transcendent being. He sighed softly as he looked off into the distance at the burly man with the whip.

The burly raised the whip up into the air and then paused for a moment. Then, he delivered the second lash.

The sound that rang out was intense and shocking to the extreme. However, it was clear that the blow had not been delivered with as much force as the previous one.

By the time the third lash fell, the skin of Meng Hao and the dozen or so others was completely torn and lacerated. Their expressions were haggard, and they could barely lift their heads. They bitterly looked over at Meng Hao, knowing that he was about to receive a fourth lash.

Meng Hao chuckled bitterly as the fourth blow descended. It slammed onto his body and his alone. At the same time, the furious words spoken

by Ke Yunhai suddenly echoed into his ears.

“Still won’t cry out?!”

Meng Hao gaped for a moment before letting out a scream that was tragic beyond description. When his companions heard the sound, they were astonished....

The punishment was over, and people came from the various peaks to support Meng Hao and the others as they left. They were quickly taken away to have their wounds treated. Soon, Meng Hao was back at the Fourth Peak, where he heard Ke Yunhai’s voice echoing throughout the mountain.

“Don’t help him. Screw off, you rebel!”

The Fourth Peak disciples who were helping him hesitated for a moment. However, Meng Hao indicated to them that they should release him. He smiled bitterly, but inwardly, felt warm at heart. Sighing, he began walking up toward Ke Yunhai’s Immortal’s cave.

Chapter 572: The Legacy of Lord Li

Meng Hao felt as if this identity he had acquired did come with its advantages, but also a lot of pressure. As a silk-pants, he could act virtually without the slightest scruple. However, this was an enormous Sect, and Sect rules could not be blithely ignored.

“It’s too bad I couldn’t find Patriarch Huyan.... I won’t be able to track down any of the others any time soon either. In that case, there’s no need to work so hard to try to find them. I’ll just focus on acquiring Daoist magic legacies right here.”

When he entered the Immortal’s cave, Ke Yunhai was sitting cross-legged on his stone bed. He looked at Meng Hao and gave a cold harrumph.

“Do you know what your mistake was this time?” asked Ke Yunhai, his voice cold.

Meng Hao looked back at him but didn’t say anything.

“Your mistake was that you shouldn’t have brazenly killed a fellow disciple!” continued Ke Yunhai slowly.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered.

“Your mistake was that you should have picked some other time to attack!” Ke Yunhai waved his hand dismissively, clearly disappointed that Meng Hao was like iron who had failed to turn into steel, and had completely fallen below his expectations.

“Killing is nothing,” he continued. “I’ve killed countless people in my life. When we Cultivators practice cultivation, we must do so with a clear conscience. You surely had a good reason to kill him, that I know. You normally act with cleverness, but in this situation, were crude and rash. Did you need to get rid of him in fear that he would go into hiding?”

“Well, whatever your enmity with him, considering your status, you can’t simply go killing people in broad daylight in front of a big crowd!”

As Meng Hao looked at Ke Yunhai, his heart trembled. The trembling

originated from his very soul, and from the vague image of his own father that existed within his memories. Suddenly, he laughed.

Perhaps he had forgotten for a moment that he wasn't really Ke Jiusi. Perhaps Ke Jiusi wanted to remind him that he wasn't really a member of the Demon Immortal Sect.

After all... I am Meng Hao, and I am also Ke Jiusi.

He suddenly spoke. "I think my real mistake... was attacking with my own hand."

"Eee?" said Ke Yunhai, looking at Meng Hao.

"I shouldn't have killed him myself," said Meng Hao softly. "I should have talked to you about it, sir. A word from you, and he would have been dead. Then things wouldn't have been so problematic."

Ke Yunhai stared at him with wide eyes. After a moment, he started chuckling. His chuckling grew louder and louder until it wasn't clear whether he was furious, or actually laughing uproariously. He suddenly waved his hand, causing a gentle breeze to spring up that healed all of Meng Hao's wounds.

After that, he sighed deeply, and then made a grasping motion toward that oil lamp that had the body of a dragon and the wick of a phoenix. Instantly, two glimmering streams of light shot out. At the same time, the power of Heaven and Earth in the area grew intense to the extreme. It began to converge, forming together in front of Ke Yunhai as if weapons were being constructed. Soon, two large stone statues could be seen.

Each of the two statues were as tall as a person, and pitch black. They held greatswords in hand, and looked like the type of soldiers buried with dead bodies in tombs. Banging sounds could be heard as they dropped down to slam onto the ground.

Their aura was enough to cause Meng Hao to begin to pant. He felt an incredible pressure weighing down on him that exceeded that from any powerful expert he had ever felt.

At the same time, Ke Yunhai pointed at Meng Hao. His forehead

suddenly split, and two drops of blood flew out. They swirled through the air toward the two statues, then merged into them.

As soon as that happened, the eyes of the stone soldiers flickered, as if they now possessed consciousness. As Meng Hao looked at them, he got the feeling that with a mere thought on his part, he could control these two terrifying soldiers.

“These two stone soldiers have your soul blood inside of them,” he said, giving Meng Hao a deep look. “No matter how many tens of thousands of years pass, no matter how many difficult situations they go through, no matter how many Masters they have, when you stand in front of them, they will recognize you as their most supreme and ultimate Master!” Ke Yunhai’s face was a bit ruddy, and his hair seemed a bit more gray, even white.

“When the Ke Clan kills people, we don’t ask help from outsiders. Now, get out of here. Do your best to gain enlightenment regarding the Soul Divergence Incantation. Oh, and... don’t cause any more problems for your old man, okay? You’re not a kid any more, try to act a bit more mature....” He sighed.

Meng Hao coughed dryly and nodded. His eyes were glowing with a strange light as he suddenly looked up at Ke Yunhai, a bashful expression on his face.

“Dad, do you have the Mountain and Sea Scripture?”

Ke Yunhai stared in shock, then slammed his palm down onto the stone bed.

“You little brat! The Mountain and Sea Scripture? Do you think I founded the Demon Immortal Sect?”

“Oh. Well, even just a bit of information about it would do,” Meng Hao replied quickly.

“You can’t even get the Mountain and Sea Scripture from the three great Demon Mountains of the Second Heaven, or the two Holy Lands of the Third Heaven!” he said angrily. “Do you really think that your dad, mere

Lord of the Fourth Peak of the First Heaven, could really request the Mountain and Sea Scripture from the slumbering Lord Li in the Fourth Heaven?

“If you really want the Mountain and Sea Scripture, there’s only one way to get it, and that is to acquire the legacy of Lord Li that he left behind before going into slumber. Whoever can reach the Fourth Heaven and stand directly in front of Lord Li, can get that legacy!” With that he waved his hand dismissively.

“If you don’t have the Mountain and Sea Scripture, that’s okay,” said Meng Hao quickly. He didn’t mind settling for second best. “Dad, you know those 3,000 Daoist magics that you can only get through meritorious service to the Sect? Do you think you could use your influence... to get them for me?”

Ke Yunhai’s eyes widened and he stared in shock at Meng Hao.

“3,000 Daoist magics?” Ke Yunhai spluttered furiously. “Do you really, actually believe that the Demon Immortal Sect was founded by me?”

“2,999 would also be okay, but not any less than that,” replied Meng Hao, grinding his teeth.

“Screw off! I don’t have them!” roared Ke Yunhai, waving his right hand.

“If you give me enough techniques, then I can focus on calmly practicing cultivation on the Fourth Peak....” said Meng Hao, using his trump card. When he said this, Ke Yunhai’s hand suddenly stopped moving. He hesitated for a moment as he looked at Meng Hao. Then he let out a long sigh.

“Considering my status, the best I can do is give you three hundred Daoist magics. If you can fully gain enlightenment of all of them, then I’ll see what else I can do.” Shaking his head, he made another grasping motion. His hand seemed to disappear into the air, and he closed his eyes for a moment. When he pulled his hand back, it was holding a jade slip. He tossed it toward Meng Hao, and then waved his wide sleeve, causing a raging wind to pick up Meng Hao and the two stone soldiers and send them out of the Immortal’s cave.

In the middle section of the Fourth Peak was a luxurious area filled with glittering lights and exotic plants. The large door of the Immortal's cave there was imposing to the extreme. This was none other than Ke Jiusi's Immortal's cave.

Meng Hao's heart was beating with excitement as he carried the jade slip toward the Immortal's cave, as well as the two stone soldiers, which had shrunk down and now fit in his palm. There were about a dozen footmen waiting for him inside. Once they caught sight of him, they all smiled and clasped hands in greeting.

Meng Hao quickly found that no matter what he wanted to do inside his Immortal's cave, there would always be someone to help him.

He couldn't help but sigh emotionally. He had never experienced such luxury, not even when he was a Violet Furnace Lord back in the Violet Fate Sect. It was something he couldn't quite get used to. After a bit of time, he sent the footmen away.

Finally alone in his huge Immortal's cave, he sat down cross-legged to examine the stone soldiers and the jade slip.

Even after trying, he was not able to put any of them into his bag of holding. However, he was able to take items from within his bag of holding and bring them out.

At first he hadn't noticed anything unusual about his bag of holding. However, after he thought about it, he realized that there was something odd about Ji Mingfeng. What was odd was that he had no bag of holding. In fact, Ji Mingfeng had been nothing but a soul.

His soul had fused with the host body, but was still nothing more than that; a soul fusion.

Muttering, Meng Hao thought about what Ke Yunhai had told him about Lord Li, the three great Demon Mountains, and the two Holy Lands.... The information regarding those things contained in Ke Jiusi's memories were rather vague.

"I remember Zhixiang also told me a few things...." Eyes glittering, he

committed the new information to memory to think about another time. As for Zhixiang, he was confident that she would come looking for him eventually. After all, Zhixiang... was a true disciple of the Demon Immortal Sect!

“When that time comes, I can get answers to everything!” He didn’t consider the matter any more. Currently, there were quite a few strange things going on with his body. His Cultivation base was only of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, which was actually quite weak in the Demon Immortal Sect. And yet, neither Ke Yunhai nor anyone else seemed to notice that. When they looked at him, they didn’t see anything out of the ordinary.

There were other strange things that Meng Hao could only attribute to the fact that this was the Second Plane of an ancient illusory world. This was all just a dream of the Demon Immortal Sect.

Although the dream seemed incredibly realistic, and was filled with limitless possibilities, a dream... was still just a dream, not reality.

A thought suddenly sprang into being in Meng Hao’s mind. “What if it could be real...?”

“What if all of this could be made real...?”

“What if all of it could become true.... What if actual changes could be made to the great river that is the flow of time?” Then he looked at the stone soldiers, which clearly could not be put into his bag of holding, and he sighed. He knew that such an outcome was impossible. After all, this place was just a dreamland.

However, he couldn’t help but feel a bit of pity regarding the two stone soldiers. If he could take them out with him after he left the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane, it would make him incredibly happy.

“Daoist magic legacies are the most important part of the Second Plane!” he thought, his eyes glowing with determination. Forgetting about the impractical matters, he took out the jade slip, closed his eyes, and began to attempt to gain enlightenment.

After a moment, his eyes opened, and they were filled with blankness.

“Lightning Spirit Incantation.... Borrow the will of Heavenly lightning, fuse it into the body to create a soul. Use the Soul of Lightning to refine a Spirit of Lightning. Transmogrify the fleshly body to form a bolt of lightning of Heaven and Earth, benefit from an eternally indestructible Divinity....” Muttering to himself, Meng Hao continued to study the jade slip.

His expression grew more and more serious, and he was breathing heavily. Occasionally, he would open his eyes, shocked by what he had learned of the various Daoist magics. He had never imagined that there would be such a variety of divine abilities and magical techniques in the world, and that they could be so unimaginable.

There was one magic that could take the rainbows which appear after the rain and transform them into a Seven-Colored Fish. With that fish, one could leap into the starry sky and swim about the Mountains and Seas as a greater Demon.

There was another that focused on observing the clouds and wind to perform augury within the Earth and the Yellow Springs. By using an Imperial will, one could understand the Will of Heaven. By understanding the Will of Heaven, the natural law of Heaven and Earth could be changed. Planets could be destroyed, and a mere thought could shatter even the most ancient of things.

There was an entire host of divine abilities and magical techniques.

One of them was called the Fish Roc Will. It was entirely based on the use of Divine Will. When the myriad of transformations were cultivated to the very peak, one’s body could become that of a roc!

The technique made him think of the strange roc in the Rebirth Cave.

Everything filled Meng Hao with an unimaginably fantastic feeling. As time passed, he gradually came to realize that of the techniques of the Demon Immortal Sect, more than half were actually... Demon magic!

Chapter 573: Her Name is Xu Qing

Cultivators could cultivate this so-called Demon magic. In fact, any living thing could. However, the end result was that one would become a Greater Demon.

Meng Hao was especially shaken after seeing the Mountain Consuming Incantation. It was a technique imbued with a spirit that could conquer mountains and rivers. It was no mere embellishment, but rather, a technique that could actually consume mountains and rivers! Success could lead to one's own path to Immortality, and becoming a Human Immortal!

Many of the techniques relied on Qi of Heaven and Earth that was actually Demonic Qi. There was one technique in which refining Demonic Qi into the body allowed one to create a personal Heavenly Demon Transformation. There were nineteen levels of such transformations, each one resulted in becoming a Greater Demon that could shake Heaven and Earth.

Meng Hao studied the information, and soon, an entire night had passed. Dawn was breaking, but he was not even aware that so much time had passed by. The Daoist magics had left him completely shaken. He suddenly realized that within his world, his life, his everything... a door had suddenly been opened. Beyond that door, was the true Heaven and Earth.

Such good fortune was something that, in the tens of thousands of years that the Primordial Demon Immortal Plan had opened, no one else had acquired. He was the only one... and it was all because of his special identity. In this world of limitless possibilities, he was the first person to ever use such a technique to gain access to three hundred Daoist magics.

From ancient times until now, from now into the future, he was the first and the last!

If the others who had come with him to the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane found out that he had three hundred Daoist magics, they would

surely go crazy. That would even be true for people who had come in past times.

Even a single one of these three hundred Daoist magics would be something most Cultivators from the great lands of South Heaven could only dream about. Even with the most incredible luck, most would have trouble acquiring one. And yet... Meng Hao had three hundred. Furthermore, he could tell that these were no ordinary techniques.... These techniques were definitely from the top 1,000 Daoist Magics out of the total of 3,000!

There were some that surely were in the top 500. As for the Mountain Consuming Incantation and the Heavenly Demon Transformation, they were definitely within the top 200.

Such divine abilities and Daoist magics would send anyone mad with jealousy. Legacies and good fortune like this were unheard throughout the past tens of thousands of years.

Others might acquire random techniques in this place, but even after exerting incredible power, they still might not be able to gain enlightenment. If that happened, then when they left, all memory of the technique would be wiped out, much as if it had just been a dream. After awakening, they would only be able to remember that the technique existed, but not the details.

It was the same with Daoist magics. Only by gaining full enlightenment could one truly possess them, and remember them after leaving.

Therefore, if one had no way to gain enlightenment, then any effort spent would be wasted. The only thing to be done would be to work hard to find an additional Daoist magic to study.

Of course, that would be incredibly difficult.

However, Meng Hao... didn't have to worry about any of those problems. He had three hundred Daoist magics. If he couldn't gain enlightenment with one, he could simply move on to the next. Within the three hundred, there were definitely magics that suited him, ones that he could master and gain enlightenment of.

It was afternoon before he finally looked up. Gripping the jade slip tightly, his eyes filled with a strange glow. He took a deep breath and rose to his feet.

“I’m going to try out this Mountain Consuming Incantation. The first step in the incantation is to observe a mountain!” With that, his body flickered and he sped out from within the Immortal’s cave. By this point, he had lost interest in seeking out the other South Heaven Cultivators. As of now, killing them was his last priority. The most important thing was to focus on his own good fortune.

Although, if he could find Patriarch Huyan, well, he wouldn’t violate Sect rules. He would instead seek out Ke Yunhai to have him eliminated.

“By this point, there should be a lot of people who are awake...” he thought. As he made his way through the paths of the Fourth Peak, all of the disciples he encountered smiled and nodded at him. He smiled back as he sped toward his destination. It didn’t take long before he finally just flew up to float in mid-air and look back at the Fourth Peak.

“Observe the mountain.... Observe the shape of the mountain. Feel its will. The mountain exists in the eyes, and is concealed in the heart. Therefore, the body can be incarnated into a mountain.

“That is the only way to reach the second stage, in which I am the mountain, and the mountain is me!”

A strange glow appeared in Meng Hao’s eyes as he looked at the Fourth Peak. The Mountain Consuming Incantation floated within his mind’s eye.

“After the second stage, the third stage can be reached and the mountain... can be consumed. The will of the mountain can shape my spirit, and the mountain can refine my body!

“A spirit that conquers mountains and rivers! When I turn away, the mountain may no longer be within my eye, but whether or not it exists in the eyes of others, has nothing to do with me!

“That much would be just a small achievement!” Meng Hao sat cross-legged in mid-air looking at the Fourth Peak. Several hours passed. He

looked at the mountain, and the disciples there looked back at him.

More and more disciples of the Fourth Peak noticed him, this Little Patriarch of their mountain peak.

There were quite a few female disciples who would occasionally look over at him with flirty smiles.

“The Little Patriarch is actually practicing cultivation!”

“Oh, that only happens once every few years....”

“Don’t tell me that the Little Patriarch’s temperament has actually changed?”

All of the disciples found the scene quite odd. In fact, many continued to stop their own cultivation to glance over at him hovering there in mid-air.

It was evening at the moment, and there were currently a dozen or so Fourth Peak Outer Sect disciples making their way up a set of stone stairs that wound up the Fourth Peak. It was an arduous task for them, and they were obviously participating in an examination for promotion into the Inner Sect.

There were nine stages to the examination, and this particular stage, I Shall Climb to Soar in the Heavens, was the last of them all! Whether or not they ended up being promoted to be a Fourth Peak Inner Sect disciples was based on how long it took them to reach the very top of the mountain, as well as their performance in the previous stages.

One of the participants was a young woman wearing the long robe of an Outer Sect disciple. Her face was pale white, but she gritted her teeth, and despite her incredible exhaustion, pushed forward with unswerving determination. Her vision swam and her body trembled, but she continued on, one stone step at a time.

The exam might seem easy, but anyone who participated would understand the incredible pressure and difficulty.

There were Inner Sect Disciples overseeing the situation to ensure safety. If anyone gave up, they would quickly be escorted away.

The young woman with the pale face stepped up onto another stone step and then happened to look up into the air toward Meng Hao, who sat there cross-legged meditating.

Not too far away from her was an Inner Sect disciple charged with the safety of the Outer Sect disciples. Having noticed who she was looking at, he coolly said, "That's the Little Patriarch of our Fourth Peak."

"Little Patriarch...." replied the woman, staring. She hadn't been a member of the Sect for very long, but how could she not have heard of the Little Patriarch? The difference between her status and his was incredible, like that between Heaven and Earth. She glanced at him for only a moment before lowering her head in exhaustion to continue on the path toward promotion.

This was the only path she could tread. To get this chance for promotion, she had pawned a precious family heirloom, a magical item. She had also borrowed a lot of Demon Stones to practice cultivation. If she failed now, it would take many years to pay everything back.

In fact, if she failed, those vicious and greedy Outer Sect disciples who had been pestering her would make her life a living hell. The only option she had was to pass the competition examination and become an Inner Sect disciple.

She took a deep breath and was about to continue climbing when suddenly, Meng Hao's gaze... fell on her.

The young woman didn't notice, and she wasn't even looking up into the sky anymore.

However, Meng Hao's eyes were fixed squarely on her. The instant he had noticed her, his heart had trembled.

He was no longer observing the mountain; his full attention was focused on her.

She wore the robe of an Outer Sect disciple, and had eyes filled with determination. Although she was pretty, she was not unmatchably beautiful. However, there was something about her that caused Meng Hao

to be deeply drawn to her.

It was as if this young woman had a soul on her, a soul from a previous life that hadn't awakened yet.

In that previous life, there were ties of Karma that affected the whole world.

Meng Hao didn't need to examine it closely to know that he was looking... at Xu Qing.

Within Meng Hao's heart was a teardrop. When he was transmigrating into the Violet Sea, that teardrop sank to the seafloor and then into his mouth. Then, Xu Qing's teardrop had fused into his heart.

She was a simple young woman, who had a simple type of love. There was nothing about such love that could shake Heaven and Earth. There was no raging fire. Instead, it was like water, calm and tranquil as it passed through the years.

Meng Hao looked at the young woman there on the mountain, and it felt as if tidewaters were surging up within his heart. It was as if this woman's appearance caused a huge stone to splash onto the surface of a calm lake. Ripples spread out, causing the calmness to be broken. At the moment, there was nothing he could do except to feel incredible shock.

That huge stone was like a catalyst that caused Meng Hao's thoughts and mind to spin. Within his memory, an image appeared. He saw a woman standing on an island above the Violet Sea. As she looked off into the distance, a tear welled up in the corner of her eye and then fell down.

That one tear sent the entire Violet Sea boiling.

The teardrop contained pain, confusion, longing, recollection, as well as an unprecedented, unspoken, profound feeling of attachment.

It was the unforgettable look she gave him on Mount Daqing. It was when she suddenly caught sight of him from within the crowd of Black Sieve Sect disciples. It was the pain felt outside the Rebirth Cave, when they looked at each other and didn't know when they would see each other again.

In the end, all of that transformed into a teardrop, which then turned into massive waves.

It was as if everything between them had been ordinary, and yet that ordinariness had at some point turned into a fundamental part of their lives. It was as if, without even realizing it, both of them had suddenly come to exist permanently as a part of each other's hearts.

"It's Xu Qing," murmured Meng Hao. A smile broke out on his face. It was the smile caused by an imminent reunion after having been parted for more than a hundred years. His body suddenly flickered, and he disappeared from the sight of all the disciples present. When he reappeared, shockingly, he was standing on the stone step directly in front of the female Outer Sect disciple.

She almost bumped directly into him. His sudden appearance caused her to subconsciously edge backward a few steps.

The nearby Inner Sect disciple's eyes went wide. His voice hoarse, he said, "Little Patriarch... you...."

He was so close to her that Meng Hao could feel his heart thumping. He looked at the yet still sleeping Xu Qing, and softly said, "From now on, you are a Conclave disciple of the Fourth Peak!"

The woman stared in shock, confusion, and panic. She was nervous, disbelieving, and frightened. She glanced at the Inner Sect disciple as if to ask for help.

The Inner Sect disciple took a deep breath and then immediately bowed his head in compliance. He immediately produced a jade slip and asked,

"What's your name?"

Before the woman could respond, Meng Hao's voice could be heard.

"Her name is Xu Qing. She'll be practicing cultivation in my Immortal's cave from now on."

"Huh?" said the girl, her eyes wide. "My... my name is...."

Chapter 574: Our Agreement

In the Fourth Peak, Meng Hao's status made it so that his words were like the will of Heaven. The Inner Sect disciple nodded, made a brand mark onto the jade slip, then clasped hands and left.

Everything happened so quickly that the young woman was left standing there at a loss. She didn't even notice as Meng Hao grabbed her by the arm.

That seemed to wake her up.

"Hey... hey, what are you doing?!" she said, her eyes going wide. A look of terror appeared inside of them as she suddenly recalled who this person was, and the stories she had heard told about him within the Sect. She was about to struggle against him, when he wrapped his arms around her and flew up into the air.

As Meng Hao flew over the Fourth Peak, the disciples who looked up to see him holding the young woman had strange expressions on their faces. Many of them looked at each other in dismay.

"Who is the Little Patriarch holding...?"

"I've never seen her before. From her garments she seems to be an Outer Sect disciple."

"No way! He was so peaceful earlier today. The sky isn't even dark, and he's already back to his old self?"

Meanwhile, up in mid-air above the Fourth Peak.

"Put me down!!" said the young woman, her face bright red. A look of rage had appeared in her phoenix-like eyes. She continued to struggle against Meng Hao, but he seemed to have no intention of releasing her. She could only look at his face, inches away from her own, her fury growing more and more intense.

When the two of them finally landed outside of his Immortal's cave, the woman opened her mouth and bit viciously down onto his arm. He looked at her for a moment, smiled, and released her.

“You’re going to practice cultivation here for a while,” he said with a smile, giving her a deep look. “It will only take a few days for you to realize who I am.”

“You’re the Eldest Brother of the Fourth Peak, Elite Apprentice of the Sect! Don’t tell me that gives you the right to arbitrarily humiliate other disciples!?” The woman backed up, staring at Meng Hao angrily.

“I was an Elite Apprentice yesterday, not today,” he said, laughing. With that, he sat down cross-legged and looked at the young woman.

That got her even angrier. But then, she thought of his status, and the stories she had heard, and she began to tremble. She backed up further, putting herself even more on guard.

She had heard far too many stories about this person. Any one of them was enough to cause an Outer Sect disciple like her to tremble with terror.

Time passed. Soon, it was evening, and then night. Bright stars twinkled into being up above. They were dim at first, but quickly grew clear and bright.

Perhaps it was because of the icy night wind, or the young woman’s panic-stricken state. In any case, she shrank into a corner against the stone wall, looking quite helpless.

Meng Hao looked at her and then stood up.

“Don’t you move!!” she cried, suddenly growing even more nervous. Ignoring her demands, Meng Hao walked over to her, retrieved a set of clothing from his bag of holding, and gently laid it over her.

The softness of his movement caused her to gape in surprise.

He smiled, returned to where he had been sitting before, and continued to meditate.

The woman looked at him silently, her expression one of confusion and doubt. Even more confused were the surrounding Fourth Peak disciples who had hidden themselves in the area to watch the proceedings.

They were all whispering to each other curiously about his

compassionate action just now.

Another person who was completely confused was Ke Yunhai.

“Has the kid really had a change in personality?” he murmured in astonishment.

No words were exchanged through the entire night.

The young woman was incredibly nervous the entire time. She didn't dare to meditate, nor close her eyes. She was too frightened of what she feared might happen if she did.

However, her nervousness, coupled with the exhaustion from climbing the mountain during the test earlier, caused her unwittingly fall asleep.

When the first rays of dawn light touched her face, her eyelashes flickered and she slowly opened her eyes. Then she began to tremble. She quickly rose to her feet, causing the two robes which had been placed on top of her to tumble to the ground.

The robes were thick, and were obviously quite warm.

One of them had been placed on her by Meng Hao when she was awake. As for the other, he had covered her with it after she fell asleep.

Just in front of her was a small ball of fire that emanated pulses of heat. The heat was filled with the power of Heaven and Earth, and relieved some of the exhaustion that had filled her body.

Seeing this, the woman stared in astonishment. She looked up at Meng Hao.

He was striding down some of the stone steps on the mountain, some fruit in hand. These were Spirit Fruits, something that Outer Sect disciples had no qualification to enjoy. Only Elite Apprentices could have access to them.

Meng Hao put one down in front of the young woman.

Her expression was complex. After having a night of rest, she seemed to have come to terms with her current situation. She still felt apprehensive, though, unsure of how she had attracted the attention of this Chosen of

Heaven. She also wasn't sure why he had changed her entire fate with that single sentence.

"Try the Spirit Fruits," he said, popping one into his mouth. "The flavor is incredible." He handed another over to her.

She hesitated for a moment, then accepted and bit down onto one of the fruits. Suddenly, her eyes began to glow, and when she squinted, they looked like two crescent moons.

"Good?" asked Meng Hao with a smile.

The young woman's face flushed, and she nodded.

"The Outer Sect is pretty chaotic," he continued, looking up into the sky. "I'll help you pay back the debts you owe."

The young woman's hand stopped in mid-air, clutching at a Spirit Fruit. She bowed her head, saying nothing in response.

"Those Outer Sect disciples who have been treating you poorly have already been taken care of," he went on softly.

The young woman's body trembled slightly. After a long moment passed, she looked up at Meng Hao, almost in a daze.

"Why?" she asked. "Why are you treating me like this? I'm just an ordinary Outer Sect Disciple, and you're.... Why?"

Meng Hao shook his head but didn't say anything.

"Is it because of Xu Qing? Who is she?" the young woman asked. She rose to her feet and looked at him, her gaze filled with stubbornness. She wanted to know the answer.

Meng Hao was quiet for a moment. Today was the third day, and unless something unforeseen occurred, Xu Qing should be waking up soon. Then this young woman would disappear. After all... she had long since already perished.

Seeing the look in her eyes, Meng Hao's eyes slowly grew blank, as if he was recalling the past. In his mind's eye, he saw the events outside the Rebirth Cave, the killing of Ji Hongdong, and Xu Qing's tears. He saw

himself raising his hand to wipe them away. He heard those voices from years ago.

“We’re safe now. No one will know your secret.”

“Meng Hao. Will we... see each other again?”

“Don’t cry. There’s a long road ahead. Who knows when it is that we will meet again.”

Meng Hao still remembered how he had been about to turn around that day, when a warm, supple body embraced him from behind.

“I’ll wait for you.” 1

Xu Qing’s voice, filled with determination, was strong enough to last through past, present, and future lives.

“You could think of Xu Qing as your next life,” Meng Hao said softly. “Regarding the two of us... we have an agreement to meet each other in the next life.”

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Note from Er Gen: This chapter is short by a thousand characters because I feel that for this chapter, it’s just the right amount. If I force myself to write more, I’m afraid it will lose its charm

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1. The scene recalled between Meng Hao and Xu Qing happened in chapter 306.

Chapter 575: Long Time No See

The young woman seemed to understand the words themselves, but not their true meaning. She looked at Meng Hao silently, then lowered her gaze to the Spirit Fruit in her hand. After a long moment, she took a few steps back to lean up against the rock wall. She put the fruit in her mouth and ate it. A smile appeared on her face.

“I’m not sure what exactly you mean when you say ‘next life,’” she said with a light smile. “All I do know is that this Xu Qing of whom you speak is truly blessed.” The wind suddenly tousled her hair, which she tucked behind her ear.

Having finished speaking, she sat down and took a deep breath, then closed her eyes. Without any further words, she concealed within her eyes the enlightenment she didn’t wish anyone else to see.

She was an intelligent young woman, more intelligent than most other young women her age.

From the way Meng Hao spoke, she could tell that he was referring to something related to death.

“If you and Xu Qing have an agreement to meet here,” she murmured to herself, “if she is destined to awaken within my body. Well then... I am willing to let that happen. I am willing to let you reunite with her here.”

In this moment, in the Demon Immortal Sect, during that split second in which she, of her own initiative, expressed such willingness, a rare change suddenly occurred.

The Cultivators of South Heaven entered the Second Plane via host bodies. That was something that didn’t require the consent of the host bodies themselves. After all, they had long since perished, and were nothing more than corpses on the outside.

However... despite having been dead for so many years, the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane was special. Their spirits existed within the plane, and those spirits... if they were willing, could allow the outside Cultivators

to completely take over their identity.

Normally speaking, the techniques cultivated by the host body that they had gained enlightenment regarding, would be available to the South Heaven Cultivators as vague memories. They could use them, but could not take them away.

It was like they were... outsiders.

Except now, something different was happening. A change was underway that would produce something more like... an insider.

The young woman's eyes were closed hard, and did not reopen.

Everything was quiet. Meng Hao did not speak. He sat there cross-legged, looking up into the sky, waiting silently as time slipped by, waiting... for Xu Qing to wake up.

Under his protection, nothing would happen to her, and no one would be able to harm her in any way. Meng Hao did not cultivate any techniques. He simply watched as the sunlight grew brighter in the sky. He looked around at the world of the ancient Demon Immortal Sect. Within his heart, the feeling of being a part of this place only continued to grow stronger.

He suddenly felt very envious of Ke Jiusi.

He envied the family that Ke Jiusi had in this Sect. He envied all of his Brothers and Sisters. He envied the fact that Ke Jiusi had friends who would even kill for him. However, what he most envied was... that Ke Jiusi had such a good father.

Ke Jiusi had a father who would bend over backward for him. He would work hard behind the scenes to erase the scrawlings that were the errors committed by his son. He was a father whose tolerant heart could accept any errors on the part of his son.

And then, there was the white hair that filled his temples, and the death aura that he did his best to hide. Clearly, Ke Jiusi's father, Paragon of the Fourth Peak, was reaching the end of his life.

“This is all just a play... and I’m merely observing it,” he thought. “But if that’s true, then why do I want so much to become a part of the play, to become one of the people here?”

He thought of Ke Yunhai, and his stern gaze. Deep within that gaze, Meng Hao could sense a deep love that somehow made him lose his way. He thought back to Mount Daqing and Yunjie County. He thought back to his own childhood, and his own father and mother.

Back then, he had been very happy, completely without a care in the world. But then the violet wind swept through Yunjie County, and everything vanished.

“Who is my father...?” he thought. As he gazed off into the sky, his mood sank. “Is he still alive in the world? Does he know that his image still exists in my thoughts, in my memories?”

Submerged as he was in this sea of bitterness, Meng Hao produced a flagon of alcohol from his bag of holding. He lifted it to his lips and took a long drink.

“Dad. Mom. Do you know that I’m already starting to forget what you look like...? It’s been too many years. The image of your faces is starting to fade away.

“I don’t want it to be that way. It’s just what happens when time passes. Sometimes I want to hold on to those images, but I can’t.... I really envy Ke Jiusi....” Meng Hao took another long drink of alcohol. It burned as it slid down his throat and into his anxiety.

Meng Hao rarely slipped into a mood such as this. Starting the year his father and mother went missing, he’d had no choice but to learn to be independent and strong. In this moment, though, because of Xu Qing, he had started thinking of the past. The memories of the Southern Domain, of Mount Daqing, and the relationship between Ke Jiusi and Ke Yunhai, all struck a chord within him. He couldn’t help but think of Yunjie County, his happy childhood, and of his parents.

He suddenly felt as if he understood this tyrannical silkpants, Ke Jiusi. If Ke Jiusi really was still alive, then perhaps after all the tens of thousands

of years, this dead ancient Demon Immortal Sect was the only place where he truly existed.

He had never left. He was here to protect the Sect, to protect the Fourth Peak. Year after year, for an eternity, he was here to protect that Pure Land which existed in his heart.

Most likely, the people around Meng Hao in the Demon Immortal Sect would never be able to imagine what Ke Jiusi would be like tens of thousands of years later.

“He saw his father die. He watched his Sect become desolate. He looked on as his friends perished. In the end, he bore witness to the absolute destruction of the Sect.

“If I were him, what would I do...?” Thoughtfully, Meng Hao took another long drink. Evening was falling. An entire day had slipped by while Meng Hao wallowed in his emotions.

“Ke Jiusi sent me back here, to the era in which his father was dying. I think I understand... what he wants me to do.” A look of enlightenment filled his eyes. He was just raising the alcohol flagon to take another drink when suddenly, a hand reached out from behind him to grasp his wrist lightly.

As he turned his head, he felt someone embracing him tightly from behind. It felt just like the embrace from back by the Rebirth Cave, that embrace which was filled with the fear of loss.

A smile broke out on Meng Hao’s face. He didn’t speak, but rather, allowed the beautiful woman behind him to embrace him. She pressed up against his back, as if she were trying to hear his heart beating.

It was as if the only way she could prove that everything that was happening was real... was to hear his heart beating. Perhaps everything around them was a dream, but within that dream, the two of them had each other.

I thought that when I saw you, I would have the world. I didn’t know that within your dreams, you already had me.

It was evening, and soft, orange light shone down onto the Fourth Peak, creating dark shadows on the opposite side of the mountain. Within those dark shadows were two people, embracing each other.

They seemed to wish that time could stop forever. Their longing, their promise, were no longer like sand floating in the wind.

A long time passed. Soon, the sky was dark. Meng Hao looked at the woman in front of him. The features he saw were different Xu Qing's, but the soul was the same ever.

"You're awake," he said.

Because her soul was different, her facial features suddenly seemed to change a bit. She grew colder, less timid and nervous. She grew more simple. Less a stranger.

She was Xu Qing.

She was not intelligent like Han Bei. She was not incredibly beautiful like Chu Yuyan. She was Xu Qing. Simple and cold, like her heart. When she loved someone, she didn't need a reason. She only needed to know that somehow, that person was part of her.

She wore the robe of an Outer Sect disciple and had long, beautiful hair. Her features were delicate, and although they couldn't be described as immaculately beautiful, they caused Meng Hao to think of that one person who was always in his heart... Elder Sister Xu.

Xu Qing looked at Meng Hao, and a smile broke out on her face. A warmth could be seen in her pupils, as well as longing, and over a hundred years of memories. She looked at Meng Hao, and recalled their past.

He carried the look of someone who had experienced great changes, and was no longer young and inexperienced.

She gazed at Meng Hao for a long time. She didn't ask why he was here, nor did she seem surprised to see him here as she woke up.

It was as if to Xu Qing, it didn't matter where she saw Meng Hao, or when. Any time she encountered him, she felt at ease, calm.

Surrounding by bustling crowds, you look at me, I look at you, and we smile at each other.

It was as if such a meeting had happened a million times for her already. It was as if from beginning to end, even that time in the Violet Sea, she had complete and utter faith that the two of them would in fact meet again one day.

“Not surprised?” said Meng Hao, smiling.

“Why would I be surprised?” she said, shaking her head and smiling. “You made a promise, and we had an agreement... to meet again.”

As Meng Hao looked at her, much of the bitterness in his heart faded away. His smile grew wider. This was Xu Qing. Plain and simple Xu Qing.

She believed that they would meet again. Because of their agreement with each other, it didn't matter when or where it was, she wouldn't be surprised. It was all because of her firm belief.

“It's been many years.... Have you been well?” she asked softly. To her, Meng Hao might be a few years younger than her. However, despite the fact that more than a hundred years had passed, his image never left her heart.

She could never forget that time she watched as he leaned out over the edge of the cliff, holding down a rope to Wang Youcai and the others, and at the same time, making fun of them.

She could never forget what he looked like in the ancient Blessed Land, when he stood protectively in front of her during her moment of helplessness.

Even more unforgettable was the time in the Black Sieve Sect when, after merging with Matriarch Phoenix, she had woken up. Meng Hao had been about to leave the Sect when he turned and smiled at her.

Never in her life would she be capable of forgetting what happened outside the Rebirth Cave.

If secrets could count as accumulated emotions between two people,

then she and Meng Hao had many. There were many secrets that only the two of them could understand.

“I went to the Black Lands, and the Western Desert,” Meng Hao said with a smile. As the evening wind blew Xu Qing’s hair into disarray, Meng Hao reached up and grasped her wrist.

She lowered her head, a slight smile tugging at her lips.

“So did I,” she said, looking back up at him.

“I know,” he replied, grinning.

The soft moonlight shone down on the two of them, covering them like a layer of silver sand. The beautiful wind lifted up their long hair.

Xu Qing looked at Meng Hao, then suddenly gaped in astonishment as she realized something. Her eyes filled with a strange look.

“Wait.... Why... why do you look the same as before?”

Chapter 576: Limitless Possibilities!

Meng Hao was shocked by Xu Qing's words. His eyes flickered, and then narrowed. He didn't respond immediately.

He focused his attention on examining his physical appearance. His facial features really were his own. There was no change whatsoever.

It was at this moment that he realized he had completely overlooked this point!

Xu Qing, Ji Mingfeng, and most assuredly, the rest of the Cultivators from the lands of South Heaven, all looked completely different. In coming here, their souls had fused with another body.

But that was not the case with Meng Hao. He could open his bag of holding and remove items from within. Although he couldn't take things from here and put them inside, he was still clearly in a completely different position than the others.

Earlier, he had hesitated a bit regarding this matter, but hadn't given it too much thought. However, Xu Qing had just hit the nail on the head with her observation. Meng Hao's heart and mind suddenly felt as if it were being struck by lightning.

He began to breathe heavily. Xu Qing looked at him and, seeing that he was lost in thought, did not ask any further questions. He was clearly thinking about some matter that was important enough to cause his countenance to change.

Meng Hao thought back to what had happened in the First Plane. After stepping onto the top of the Fourth Peak, he had found no corpse, only an empty coffin.

"Don't tell me... that I actually came in person to this place?!?!" he thought.

"Others came by means of a host body, which means that their souls entered into a dream. But I have no host body, which means that I am actually here!" Meng Hao almost couldn't believe it, and could think of no

possible explanation.

“But that’s the only way to explain why I can open my bag of holding, and why my appearance hasn’t changed! Although... if my appearance didn’t change, then how much Ke Yunhai and the others didn’t notice...?” After a long moment of thought, an answer occurred to him.

“Because Ke Yunhai, and this place... are nothing more than an illusory version of ancient times.” He sighed lightly and kneaded the bridge of his nose. There were too many contradictions to be had in all the different aspects of the situation. The only thing he could do was come to this much of an understanding. Complete understanding was beyond him currently.

“If all of that is true, then when the others wake up, does that mean they will be able to tell who I am?” Meng Hao’s eyes flickered with a cold light. The light faded away quickly, though, and he suddenly chuckled.

“Well, who cares if they do? Considering my status, even if they do recognize me, they’ll be the ones hiding from me, not the other way around.” Having reached this point in his train of thought, Meng Hao looked at Xu Qing and was about to say something when suddenly, an audacious, almost insane, thought occurred to him.

As the idea began to develop, Meng Hao realized that it was virtually unthinkable, almost delusional. However, he couldn’t stop thinking about it. The idea sank deeper and deeper into his mind, and his eyes began to flow with a fearsome glow.

Xu Qing looked at him and hesitated for a moment before softly saying, “You....”

“I’m fine,” Meng Hao said with a smile. The glow disappeared from his eyes, to be replaced by a profound expression.

“If you have something you want to do, go take care of it,” Xu Qing said. “You don’t need to worry about me.” She rose to her feet and then pointed toward the door of the Immortal’s cave. “I’ll need to use your Immortal’s cave,” she said.

Meng Hao nodded. He retrieved a jade slip from within his robe, the one that contained the three hundred Daoist magics from Ke Yunhai. He handed it to Xu Qing.

“Take a look at these Daoist magics and see which ones you can gain enlightenment regarding,” he said.

Xu Qing took the jade slip and scanned it with Divine Sense. Her eyes instantly went wide with disbelief. She stared blankly at Meng Hao, her mind spinning. She was well informed about the ancient Demon Immortal Sect, but that caused her to be even more shocked by the jade slip.

“These... these....”

“They are all Daoist magics of the Demon Immortal Sect,” said Meng Hao, chuckling.

Xu Qing looked at him for a long moment, then nodded. A strange expression could be seen on her face as she began to search through the fused memories of her host body. Finally, she found information regarding Meng Hao’s identity.

After becoming aware of who she was, Xu Qing realized that as far as Meng Hao was concerned, it wasn’t necessarily impossible for him to eventually acquire all three thousand Daoist magics....

As Xu Qing entered the Immortal’s cave, Meng Hao stood there staring out at the lands. A bizarre glow could be seen in his eyes as he rubbed his bag of holding.

“To everyone else, this is an ancient, illusory world, like a dream.... But I am actually here. Does that mean that it’s possible to make changes that could affect history?” Meng Hao knew that such a prospect was outrageous, and also paradoxical.

However, he couldn’t stop himself from thinking about the possibility.

“Although there is a 99% chance that I’m wrong, even that slight possibility....” He began to breathe heavily, and his eyes glowed.

“Even that slight possibility means that a gamble would be worth it!”

With that, he left the area of his Immortal's cave to search around the Fourth Peak for what he was looking for.

It didn't take long before he ran into an Inner Sect disciple, floating through the air like a ghost as he patrolled the mountain. When he saw Meng Hao, he instantly stopped in place and clasped hands.

"Greetings, Little Patriarch," he said.

Meng Hao may have been stripped of his status as Elite Apprentice, but in the Fourth Peak, being an Elite Apprentice was secondary to his eternal status as Little Patriarch.

"Do you have any medicinal pills?" asked Meng Hao, his eyes gleaming. The disciple seemed a bit confused, but immediately nodded his head and produced a medicinal pill bottle from his bag of holding, which he then handed over to Meng Hao.

Meng Hao nodded and departed, leaving the Inner Sect disciple behind, confused.

After returning to his Immortal's cave, he sat down cross-legged and took a deep breath. He opened the medicinal pill bottle, within which were seven medicinal pills the size of longan fruits, that pulsed with a medicinal fragrance. After smelling them, Meng Hao realized that most of the ingredients were unfamiliar to him. However, he could still reach the general conclusion that these were pills which could increase Cultivation base.

The quality of the medicinal pills was incredible; they had at least eighty percent medicinal strength. Most importantly, these pills were no ordinary product. They were medicinal pills belonging to an Inner Sect disciple of the ancient Demon Immortal Sect. To Cultivators from the lands of South Heaven, they could be described as Immortal Pills.

In fact, if this pill bottle surfaced somewhere within the lands of South Heaven, it would cause a huge commotion even among the various great Sects.

Meng Hao hesitated for a moment, gritting his teeth before finally taking

one of the pills and putting it into his mouth. Even before the pill could dissolve, a roaring sound filled Meng Hao's mind. At the same time, and indescribable, boundless power completely inundated him. It was like an endless, furious sea, and he was a tiny, leaf-like boat, weak enough to be destroyed with a single blow.

Meng Hao immediately spit the pill out of his mouth. A few hours passed, and it was light outside, before he finally opened his eyes.

After opening his eyes, he checked his Cultivation base, and quickly frowned. It hadn't increased even in the slightest. It was as if everything truly was illusory.

"Useless...." he said, sighing. Although he had assumed this would happen, he still couldn't help but feel some regret. He stood and looked out at the rising sun, and suddenly, his heart trembled.

"Medicinal pills don't work, and I can't increase my Cultivation base. However, what about the various techniques and regions of the Demon Immortal Sect focused on cultivating the fleshly body?" It was not very likely that techniques existed that could quickly be learned and used to increase the power of the fleshly body. However, there were areas in the Sect specifically set aside for fleshly body cultivation. Meng Hao knew this from Ke Jiusi's memories.

One of them was none other than the Underworld Cave of the Fourth Peak.

Within the Underworld Cave was an inexhaustible supply of Underworld Death Sand, which came from the Underworld River. Any Cultivator who entered the Underworld Cave without a powerful body would have their skin shredded off, their blood and muscles ground into a paste, and their bones crushed.

At the same time, because the Underworld Death Sand was filled with the pinnacle of death, that meant it was also filled with the pinnacle of life. It contained the power to cause one's Qi and blood to develop with vigor. By practicing cultivation inside the Underworld Cave, it was possible to cause one's fleshly body to grow stronger and stronger.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he headed toward the cave. As soon as he arrived, the guards, two Fourth Peak Conclave Disciples, instantly stared in shock. In all the years they had stood guard here, they had never once seen the Little Patriarch step foot inside.

They immediately greeted him with clasped hands. After hearing his demands, the Conclave Disciples' foreheads began to drip with cold sweat. They immediately tried to advise him against such a course of action, but seeing that he was determined, could only brace themselves and begin to open the cave.

"Little Patriarch, it's very dangerous in there. You... you could always find some other places to temper your fleshly body, you know? You really shouldn't go inside...."

Meng Hao nodded in response. As the Conclave disciples opened the cave, a glowing light appeared in the stone wall. Meng Hao strode forward into the light.

As soon as he entered, everything went pitch black. Before he could see anything clearly, stabbing pain covered his entire body. It seemed as if an innumerable amount of gritty sand covered everything, surrounding his body. In the blink of an eye, Meng Hao's body was on the verge of collapse.

Enduring the pain, he instantly entered the Seventh Anima.

Boom!

His body grew larger as the battle prowess of sixty-four great circle Nascent Souls filled him. His fleshly body exploded with intense power. However, the pain that he felt only continued to grow stronger.

After ten breaths of time passed, blood spouted from his mouth and he tumbled backward. He shot out of the exit at top speed, leaving the terrifying world of flying sand.

As soon as he emerged, he sat down cross-legged to meditate. His entire body was a bloody mess, and looked shocking to the extreme. The Conclave disciples responsible for the Underworld Cave felt their hearts

pounding with fear that he might unexpectedly pass away.

Four hours passed. Meng Hao's fleshly body was now completely recovered. He opened his eyes, and although he looked exhausted, he quickly checked his body. An intense light gleamed within his eyes, a look filled with excitement.

"My fleshly body... can be cultivated!" Although he wasn't sure he would be able to keep such a powerful fleshly body after he left this place, he did know that the feeling of power he was experiencing in his fleshly body seemed completely real.

"If I can combine some body refining techniques like the Mountain Consuming Incantation or the Demon Animas Nine Transformations... then my efficiency would be incredible!" His eyes shining with anticipation, he turned and headed back toward the Immortal's cave. The instant he stepped foot inside, Xu Qing opened her eyes and looked with excitement at Meng Hao. A warm smile appeared on her face.

Chapter 577: Silkpants Demon Entente

Time passed by. In the blink of an eye, more than ten days had gone by. The Fourth Peak disciples gradually came to notice that their Little Patriarch, the number one silkpants bully, had experienced a change of temperament recently. Unexpectedly, he hadn't stepped foot out of the Fourth Peak at all recently.

He would spend all day gaining enlightenment of Daoist magic, or would temper his fleshly body in the Underworld Cave. It was actually so unusual that the Fourth Peak disciples were alarmed. Even Ke Yunhai could scarcely believe it. After observing Ke Jiusi a few times, a contented smile could be seen on Ke Yunhai's face.

Meng Hao was thoroughly immersed in practicing cultivation. He completely ignored all outside matters, even the awakening of all the other South Heaven Cultivators.

The fleshly body tempering caused him to grow much stronger with each passing day. At the moment, he maintained his place in the First Anima, and yet, the strength of his fleshly body was equivalent to that when he entered the Second Anima.

Such an increase caused Meng Hao to realize which direction his path lay!

"If I could reach the point where my fleshly body in the First Anima was as strong as it normally is in the Seventh Anima, then even if I have no change in Cultivation base, my fleshly body might be able to reach the point of... Spirit Severing!" His heart beat rapidly. As of this point, he truly felt that the fleshly body cultivation of the Second Plane was just as important as mastering techniques.

It was an incredible opportunity available only to him. In the past, there had never been a Cultivator who could acquire such good fortune in the Second Plane.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, and a bright glow appeared in his eyes.

Recently, he and Xu Qing had been spending time gaining enlightenment of the three hundred Daoist magics. Of course, they each focused on different specific types of Daoist magic. When Meng Hao came to the conclusion that he couldn't gain enlightenment with one, then he would immediately switch to another.

During the ten days, he managed to look through all three hundred. In the end, there were three that he chose to initially focus his attention on. One was the Mountain Consuming Incantation, the second was the Heavenly Demon Transformation, and the last was...

None other than Ke Jiusi's Soul Divergence Incantation!

"The Mountain Consuming Incantation is both an internal and external cultivation technique. However, the main focus is cultivation of the fleshly body. By practicing such cultivation to the pinnacle, one could become a Human Immortal!

"As for the Heavenly Demon Transformation, it is ranked 96.... It's terrifying, a magical technique that requires a Demon Soul. By fusing the Demon Soul into one's body, one can incarnate into a Greater Demon. There are nineteen levels, each of which can incarnate a different Greater Demon of Heaven and Earth!

"Regarding the Soul Divergence Incantation... it is an undying Dao!" Meng Hao's eyes glowed with a strange light. Of these three Daoist magics, the Soul Divergence Incantation was the most mysterious. It was actually not one of the Demon Immortal Sect's three thousand Daoist magics, but rather, something Ke Yunhai had acquired on his own by chance. Based on his own Cultivation base and knowledge, he knew that it could be considered a precious treasure. However, it was not suitable for him in terms of cultivation, which was why he had recommended it to Ke Jiusi.

The Soul Divergence Incantation enabled one to cultivate an undying soul. The reincarnation of Heaven and Earth could do nothing to destroy such a soul. Even when one died, in a matter of years, a flesh and blood body would be reborn.

This art... defied Heaven!

The more Meng Hao understood these various techniques, the more he realized how magnificently shocking the Demon Immortal Sect was. During the ten days that passed, he took time to observe some of the other disciples of the Demon Immortal Sect as they practiced their cultivation. During that time, he was actually able to sense a totemic aura.

In fact, there were some of the three hundred Daoist magics that, when he examined them more closely, obviously required totem tattoos once a certain level of cultivation was reached.

This discovery validated some of Meng Hao speculations from years ago. It seemed that the totemic neo-demons of the Western Desert likely originated somehow from the Immortal Demon Sect.

Meng Hao's shock only continued to grow as he learned more about the Demon Immortal Sect. He focused on cultivating the Mountain Consuming Incantation and the Heavenly Demon Transformation, although he placed the most emphasis on the former. As for the Heavenly Demon Transformation, he didn't intend to thoroughly gain enlightenment of it, although he had noticed some similarities between it and his Seven Animas Soul Transformation.

As far as the Soul Divergence Incantation went, it was a shocking art, but something that he would be incapable of success when it came to enlightenment.

Time passed quickly. Soon, Meng Hao had been in the Second Plane for a whole month. During that time, Xu Qing did not leave the Immortal's cave. She was fully immersed in gaining enlightenment of Daoist magic. Eventually, Meng Hao completely gave up on the Soul Divergence Incantation and the Heavenly Demon Transformation, and instead focused complete attention on cultivating the Mountain Consuming Incantation.

He would also take time to visit the Underworld Cave, where he continued to temper his fleshly body. By now, he could stay inside the Underworld Cave for a full thirty breaths of time. The strength of his

fleshly body was now quite obvious.

In fact, when the other silkpants who had been punished with Meng Hao came to visit him on the Fourth Peak, they were astonished by the huge change that had occurred in the past month.

“After getting punished, I thought of something,” said Meng Hao. “If my fleshly body was strong enough, then maybe that punishment wouldn’t have hurt so much.” When he saw the strange expressions of the faces of the other silkpants, he cleared his throat and then continued on honestly, “I have the feeling that one of these days, I might experience five lashes, maybe even six or more. If I don’t temper my fleshly body enough before that happens, I’ll have no choice but to be lashed into a pulp.” Hearing this, the other silkpants seemed lost in thought. Apparently, what Meng Hao was saying made sense to them.

A while after that, Meng Hao called Xu Qing. Together with the other silkpants, they left the Fourth Peak for the first time in a month. As soon as they appeared outside, a rumbling sound could be heard, and a white lotus appeared up in the air.

When other disciples on the various peaks saw the lotus, they lowered their heads vigilantly. They all knew that the Sect ruffians who had been quiet for the past month, were now going to make another appearance.

Meng Hao stood in the crowd, exchanging greetings with the various friends who approached. It didn’t take long before he was surrounded by over a hundred people. Together, they flew wildly through the Demon Immortal Sect, the sound of their talking and laughing drifting out with the wind. When the others saw that Xu Qing was with Meng Hao, they exchanged understanding smiles, and did their best to pay special attention to her.

Soon, the group neared a squat mountain that was part of the Seventh Peak of the Demon Immortal Sect. This mountain was an unofficial restricted area within the Sect.

It was not officially a restricted area; it was actually a location that the Sect silkpants had taken over to serve as their headquarters. Afterwards, it

became a restricted area as far as other disciples of the Demon Immortal Sect were concerned.

On top of the squat mountain was a luxurious temple. Meng Hao sat in the seat of honor, surrounded by a crowd of people. Some arranged themselves in places according to the ranking of their various Clan ancestors. Soon, there were roughly seventy or eighty people seated about. They laugh and chatted about gossip from within the Sect, or their interesting experiences on the outside.

Next to Meng Hao sat a handsome young man with black wings who was embracing a smiling female disciple. "Jiusi," he said, "my kid brother knows a few Inner Sect disciples who want to join our Demon Entente. I told him to bring them here today for us to have a look at. If there aren't any problems, we might as well let them in."

Meng Hao was not unfamiliar with the Demon Entente. He knew from Ke Jiusi's memories that it was nothing more than an alliance formed by the silkpants. All members who joined would enjoy the protection offered by other silkpants.

Of course, a price needed to be paid, considering that the operation was privately run by the silkpants.

The Demon Immortal Sect turned a blind eye to the matter, and would ignore them, unless they caused too much of a ruckus. After all, the Elders of this Demon Entente were all silkpants who had deep roots within the Sect. Although they might do a lot of absurd things, when it came to loyalty, theirs was far greater than that of the ordinary disciples.

Meng Hao nodded his head in response to the young man's word. He lifted up a glass of alcohol and took a drink. Sitting next to him was Xu Qing, who was looking around curiously at the crowds. She still almost couldn't believe the identity Meng Hao had acquired.

Not too much time passed before the disciples who wished to join the Demon Entente arrived. They entered the temple trembling, looking nervously at the silkpants around them. After quickly handing over the gifts of entry they had brought, they clasped hands and bowed to everyone.

One group after another entered. After a bit of time past, Meng Hao caught sight of a group of three Cultivators, two men and a woman, all of whom seemed very nervous. However, from what Meng Hao could tell, the nervousness was an act. Deep in their eyes, it was possible to sense that they actually despised everyone they were looking at, and Meng Hao could see that.

As soon as he saw them, Meng Hao started laughing. It was at this point that the three people saw that sitting in the seat of highest authority among the silkpants was none other than Meng Hao.

When they saw him, the three Inner Sect disciples began to shake, and their eyes filled with disbelief.

They recognized Meng Hao, and Meng Hao recognized the aura of their souls.

The woman in the group of three was none other than Ji Xiaoxiao. One of them was a stranger to Meng Hao, but he gave off a similar feeling as Ji Mingfeng had. Meng Hao was certain that he was a member of the Ji Clan.

Meng Hao was a bit surprised to see the last person. He had to think for a moment before he realized who it was. Song Yunshu! 1

He was none other than the Dao Child of the Song Clan of the Southern Domain. During the Song Clan search for a son-in-law, Meng Hao had come in first place, and had actually become the husband of the beloved daughter of the Song Clan, Song Jia. Although he had never thought about the matter much, after seeing Song Yunshu here today, he recalled who the man was.

“Interesting,” said Meng Hao, his eyes shining coldly. “Who would have thought that I would meet the three of you here?!”

Next to Meng Hao, Xu Qing smiled as she looked at the group of three.

These three could never have imagined that they would run into Meng Hao in this place. Their faces instantly fell. Meng Hao’s identity also caused them to be thoroughly astonished. They were well aware of what it meant that Meng Hao was sitting in such a position as he was.

However, the more shocked they were, the more difficult they found it to believe. They also were completely astonished when they realized that Meng Hao's appearance hadn't changed.

"He... he actually acquired the identity of an Elite Apprentice!" thought Ji Xiaoxiao, her eyes widening. "Ke Jiusi! To get Ke Jiusi as a host body, that's... that's impossible! Elite Apprentice! That's the kind of host body that exists only in legend!" She began to pant as her mind reeled.

Next to her was the other member of the Ji Clan. He didn't know Meng Hao, but he knew that the person sitting in that position could only be the legendary number one bully of the Sect, Ke Jiusi. His heart trembled as he realized that Meng Hao was just like him, an outsider.

That in itself was enough to leave him flabbergasted. However, even more shocking was that he suddenly recalled that Ke Jiusi had killed a Conclave disciple of the First Peak nearly a month ago.

Instantly, he began to put the pieces of the puzzle together....

"He killed Ji Mingfeng!" he cried inwardly. "This is bad! If he knows that I know, he'll kill me to shut me up!!" The Ji Clan member's face fell. In actuality, he had wanted Ji Mingfeng dead more than anybody else, but nobody knew that.

Song Yunshu stood there in a daze. Although Meng Hao's appearance hadn't changed, he instantly began to suspect if what he was seeing was true. But then Meng Hao laughed. That expression caused Song Yunshu to recall the image from that year of the person who had become his brother-in-law, Meng Hao.

"Elite Apprentice.... He's actually... an Elite Apprentice!!"

*

1. Song Yunshu was introduced when Meng Hao visited the Song Clan. He appeared first in chapter 192, as well as several subsequent chapters. He was also present during the events of the Primordial Dao

Geyser, starting in chapter 264 as well as a handful of chapters after that.

Chapter 578: Dad....

The young man with the back wings was named Yu Xinglong. He looked thoughtfully at the group of three for a moment, then turned to Meng Hao. "Jiusi, do you know them?"

The other surrounding silkpants naturally looked over at the strange scene, their eyes glittering. They were now no longer chatting.

Instantly, the entire temple hall grew silent. Within the silence, Ji Xiaoxiao and the other two felt an intense pressure, causing an unprecedented sense of deadly crisis to fill them.

"Cheater!" thought Ji Xiaoxiao. "He's a cheater! Otherwise he could never become an Elite Apprentice!? How... how are other people supposed to acquire legacies here? How are other people supposed to survive!?!?" Her eyes were wide and sweat poured down her forehead. She looked like she was about to cry as she edged backward. However, the looks being given to her by the surrounding silkpants, who in her view were already dead, caused the sense of deadly crisis within her to climb to the pinnacle.

The male member of the Ji Clan was proud to the extreme, but at the moment... he couldn't summon a scrap of pride. "This isn't fair!" he thought. "How did he get his hands on such an identity...? How are the rest of us supposed to acquire any good fortune? Just from the look on his face you can tell that if he gets pissed off, he can say a word and... we'll all be dead!! If our souls die in here, then we're truly dead!"

"Of course I know them," said Meng Hao, smiling and standing up. "Close the doors!"

As soon as the words left his mouth, the main doors of the temple hall slammed shut. Glowing lights enveloped the doors, and at the same time, virtually all of the silkpants in the hall rose to their feet.

This was the Demon Entente. This was their headquarters. If they killed people here... it wouldn't be without repercussion, and there would certainly be punishments doled out. But they had plenty of measures to evade such punishment. If they wanted to, they could crush these three

where they stood.

Meng Hao smiled and said, "I remember that the Third Peak has a Soul Scorching Cave. I can tell the three of us are bound by destiny. That doesn't happen very often. Therefore, I'll send you to the Soul Scorching Cave to train for a month.

"If you succeed, you're into the Demon Entente. If you fail, then your death has nothing to do with us." As his voice echoed out throughout the hall, the other silkpants burst out laughing.

The faces of the three South Heaven Cultivators instantly went pale. Song Yunshu reluctantly said, "Can we... think about it?"

"Think about it? Entering the Demon Entente temple clearly shows your intentions. If you back out now, then you're directly humiliating the Demon Entente. Do you dare to humiliate the Demon Entente? Do you dare to humiliate US?!" Meng Hao's voice grew louder and louder as he spoke, causing dark looks to appear in the eyes of all the other silkpants.

"Brothers from the Third Peak, please take them away. As for this one...." His eyes fell onto Song Yunshu, and it almost seemed as if he were looking at a dead person. "Forget about him."

Song Yunshu heaved a sigh of relief. Only a short moment had passed, but his entire body was already soaked with sweat.

Laughter filled the air as a dozen or so Third Peak silkpants flew out. They grabbed Ji Xiaoxiao and the other person, and then started to fly off. In this moment of crisis, Ji Xiaoxiao gritted her teeth and then anxiously called out, "I know where Ji Mingfeng's corpse is! He has a bag of holding with treasures in it. I can take you there!"

The other Ji Clan Cultivator's face fell, and he also called out, "Ji Mingfeng was unlucky! He picked the wrong time and then died before he came here! Nobody killed him! He died naturally!! I witnessed it myself! Since I was there, I couldn't possibly be mistaken!"

The words spoken by the two of them essentially meant the same thing; they were giving their dark vow to join this shady organization.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he pointed at the male Ji Clan Cultivator and said, "Take him away."

The face of the Ji Clan member flickered, and he was about to offer more explanations when the dozen or so Third Peak silkpants, having already been roused into action, whisked the man off before he could do anything further.

Song Yunshu's face was pale, and his mind was reeling.

Breathing raggedly, Ji Xiaoxiao pushed her hand down onto her forehead, causing a soul strand to fly toward Meng Hao. Meng Hao looked at her with an enigmatic smile and then accepting the soul strand.

"Welcome to the Demon Entente," said Meng Hao with a smile. The doors of the temple slowly opened. The observing silkpants knew that not all was as it seemed. However, everything was a matter of perspective, and to them, Ke Jiusi was part of their group, whereas everyone else was an outsider.

Ji Xiaoxiao forced a smile, then clasped hands and bowed. Inwardly, she sighed. She understood that from now on, she would have to try to convince other members of the Ji Clan that Ji Mingfeng had died because of an error in selecting the time period. That was why he had been killed the instant he appeared.

If anyone didn't believe her, then as soon as Meng Hao faced any trouble, she too would be in a bad situation. Having reached this conclusion, killing intent flickered in her eyes. Some of it was for Meng Hao, the other was for her fellow Clan members.

Outside, the sun was beginning to set. As everyone began to depart, Meng Hao noticed Song Yunshu's absentminded expression, and suddenly realized that, considering Ji Xiaoxiao's ruthlessness, this Song Clan Dao Child was surely heading for a catastrophe.

Meng Hao shook his head, then paid the matter no more heed as he headed back toward the Fourth Peak with Xu Qing.

More time passed.

Everything was peaceful. Each morning at dawn, Meng Hao would go to observe and study the Fourth Peak to gain enlightenment of the Mountain Consuming Incantation. Other times, he would go to the Underworld Cave to practice fleshly body tempering.

Another month passed. Meng Hao wasn't sure how the passage of time in the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane compared to that in the outside world. In any case, he had acquired quite a bit during these two months.

The Mountain Consuming Incantation was now in an embryonic form within him. He had succeeded in branding it into his mind. Furthermore, his fleshly body tempering had also succeeded to quite a degree. By now, his normal body was as tough as it had been in the Third Anima.

"It's too bad the Soul Divergence Incantation... seems like a normal technique, but actually requires a very special environment." Meng Hao felt it to be somewhat of a pity. He was starting to get the feeling that if he could master the technique, he would be able to make shocking gains within the Demon Immortal Sect.

In fact, he was now beginning to suspect that the Soul Divergence Incantation was the reason Ke Jiusi was still alive within the First Plane.

"The cultivation of this art is filled with profound mysteries. An undying soul...."

As for Xu Qing, she was completely submerged in the three hundred Daoist magics. Meng Hao did not disturb her. After all, gaining enlightenment of such Daoist magic was the most important thing for her and the others.

Meng Hao could tell that Xu Qing was extraordinarily qualified to seek enlightenment of the Daoist magic. Some of it had to do with the latent talent of her own soul, and some of it had to do with her host body.

Several days later, Meng Hao was floating cross-legged in mid-air, studying the Fourth Peak. All of a sudden, Ke Yunhai's voice could be heard in his ears.

"Come see me," said the low voice. Meng Hao's eyes instantly snapped

open.

Without hesitation, his body flashed as he headed toward Ke Yunhai's Immortal's cave. It didn't take him long to arrive, and when he entered and saw Ke Yunhai, his face fell.

Ke Yunhai now looked nothing like the middle-aged man he had been two months ago. He was much older, thoroughly ancient, his head full of white hair.

He sat cross-legged on the stone bed, just like he had before. However, the oil lamp next to him was much dimmer than before.

When he saw the look on Meng Hao's face, Ke Yunhai said, "Don't worry, your dad isn't dead yet." He smiled, his eyes filled with kindness and expectation, and even more so, a reluctance to part.

Meng Hao wasn't sure why he felt the emotions that he did. He had known all along that something like this would happen; but to see Ke Yunhai change into a white-haired old man in front of his own eyes, to see the aura of death around him grow stronger and stronger... it filled his heart with emptiness.

Not much time had passed, but the fatherly love from Ke Yunhai that Meng Hao felt made him think of his own father. At the moment, all he could do was stand there silently.

"You've done well recently," said Ke Yunhai. "You haven't brought about any more disasters for me to deal with. Since you've decided to focus on body tempering, then let me tell you about one of the three thousand Daoist magics that should be especially useful to you. It's called the Nine Heavens Treasured Body Seal. It's a Daoist magic that fuses magical items into your fleshly body, turning it into a treasure. By combining it with the Mountain Consuming Incantation, you can make your body into something like a mountain.

"In the rankings of the three thousand Daoist magics, it is number 9!" His voice was very dignified by the time he finished speaking.

"There is another art called Fleshly Sanctification! It is extremely

extraordinary. It would be better to call it a technique than a secret art. If you can master it, then your fleshly body can grow exponentially powerful in the blink of an eye, and stay that way forever.

“Such a mysterious art is extremely rare. In my entire life, I’ve only heard of two such arts. As far the specific details of how much it can strengthen your body, father doesn’t know. What I do know is that among the three thousand Daoist magics, it is ranked... number 7!

“Regarding the top ten Daoist magics among the three thousand, even I have no way to acquire them, not even with further service to the Sect. Lord Li has set rules regarding the top ten. All of them, with the exception of the legacy of the Mountain and Sea Scripture, can only be acquired by entering the Demon Immortal Pagoda.

“It is not easy to open the pagoda. The seven great Sect Priests must all join hands to do so. The pagoda has 99 levels. Every ten levels, there is a chance to acquire a Daoist magic.

“I’ve paid a heavy price to convince the other six Sect Priests to agree to open the pagoda for you two times. You need to seize these two chances, and fight to acquire the Daoist magic that you need!” Ke Yunhai spoke all these words casually. However, from the fluctuations on his ancient face, Meng Hao could guess that despite his light tone, he really had paid an incredible price.

If he hadn’t, the other six Sect Priests would never have agreed to open the Demon Immortal Pagoda.

“Furthermore,” continued Ke Yunhai, “although both instances of the Demon Immortal Pagoda opening have been arranged specifically for you, in order to cut down on gossip, others will also be allowed to enter.

“You don’t need to worry. Although the difficulty level within the pagoda is extreme, father has prepared quite a few magical items for you. I spared no cost to give you your chance to get the special body tempering Daoist magics.” As he spoke, a reddish glow appeared in Ke Yunhai’s face. The glow was not ordinary, and almost looked like the last glow of light before sunset. He waved his hand, and a beastskin bag flew out in front of Meng

Hao.

“Inside you will find 5,000 magical items, 30,000 Demon Weapons, 150,000 talismanic seals, and 1,000,000 Demon Stones. Take them. Even if you have to force your way through, then do it! Get to the top for me! Get those Daoist magics that you need!” From the way he looked at Meng Hao as he spoke, it was clear how much he doted upon him. Meng Hao’s heart began to tremble as he looked at the beastskin bag. He took it in his hand and then scanned it with Divine Sense. His entire body shook.

It was clear that virtually all of the items inside emanated a fresh, new aura. Within that aura could be sensed a bit of Ke Yunhai.

Shockingly, all of these items... had been personally forged by Ke Yunhai during the past two months.

Even as his allocated lifespan reached its end, he had expended no effort to refine all of these objects for his son. Embodied here was the love of a father for his child; after all, of the items had been refined with his own life force.

When Meng Hao spoke, his voice was not carefully controlled like it had been before. As of this moment, he had forgotten about Ke Jiusi. This time... the words came up from the depths of his heart. He was so moved by Ke Yunhai, so envious of this life, felt so many complex thoughts and emotions, that all he could do was look up and softly murmur, “Dad....”

Chapter 579: To Get the Mountain and Sea Scripture, You Must Have a Demon Immortal Body!

“Stop acting like a little kid,” said Ke Yunhai, the love in his eyes growing even deeper. “Concentrate wholeheartedly on your cultivation. It’s a good thing! I just wish... that you had started acting like this a bit sooner.

“Alright, go. The Demon Immortal Pagoda opens in three days. If you can get some of what you want, then it won’t have been in vain that I got them to open it for you.” He gave Meng Hao a deep look.

Meng Hao bowed his head, then clasped his hands. Clutching the beastskin bag in his hand, he left, taking his melancholy and other complex emotions with him.

As he watched Meng Hao leave, Ke Yunhai’s face was no longer ruddy, but pale white. More wrinkles appeared, and the death aura surrounding him grew stronger. It seemed as if his flame of life could be snuffed out at any moment.

“Jiusi, your father can’t be with you forever. Soon... you’ll have only yourself to rely on.... I hope that you can learn to be a bit more sensible....” Ke Yunhai only continued to grow older. Originally, his Cultivation base had nearly limitless longevity. However, Lord Li had returned the Heavenly mandate to the masses. In the end, life would wither and die. As for Ke Yunhai, he had existed for a very, very long time. Currently, he was running out of energy to continue existing.

Actually, he should have withered up and died many years ago. However, because of his concern for Ke Jiusi, he continued to endure. Eventually, though he found that, no matter how much he wanted to continue on, he wouldn’t be able to do so for much longer.

“Lord Li, I will respect your decision. However... are you sure it is the correct one? If we powerful experts do not have limitless life, then what we are cultivating is not longevity. In that case, what is the end purpose of

it all?" Ke Yunhai sighed and closed his eyes. However, only a moment passed before they opened again. Exhaustion could be seen within, but also, a bright glow, like the last flickering of a bright fire before it went out.

"Now is not the time for me to close my eyes. Before returning to the dust, I need to finish refining that true lifesaving treasure for Jiusi. I've been working on it for years, and only have a bit more work left.... Once it's complete, then even if he hasn't successfully refined the Soul Divergence Incantation, even nine Tribulations couldn't kill him. In fact, it might even help him to finish cultivating the Soul Divergence Incantation!"

After returning to his own Immortal's cave, Meng Hao saw that Xu Qing was still sitting there meditating, silently focusing on cultivating enlightenment. Meng Hao sat down and glanced around at the extravagant decorations on the walls of the Immortal's cave.

After a long time passed, he looked down at the beastskin bag. It actually wasn't very heavy, but for some reason, in Meng Hao's hands, it felt very heavy indeed. What truly filled the bag wasn't actually magical items, but rather, a father's love for his son.

It contained his very life, and the truest of his feelings.

Finally, Meng Hao sighed. He closed his eyes and thought once again about his own father and mother, and the vague images of them that still existed within his memories.

Time passed. Three days were gone in the blink of an eye.

The echoing of bell tolls could be heard throughout the entire Demon Immortal Sect. Countless disciples, awoken from their sleep, flew out of their residences. All of them were astonished, and wanted to know what was going on. What they found was that in mid-air above the Demon Immortal Sect, pulsating, multicolored lights had suddenly appeared.

Rays of light spread out in all directions, covering the sky. The light made the three inverted mountains which hung up above to be even clearer.

As the light grew more intense, innumerable Cultivators appeared on the seven peaks of the Demon Immortal Sect. All of them were shaken inwardly. Some were old veterans of the Sect, whose expressions slowly began to change, as if they had suddenly recalled something. Their eyes filled with disbelief.

The bright glow lasted for a full quarter of an hour. Then, in the very center of the glow appeared an enormous fissure. It looked like a huge mouth with no beginning or end. The instant it appeared, a shocking rumbling sound echoed out as a glowing, bronze pagoda slowly emerged from within the fissure.

Each level of the pagoda had four iron chains stretching out into the air. There were a total of 99 levels, and therefore, nearly four hundred iron chains. Anyone who laid eyes on such a shocking scene would definitely be left astonished.

In the blink of an eye, the enormous pagoda had emerged. Rumbling echoed out in all directions and the ground quaked. The bronze pagoda slowly lowered down from the sky, growing larger and larger, until it seemed to blot out the sky above. Even though it was early morning, it almost seemed like the dead of night.

Finally, the enormous pagoda descended toward a spot between the Fourth and Third Peaks, directly above... the deep pit, which according to legend, housed the great Demon Divinity that protected the entire Sect.

It did not touch down onto the land, but rather, hovered up above. A huge shadow filled the sky above the Demon Immortal Sect. The pagoda appeared to be above the deep pit, but that was actually only the center location. In reality... if you looked at it from a distance, the pagoda seemed to cover the entire Demon Immortal Sect.

Beneath the darkness of the pagoda was not just the deep pit, but all seven peaks and the lands around them!

All of the Demon Immortal Sect disciples were panting and staring numbly.

Shockingly, on the 1st level of the pagoda was a huge bronze door

covered with carvings of countless auspicious beasts, which emanated an archaic and primordial will.

The gigantic pagoda was shocking to the extreme. Compared to its huge size, the Cultivators below were nothing more than ants. Even the seven peaks looked like children in comparison.

It was at this point that seven suns, each one a different color, flew out from the seven peaks. As they slowly flew up into the air, the disciples in the Demon Immortal Sect all dropped to their knees to kowtow.

Within these seven suns sat seven cross-legged figures. They... were the seven Paragons of the seven peaks!

Within the fourth sun was none other than Ke Yunhai.

As the seven Paragons flew up into the sky, each one raised a hand and pointed toward the bronze pagoda. Instantly, a roaring sound could be heard as the huge bronze door on the 1st level suddenly... opened slightly!

Although the door only opened a crack, this pagoda was enormous. What appeared to be only a tiny sliver was actually three hundred meters wide!

The deep voice of the Seventh Peak Paragon suddenly rang out, "The Demon Immortal Pagoda has opened. In total, there are 99 levels. There is a chance on every level to acquire one of the 3,000 Daoist magics. Every ten levels, there is a chance to get one of the top 100. In the higher levels, there is even a chance to acquire Daoist magics from the top 10! The 70th, 80th, and 90th levels all provide that chance!

"If you pass the 99th level... you may select any of the top 10 Daoist magics, with the exception of the Mountain and Sea Scripture!

"Every time the pagoda is opened, it requires a vast consumption of Sect resources. Today, all of you will have a chance. Whichever of you has good luck, will be able to acquire good fortune." The voice echoed throughout the entire Demon Immortal Sect. As it faded away, a deathly silence spread out among the million disciples of the Demon Immortal Sect.

It only took a moment, though, before an incredible commotion

exploded out.

“The Demon Immortal Pagoda.... Is that the Demon Immortal Pagoda? Heavens! It’s... it’s huge!”

“That’s the most important pagoda in the First Heaven of the Demon Immortal Sect. It’s a precious treasure of the same level as the Mountain and Sea Scripture!”

Amidst the rise and fall of conversation, there was a female Cultivator who stood on the Fifth Peak, her fists clenched tightly. It was none other than Fang Yu, her eyes shining with determination and wild joy.

“I never thought that there would be such good fortune this time!” she thought. “The Demon Immortal Pagoda has actually appeared in this period of time!” Her eyes glowed with stubbornness.

At the same time, a middle-aged man stood at the foot of the Seventh Peak. He was an Inner Sect disciple honor guard in charge of Outer Sect disciples. He stood, looking up at the enormous Demon Immortal Pagoda up in the sky, his hands clasped behind his back and a strange light gleaming in his eyes.

“I thought my good fortune would be restricted to the gains in the Seventh Peak, and that it would be difficult to acquire at that. But now that the Demon Immortal Pagoda has appeared, my chances have improved quite a bit!” This middle-aged man was the same person Meng Hao had been looking for: Patriarch Huyan.

Throughout the Demon Immortal Sect, Wang Lihai, Han Bei, and the other South Heaven Cultivators were all shaken. It didn’t matter if they were from the Eastern Lands, the Northern Reaches, the Southern Domain, or the Black Lands. All of them were astonished.

Amongst their number was an Inner Sect disciple from the Third Peak. He was a young man who up until this moment had spent his time bowing obsequiously to everyone around him. However, in the blink of an eye, he suddenly stood ramrod straight. Within his eyes flickered a bright glow, and an aura that almost seemed to contain the will of a monarch flickered out from his body.

This young man was from the Northern Reaches, and was of the Imperial Bloodline Clan!

He was not the only such blazing sun within the Demon Immortal Sect. There were others, all of whom suddenly rose up with lofty wills.

One of them was on the Sixth Peak. It was a young woman who shockingly wore the robes of a Conclave disciple. Other than Meng Hao, she had a higher position than anyone else from the Southern Domain.

She blinked a few times as she looked over toward the Fourth Peak and the Demon Immortal Pagoda. Then she smiled.

“Meng Hao really does have some pretty good luck. He found the corpse of one of the Elite Disciples, and in the few months before Ke Yunhai passed away in meditation at that.

“For the Demon Immortal Pagoda to appear in this Second Plane of limitless possibilities is nothing strange. It’s just like the real world. After all, with the Night Demon in existence, Heaven and Earth can create something from nothing. Even the traitorous Lord Ji was rather frightened.”

Naturally, this woman was Zhixiang.

“The Demon Immortal Pagoda has been opened!” As the archaic voice of the Seventh Peak Paragon sounded out, thousands of figures instantly flew up into the air toward the pagoda.

Meng Hao and Xu Qing walked out of the Immortal Cave and looked up at the towering pagoda. Xu Qing’s eyes filled with a glow of determination. She looked down at the jade slip in her hand and chuckled silently.

“I won’t be going,” she said. “These three hundred Daoist magics are good enough.”

Meng Hao nodded. He knew Xu Qing’s disposition, so he did nothing to try to persuade her to change her mind. He took a deep breath and looked up toward Ke Yunhai’s sun up in the sky. He could see the silhouette of the ancient man he had spoken with only three days before. After a moment of silent contemplation, his eyes flickered with decisiveness.

“Whether it’s for me or for Ke Yunhai, I’m going to go absolutely all out!” His body flickered as he flew up into the air toward the Demon Immortal Pagoda that had been opened especially for him. Up above, the figures in the seven suns, the seven Paragons, all looked at Meng Hao.

Within Ke Yunhai’s eyes could be seen hope as he watched Meng Hao disappear into the pagoda.

At the same time, more and more figures flew up and entered. In a very short period of time, more than 100,000 people had entered the 1st level of the Demon Immortal Pagoda.

Down below were even more people who chose just to watch. Since they only had this one chance, they decided to first observe for a while to see if they could derive any benefits.

“Back in the Sect, there’s a detailed description of the Demon Immortal Pagoda,” thought Zhixiang. “The pagoda doesn’t test the level of one’s Cultivation base, nor the quality of one’s latent talent. What it tests is a person’s overall battle prowess.

“The level of difficulty is the same for every person, regardless of the level of their Cultivation base. A Cultivator in the Qi Condensation stage and an Immortal would both have the same chance. Each participant will face different opponents, based on their own strength.

“I’m curious how far that brat Meng Hao will get. What level will he reach?” Zhixiang didn’t immediately enter the pagoda. As far as she was concerned, while it was shocking enough to shake Heaven and Earth, at the same time, it wasn’t something very important to her.

Her main purpose here was not to seek out Daoist magic. No, she was here... for the number one battle body of the Demon Immortal Sect, that which could shake the Ninth Mountain and Sea... the Demon Immortal Body!

Regardless of past times or present, the Demon Immortal Body was incredible and illustrious. In fact, Lord Li possessed such a body in the past. According to hearsay, if one wished to acquire the Mountain and Sea Scripture, one had to possess the Demon Immortal Body!

Zhixiang made her decision. “When the matter with the pagoda is over, I’ll go find that brat!”

Chapter 580: The Path of Good Fortune

Outside the Demon Immortal Pagoda, a million Cultivators scattered to the area outside of the various mountain peaks. That was the only place where they could view its exterior.

A million disciples formed a ring around the pagoda, which they all stared at fixedly.

What they saw was nearly a 100,000 bright dots of light appear on the 1st level of the pagoda. They were densely packed together, and each one represented a disciple of the Demon Immortal Sect.

“I wonder what it’s like inside?” murmured a Conclave disciple from the First Peak as he looked at the dots of light.

Similar questions were going through the minds of all the disciples who were watching the Demon Immortal Pagoda.

However, before they could put much thought to it, roughly half of the 100,000 dots of light suddenly vanished. A moment later, tens of thousands of Cultivators were ejected out into the air, blood spraying from their mouths as they tumbled backward.

There were even some who were knocked completely unconscious.

The sight immediately caused everyone to gasp. However, at the same time, a dot of light appeared on the previously dark 2nd level!

“Someone made it past the 1st level!”

“How much time has passed? Someone already made it past the 1st level!” The buzz of conversation filled the air.

Fang Yu’s pupils constricted as she watched on silently.

Wang Lihai was also in the crowds of people, frowning.

The young man from the Northern Reaches stood there, his eyes glittering brightly. Generally speaking, South Heaven Cultivators would not be the first ones to rush into the Demon Immortal Pagoda. Most would wait on the outside to observe.

After the first person made it to the 2nd level, gradually, more lights began to appear. All of the observers settled their Qi and calmed their minds as they focused completely on the proceedings.

Some, feeling confident in their ability and experience, decided to enter the pagoda.

When Meng Hao entered the 1st level of the pagoda, the first thing he saw was a land covered in blackness. The reek of blood wafted through the air, as if he were standing on some ancient battlefield.

Looking around, he suddenly noticed that the air up ahead was rippling. Ten figures appeared, all of them blurry and unclear. However, their Cultivation bases were all at the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage.

The ten figures emanated a raging killing intent as they charged toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and suddenly he laughed as he realized what was being tested in the Demon Immortal Pagoda. As the ten figures neared, he did not retreat, but instead shot forward to meet them.

Rumbling echoed out as Meng Hao transformed into a green smoke. All it took was a fist or a finger attack. The ten great circle Nascent Soul figures were incapable of fighting back. In the blink of an eye, they were destroyed.

All of it lasted only the space of five breaths, and ten opponents were slaughtered.

Next, however, black smoke began to rise up from their bodies. It seethed and churned, forming together into one single pitch-black figure. He wore a long black robe, and a black mask. His black hair floated up into the air, and an aura emanated out from him that caused Meng Hao's pupils to constrict.

Even more shocking was that although this man also had a Cultivation base at the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, it was completely different than those of the figures from before. If you likened those figures to fierce dogs, this man was a lone wolf.

He eyed Meng Hao coldly, then suddenly raised his hand up. Shockingly, a mountain appeared above his hand.

The instant the mountain appeared, Meng Hao recognized it. This was the Mountain Consuming Incantation!

Next, the mountain vanished, and the man appeared directly in front of Meng Hao. A palm strike descended. Meng Hao's eyes flickered; it was as if he saw a mountain rushing directly toward him.

"A great circle Nascent Soul expert from ancient times!" Meng Hao's eyes shone with the desire to do battle. Any of the items inside the beastskin bag he carried could instantly wipe out this expert. However, Meng Hao just couldn't make himself use the items given to him by Ke Yunhai on the 1st level.

Without even entering the Second Anima, he struck out with his fist. He wanted to use this opportunity to test out exactly how strong or weak he was compared to a person of the same stage as himself, except from ancient times.

A booming rang out as the two of them fought back and forth. Divine abilities and magical techniques caused multicolored light to explode out shockingly in all directions!

A moment later, the black-robed figure turned and then made a strange writhing movement to appear directly in front of Meng Hao. Meng Hao laughed, not retreating, but rather, punching out with full force.

The two of them fought back and forth within the 1st level of the Demon Immortal Pagoda. After enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, an explosion could be heard. The black-robed figure shook and then collapsed into pieces. It transformed into a stream of magical symbols that quickly surrounded Meng Hao.

Meng Hao panted a bit, and his eyes glinted as if they contained lightning. The battle hadn't lasted for too long, only the time it takes an incense stick to burn. However, during that short time in which he had battled with the illusory figure, he had gone all out with his magical techniques before finally shaking his opponent and eventually destroying

him.

Most importantly, Meng Hao's body was currently as strong as it normally would be in the Third Anima. Were it not for that, he would never have been able to achieve victory while only in the First Anima.

"A powerful Nascent Soul expert from ancient times. Incredible!" Meng Hao took a deep breath as he looked at the magical symbols floating around him.

There were thousand of them, flickering between lightness and darkness, emanating fearsome pressure. In the blink of an eye, one of the magical symbols rushed toward Meng Hao.

It was as if the symbol had chosen him; eyes flickering, Meng Hao did nothing to evade the incoming symbol, but rather, allowed it to fuse into his body. Gradually, it transformed into a Daoist magic.

"Demonfire?" Meng Hao took some time to feel it out. This art was not one of the three thousand Daoist magics, but rather, a simple, miscellaneous technique.

Well, it could be called simple as far as the Demon Immortal Sect was concerned. However, if you revealed such a magical technique to the Sects of the lands of South Heaven, even this simple Demonfire would be incredible and extraordinary.

A strange glow appeared in Meng Hao's eyes. He closed them thoughtfully for a moment, and when they opened, they shone with enlightenment. It was an enlightenment that had nothing to do with the Demonfire technique, but rather, this examination as a whole.

"This examination is different for every person, based on the level of their Cultivation base. The difficulty will be the same for everybody!"

"If I were in the Dao Seeking stage, then I would have faced ten Dao Seeking experts.... Actually, my true prize from the 1st level is not the Demonfire technique, but rather... a look into how the Mountain Consuming Incantation is used!

"I never realized that the incantation could be utilized in such a way."

With that, his body flashed as he headed toward the 2nd level.

Even as Meng Hao stepped into the 2nd level, the disciples surrounding the Demon Immortal Pagoda were all observing with rapt attention. All of them had looks of determination in their eyes.

In order to acquire the good fortune that lay within the Demon Immortal Pagoda, what was required had nothing to do with Cultivation base, but actually, destiny!

By now, everyone could see that more than half of the remaining dots of light from the 1st level had already vanished and reappeared on the 2nd level. There were even few that had reached the 3rd level.

The greatest cause for envy among the Demon Immortal Sect disciples, however, was that there were more than ten dots of light on the 5th level.

The scene caused the hearts of the observers to seethe with excitement. Quite a few finally decided to enter the pagoda themselves.

The young man from the Imperial Clan of the Northern Reaches watched on, a flicker of disdain in his eyes.

“All these illusory people are actually dead. They don’t even know that they don’t exist. Yet even in an illusory world, their greed can be aroused. How amusing!

“Unfortunately, even if somebody does manage to reach the 99th level, only those of us with living souls can actually acquire good fortune for ourselves!” A bright light glittered in his eyes as he flew up into the air. An air of scorn emanated off of him as he shot toward the Demon Immortal Pagoda.

Wang Lihai, Han Bei, and Fang Yu all watched with flickering eyes. They didn’t fly out toward the pagoda. As for the rest of the Cultivators from South Heaven, some hesitated, some had looks of decisiveness on their faces.

Zhao Fang’s face was pale, and his eyes glowed with an intense light. The identity he had acquired was not that of the Inner Sect disciple he had originally been watching over, but rather, an Outer Sect disciple.

Even the corpse of this Outer Sect disciple had been difficult to come by when the critical moment arrived. Although Meng Hao had scared off Wang Lihai, in the end, a Cultivator from the Northern Reaches had come to snatch it away.

“The hope of my Tribe rests on me! I WILL acquire some Daoist magic!” Gritting his teeth, Zhao Fang flew up into the air toward the Demon Immortal Pagoda.

At almost every moment, more disciples flew up from the Demon Immortal Sect to charge toward the pagoda. As everyone else watched the dots of light on the various levels, Meng Hao finally ascended to the 2nd.

As soon as he entered the 2nd level, he instantly found himself surrounded by a huge sea. Massive waves rolled across its surface. Crashing sounds could be heard as ten statues rose up from within the waters.

Shockingly, each statue seemed as powerful as the black-robed expert he had just faced up against. Apparently, the difficulty level had just increased by a factor of ten!

Meng Hao's eyes flickered, exploding with an overflowing will to fight. What he needed right now was an unrestrained, massive battle. He would refine his Cultivation base with fire, temper his fleshly body, making it so that the two worked together in perfect harmony.

As soon as the statues appeared, their eyes opened. An incredible aura blasted out as they shot toward Meng Hao.

“Second Anima!”

BANG!

Meng Hao's body expanded and his Cultivation base exploded out. His battle prowess rocketed up, revealing the power of two great circle Nascent Souls. As for his fleshly body, it also exploded up in power. Now that he was in the Second Anima, its strength was comparable to that of the Fourth Anima. He directly shot toward the incoming statues.

The ten statues were incredibly realistic; Demonic Qi roiled out from

them, just barely discernible on their foreheads were totem tattoos.

Roaring sounds exploded out across the sea as the battle raged. It lasted for a little less than an hour. One statue after another was crushed by Meng Hao's Second Anima attacks. Their magical techniques landed onto a body that was comparable to the Fourth Anima, and were completely blocked.

When the last statue exploded into pieces, the seawater which had formed them rose up into the air and formed together into a shocking, enormous mountain peak!

The mountain was the color of the sea. This was a sea mountain, and when it appeared, it shone with brilliant, colorful light as it smashed down toward Meng Hao.

The mountain neared and the wind raged. A crater-like depression appeared in the seawater below. Meng Hao's hair whipped about, along with his robes. He looked at the descending sea mountain, and his eyes filled with a strange light.

"The Mountain Consuming Incantation again?"

Chapter 581: Seed of Daoist Magic

Circulating cross-legged in the air around the Demon Immortal Pagoda was the Paragon of the Fourth Peak of the Demon Immortal Sect's First Heaven, Ke Yunhai. White hair swirled around him, and his eyes shone with a radiant glow.

He seemed to be in high spirits; however, far back within the recesses of his eyes was an imperceptible exhaustion and ancientness. No aura of death emanated out from him; however, deep within his heart existed a sea of death.

Outsiders could not observe what was happening within the Demon Immortal Pagoda. Even the seven Paragons couldn't sense the ripples of what was happening. However, all of them were well aware of why the Demon Immortal Pagoda had been opened this time.

Their gazes swept over the pagoda, and, although they could not see what was happening inside, based on the aura coming from the dots of light, it was possible for them to determine who was who.

Ke Yunhai was watching the 2nd level, and his eyes shone with determination.

"Jiusi, your father can only do this much for you...."

In addition to the seven Paragons, the rest of the disciples in the Demon Immortal Sect's First Heaven were all congregated around the pagoda. One by one, the disciples flew up to enter the pagoda. Everything was in a great commotion. A few moments later, a dot of light appeared on the 7th level, leading to an outburst of discussions.

Meng Hao had no way to know about any of this. He was still on the 2nd level, looking at the enormous mountain formed of seawater that was hovering in mid-air. A bright glow shone from his eyes as the mountain shot toward him. He leaped upward, not in evasion, but rather, relying completely on the Second Anima, he charged in attack.

A massive boom rose up into the air. Meng Hao didn't destroy the

mountain, but rather pierced inside of it.

Rumbling filled the seawater mountain, and countless ripples spread out, as if to seal Meng Hao inside. As the ripples surrounded him, he suddenly closed his eyes.

Then he waved both arms out in front of him. A boom filled the sea mountain as it exploded apart. Meng Hao shot out from within, his face pale, but his eyes shining with a strange light.

“Mountain Consuming Incantation....” he said, panting a little. By this point, Meng Hao could tell that if you looked at the enlightenment of the Mountain Consuming Incantation in terms of percentage, then he had mastered roughly five percent.

As the sea mountain fell apart, no magical technique appeared. Meng Hao looked up as a beam of soft light appeared up in the air in front of him. A mere glance and he understood that this dazzling light was the entrance to the 3rd level.

As the light neared, he shot up into the air. He entered the void, and when everything became clear, he was in the 3rd level.

The moment he appeared, a towering sea of flames could be seen, as well as ten enormous figures. Meng Hao shot out from within the flames, his eyes glittering.

“Third Anima!”

BOOM!

His fleshly body expanded and his Cultivation base began to transform. The power of four great circle Nascent Souls instantly exploded out from within him. Fearsome and intense power roared up from him, especially from his fleshly body, as he strode forward.

4th level. 5th level. 6th level....

Without hesitation, Meng Hao charged up all the way to the 7th level. By this time, he was in the Fourth Anima.

In the outside world, there were simply too many people participating in

the event, so few people noticed Meng Hao's dot of light moving up. Most were focused on the 10th level.

There was only one dot of light there, attempting to break through.

At the moment, just about all of the disciples' eyes were focused there. Their eyes shone brightly as they watched to see what transformations might occur if the 10th level were passed.

After all, the Demon Immortal Pagoda had 99 levels, and every 10th level gave a chance at one of the top 100 Daoist magics. Any one of those could be considered a shocking magical technique, enough to cause anyone's heart to pound.

That was especially true for the Cultivators from South Heaven. They were completely focused on the 10th level, even more so than the other disciples from the Demon Immortal Sect. Han Bei and Wang Lihai, the Ji Clan, the Fang Clan, the Cultivators from the Eastern Lands and the Northern Reaches, all those who had not entered the Pagoda were observing closely.

Time passed. Apparently, the 10th level was quite difficult. The Cultivator who was there still had not broken through. With the exception of Ke Yunhai and Fang Yu, few people had noticed that there was one particular dot of light that had just disappeared from the 7th level and then appeared in the 8th. Then it was in the 9th.

Finally... everyone gaped, and their stares focused even more intently on the 10th level, because.... Suddenly, another dot of light had appeared there!

A second dot of light was now in the 10th level!

Of course, it was Meng Hao.

"Who's that...?"

"Who could that be? Whoever it was that just entered the 10th level, no one was paying much attention to him before!"

As the buzz of conversation filled the air, all gazes focused on the dot of

light that represented Meng Hao.

Meanwhile, back in the 10th level, a golden glow filled the area. The sky was gold, the land was gold. Everything was the color of gold. Ten swords sped toward Meng Hao from all directions, filled with shocking power.

These ten swords exploded with the power of Spirit Severing. They were matchlessly brutal, and their killing intent rose to the Heavens.

In the moment before the ten swords reached him, Meng Hao's pupils constricted and he unhesitatingly cried, "Sixth Anima!"

BOOM!

His Cultivation base shot up and his fleshly body exploded with power. His battle prowess was now equivalent to thirty-two great circle Nascent Souls. As for his body, it was now more powerful than the Seventh Anima. According to Meng Hao's speculations, the level of power it now reached was equivalent to an Eighth Anima!

Such shocking power, especially when it was all synthesized together, made it so that Meng Hao could now attack with roaring power equivalent to the Seventh Anima.

Meng Hao unleashed divine abilities, one of which made a small, illusory mountain appear above his hand. The golden world he was in seemed to transform into a sea of rage, churning and seething.

A moment later, ghost images sprang up from the ten swords. The golden glow that filled the world swept toward them, changing the ghost images into something like a black hole that seemed capable of swallowing all light. All the light in the world was sucked in, leaving behind only the swords themselves. Surrounded by a shapeless glow, they slashed down toward Meng Hao.

Furthermore, they even began to emanate the ripples of a Domain!

Meng Hao's pupils constricted. The instant the swords began to near him, he unhesitatingly entered the Seventh Anima!

BOOM!

The Seventh Anima exploded out, filling him with sixty-four shocking levels of power. Sounds like cracks of thunder exploded out from Meng Hao's fleshly body, which did not grow any larger, but rather, more tight. The feeling of an Immortal Devil grew even more intense. In Meng Hao's judgement, he currently had a fleshly body that was equivalent to a Ninth Anima.

He was only a tiny step away from having a fleshly body that was actually of the Spirit Severing stage!

Meng Hao moved toward the descending swords and punched.

A huge explosion filled the air, causing everything to tremble and shake. Meng Hao coughed up some blood as he shot backward. Everything up ahead of him shattered into pieces; at the same time, countless magical symbols flickered out. Three thousand great Daos. Three thousand magical symbols. They swirled around Meng Hao for a moment before one of them sparkled and shot toward him.

The mark had the appearance of a small mountain. Meng Hao recognized it as soon as he saw it; this was none other than the Mountain Consuming Incantation which he already had partly gained enlightenment of.

His eyes glittered, and he did nothing to dodge the magical symbol. It neared him and then fused into his body, filling his mind with a roaring sound. Something like the shapes of countless mountain peaks filled his mind. It felt as if he was currently personally observing and emulating hundreds of millions of mountains.

At the same time, the glow of enlightenment filled his eyes. He sat down cross-legged for an hour before opening his eyes. Shockingly, the image of a mountain could now be seen in Meng Hao's pupils!

His aura also changed. All of the images and memories regarding the Mountain Consuming Incantation merged together into his mind to form a brand mark that was like a seed.

This was a seed of Daoist magic that he could take with him when he left the Demon Immortal Sect's Second Plane!

The appearance of this seed proved that Meng Hao had achieved initial enlightenment of this art!

“Consume the soul of the mountain, emulate the soul of the mountain; seize the body of the mountain, refine my own body!” Meng Hao stood up and waved his right hand. Instantly, the illusory shape of a mountain peak burst into being above it. A strange light appeared in his eyes as he looked up and then shot toward a glowing screen up above.

As soon as he touched it, a roaring sound echoed out within his body. He felt as if he were trying to move forward through water, as if there were something pushing back against him. The feeling lasted for the space of a few breaths before he pierced out of his current world. Everything in front of him grew clear, and shockingly, he could see an entire new world in front of him.

This world was an ancient battlefield. The instant he appeared, many of the figures on the battlefield suddenly turned and looked directly at him.

There were several dozen of them, each one a Cultivator. When he saw them, Meng Hao’s pupils constricted. They instantly began to near him, whereupon, without hesitation, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a large amulet which he flung out in front of him.

Booming sounds echoed out, and half of the lands of this entire world quaked. Massive fissures appeared, with Meng Hao at the center. As they spread out, thundering booms could be heard, and countless bolts of lightning rained down. It was as if the entire world had turned into an armageddon.

Meng Hao took a deep breath. Although he had anticipated that the amulets given him by Ke Yunhai would be powerful, now that he could see one in action, he was shaken. The entire world of the 11th level vanished, completely toppled and destroyed. Everything was wreckage; the figures on the battlefield had been transformed into nothing but drifting pieces of ash.

Only Meng Hao remained behind.

“Force my way to the top?” Meng Hao blinked, and then a shy expression

appeared on his face as he shot toward the 12th level.

12th level. 13th level. 14th level.... Meng Hao was surrounded by explosions as he proceeded onward. Everywhere he went, he shook Heaven and Earth, and was surrounded by the boundless glow of magical items. Even from the perspective of those on the outside world... it was starting to become obvious what was happening.

All of the disciples of the Demon Immortal Sect watched with wide eyes as, within the space of only a few breaths, a glowing dot rose from the 11th level all the way to the 15th level. Everyone gaped in astonishment.

That was especially true when a glowing aura appeared in the area around the dot, along with the clear, rippling aura of magical items.

“How many... how many magic items does that guy have?”

Chapter 582-583: Twelve Words

Amidst the deathly silence, a complaining voice suddenly cried out. It was from none other than the Cultivator from the Northern Reaches: “Who is he? Don’t tell me he’s one of those Elite Apprentices? But, even if he is an Elite Apprentice, he... he still shouldn’t be able to squander magical items like that.

“Just... just how many magical items has he actually used? Cheater! He’s cheating!”

What happened next caused everyone to watch on in a daze. The glowing dot on the 15th level, surrounded by a powerful glow of magical items, flickered up to the 16th level.

Next was the 17th level, the 18th level, the 19th level. Incredible amounts of jealousy filled the hearts of the onlookers as the glowing dot finally reached the 20th level before finally stopping. Apparently this level was incredibly hard.

Seeing this, the audience finally breathed sighs of relief. All of them had very conflicting emotions as the sounds of their discussion began to spread out.

“Hey, I said it, didn’t I? There’s nobody that could last like that for too long. Even if that guy has more magical items, he won’t be able to break past the 20th level!”

“Thank goodness he finally stopped. Otherwise how could any of the rest of us measure up to him?!”

Han Bei and Wang Lihai also secretly sighed in relief. The scene they had just witnessed caused them to be jumpy with fear. It wasn’t just them; the others from the lands of South Heaven felt the same.

And yet, even as everyone was still in the midst of discussing the matter, before they could get to the third sentence in their conversations, a booming sound could be heard from the 20th level. It was so powerful that it echoed outside of the pagoda.

As the roaring sound echoed out, nearly thirty percent of the 20th level was covered with a magical glow that surrounded Meng Hao's dot of light. From a distance, the glow seemed boundless!

The scene instantly caused everyone in the area to gasp as a roaring sound filled their minds. All of them seemed to be wondering about the exact same thing.

Just exactly... how many magical items had been detonated to create a glow that encompassed thirty percent of the entire level?

Fang Yu's eyes were wide and her expression was one of complete envy. "It's only because of that awesome dad of his!!" she thought.

Ke Yunhai sat cross-legged in mid-air, a complacent smile on his face as he completely ignored the strange looks on the faces of the other six Paragons.

"Attaboy, Jiusi! Force your way up to the top. Get to the 90th level for your old man!" Ke Yunhai almost shouted this out. Even if everyone else knew that cheating was involved, as a father, he couldn't help but be happy as he watched the scene playing out.

In the 20th level, Meng Hao, tattered and bedraggled, shot backward at high speed. He was surrounded by an enormous shield that glowed with incredible brightness. A host of vicious Heavenly dragons charged him constantly, any one of which was enough to shock Meng Hao to the core. All of them, though, were blocked by the huge shield.

Unfortunately, the shield was rapidly fading. Meng Hao's left hand clutched a bag that happened to be filled with Demon Stones. They were similar to Spirit Stones, and were what Meng Hao was using to sustain the magical treasures and talismans that he was wielding.

Just now he had slipped up, which caused him to almost be buried in a divine ability. Currently, he was in full retreat, at the same time pulling out vast quantities of talismans that he was slapping onto his body.

Boom!

The fading shield once again surged with strength. Immediately,

hundreds of layers burst out, then superimposed over each other to block all of the divine abilities that were shooting against him.

Meng Hao let out a sigh. This shield was the main reason he had been able to charge into this place. Furthermore, of all the magical items and talismans that Ke Yunhai had refined, this type of shield was what he had created the most of. He has used his own life force to refine such shields; they contained his Qi, blood, and aura. It was as if he himself were here, protecting Meng Hao with his magical arts.

Because of this shield, Meng Hao was able to proceed from one level to next as easily as walking down a level path.

This really was just as the people on the outside has said; cheating. And it was not a small cheat either, but rather, major cheating.

Meng Hao looked around at the Cultivation bases of the figures around him, and was shocked. He immediately produced a vast quantity of talismans from another bag, which he then tossed forward.

Booming sounds rolled out, and thousands of huge hands appeared in the air, each one of which was thoroughly shocking. They instantly descended downward, sweeping across everything.

The glow of magical items spread out to fill nearly half of the entire 20th level.

As Meng Hao shoved aside everything, the glowing light of the 21st level began to spread out. At the same time, the magical symbols of the three thousand Daoist magics once again appeared. They swirled around Meng Hao, after which, a red symbol shot toward Meng Hao.

As soon as it touched his forehead, his mind filled with a roaring sound. An ancient voice filled his mind.

“Daylight Incantation!”

The voice didn’t just echo in Meng Hao’s mind, but rather spread out from within the 20th level of the Demon Immortal Pagoda to fill the entire Sect. The sound echoed out so that all disciples could hear, filling their minds with shock. Quite a few people began to pant, and their eyes

filled with avarice and greed.

“Daylight... Daylight Incantation!!”

“Dammit! DAMMIT! He actually got the Daylight Incantation in the 20th level!!”

“In the rankings of the 3,000 Daoist magics, the Daylight Incantation is number 31! It’s said that if you gain enlightenment, that when you use it, all you have to do is turn your hand over, and the sky will turn dark. Flip your hand back, and it becomes day! He actually got the Daylight Incantation. I can’t accept this!”

All of the disciples of the Demon Immortal Sect were completely in a frenzy. Most crazy were those who had arrived from South Heaven. Han Bei, Wang Lihai, the Cultivators from the Eastern Lands, the Southern Domain, and the Northern Reaches, all of them were filled with intense longing. None of them were willing to wait any longer. Their bodies flickered as they shot toward the Demon Immortal Pagoda.

The Ji Clan, the Fang Clan, including Fang Yu, all of them shot up into the air.

It wasn’t just them. Many other disciples of the Demon Immortal Sect were no longer willing to just observe. They charged forward, clearly unable to take the intense stimulation caused by Meng Hao’s acquisition.

In the blink of an eye, more than 100,000 people rushed into the Demon Immortal Pagoda. At the same time, Meng Hao sat there in the 20th level. Suddenly, a tremor ran through his body, and his eyes opened. The Daylight Incantation was now there in his mind. However, despite being an excellent incantation, it wasn’t the Daoist magic that he really wanted.

After a moment of considering, he gave up trying to gain enlightenment. His body flickered as he shot toward the 21st level.

22nd level. 23rd level.... In the amount of time it takes an incense stick to burn, Meng Hao shot with incredible speed all the way to the 29th level. Everyone watched, hearts burning, hands clenched tightly into fists. Their fury continued to rise, and cries of disbelief began to join together to form

an uproar.

“This is definitely cheating!”

“How could he have so many magical items!? How could he move so quickly!? It’s almost like he has an endless supply of treasures for each level!!”

“This isn’t fair!!” By now, almost all of the disciples were shouting out. Even more began to charge toward the pagoda. However, people continued to be ejected out from within. There were at least ten empty levels between Meng Hao and his nearest competition.

One of the Cultivators from the Eastern Lands, who had met with failure on the 7th level, was filled with frustration and shouted, “Let’s go break open the pagoda and drag that guy out! The Demon Immortal Pagoda is for everyone! We demand fairness!”

However, even as the fury of the crowd raged, the light of magical items completely covered the 29th level, where Meng Hao was currently. Most outrageous was that the glow of treasures directly reappeared on the 30th level.

Then, after the space of only seven or eight breaths. The 30th level... was passed!

The sky in the 30th level suddenly took on a bizarre appearance. Seven enormous statues appeared, each of which had three heads and six arms. They were completely ferocious in appearance. A voice that seemed to echo out from the netherworld with Heavenly might suddenly filled the entire land.

“Our Daoist magic, Dao of Seven Bodhisattvas!”

As soon as the voice echoed out, the eyes of the disciples outside of the Demon Immortal Pagoda went completely red as their madness increased. The Dao of Seven Bodhisattvas was a divine ability ranked number 67 in the 3,000 Daoist magics of the Demon Immortal Sect.

It was an art completely and thoroughly shocking. Anyone who gained enlightenment could advance by leaps and bounds and move beyond the

bounds of mortality.

“This isn’t fair!!” cried the Cultivator from the Northern Reaches. More and more people were becoming enraged.

“This is incredibly unfair!!”

“The Demon Immortal Sect is fair and upright! Kick that guy out!!”

However, even as their voices rose up, Ke Yunhai looked coolly down at them and gave a light snort. The sound descended, turning into what sounded like Heavenly Thunder. Blood sprayed from the mouths of everyone present, especially that Cultivator from the Northern Reaches. His soul shuddered on the verge of collapse, and his face filled with astonishment. He suddenly looked up toward the seven Paragons in mid-air.

Ke Yunhai’s archaic voice echoed coldly throughout the Sect: “If anyone else talks crap, they’ll be kicked out of the Sect.”

Everything went completely silent. When a Paragon spoke, no one would dare to offer retort. However, everyone was still suspicious as to why Ke Yunhai, who usually paid little attention to outside matters, would suddenly open his mouth now.

Time passed. The 10th level of the Demon Immortal Pagoda seemed to be a line of demarcation that ninety percent of participants couldn’t pass. Of the few who were actually able to pass it, the 20th level was the second line of demarcation. Only 15 people had managed to force their way past that point.

As for the 30th level, currently... only Meng Hao had made it that far.

As time passed, the majority of the Cultivators from South Heaven experienced defeat. Wang Lihai was stopped at the 9th level, after which he emerged, pale faced and wounded.

In his attempt to pass the 9th level, he had employed all of the hidden techniques he possessed, and yet had still failed. Now, he could only grudgingly admit the vast difference between himself and the Cultivators from ancient times.

As for Zhao Fang, he wasn't even able to get past the 5th level.

Han Bei was one of the few who made it to the 10th level before meeting defeat, unable to acquire the good fortune of one of the top 100 Daoist magics.

Among the group from South Heaven, including those from the Ji and Fang Clans, only three people were able to make it past the 10th level.

One was Fang Yu, the second was Patriarch Huyan and the third was the young man from the Imperial Bloodline Clan of the Northern Reaches. These three managed to make it past the 10th level, but were stopped at the 11th.

Unable to proceed, they were forced to accept defeat and leave.

At the moment, Meng Hao's dot of light went onward, surrounded by the glow of magical treasures, all the way to the 40th level.

When he reached the 40th level, an archaic voice could be heard. The crowds outside of the Demon Immortal Pagoda were now jealous to the extreme and filled with incredible discontent. However, none of them dared to give voice to vent their feelings.

If looks could kill, though, then the 40th level would have long since been reduced to nothing but wreckage.

By this point, all of them could hardly wait to find out who this person was, this damnable cheater who had relied on an inexhaustible supply of magical items to get to the 40th level. It wasn't just the disciples of the Demon Immortal Sect who wondered about this; all of the South Heaven Cultivators were also dying to find out.

Although some people had already guessed that it was Ke Jiusi, there was no way to confirm that. In addition, they didn't dare to give voice to their suspicions.

Right now, regardless of whether the crowds admitted it or were willing to accept it, and despite how many people had entered the Demon Immortal Pagoda this time, it was now the battlefield of a single individual.

That person's existence caused their gums to itch. On the one hand, they hated him down to their bones, but on the other hand, they envied him to death.

If things went on like this, then perhaps in the end, when they found out that the glowing light was Meng Hao, there might be an "unforeseen occurrence." Although, at the moment, Meng Hao had already run into an unforeseen situation on the 40th level.

1,000,000 Demon Stones was gradually proving to be insufficient. After all, Meng Hao wasn't really Ke Jiusi. These Demon Stones were only here for him to borrow; he couldn't absorb them. Therefore, he had no qualms about wasting them.

"This isn't gonna work," he thought anxiously. "I'm going to need a few more Demon Stones...."

Currently, his supply was down to only about thirty percent. After reducing the 40th level to ruins, Meng Hao thought about it from a hundred different directions, and yet couldn't come up with any ideas except for one. He decided to give it a shot. Employing the power of his Cultivation base, he tossed out vast quantities of magical items. Using their glow, he arranged them all to form a string of words.

Close up, you wouldn't be able to make out much. However, from outside the pagoda, the glow of the magical items filled nearly half of the 40th level. Gradually, a string of twelve words became visible.

"Dad, I don't have enough Demon Stones. Please send a few more."

As soon as the words became visible, the disciples outside of the Demon Immortal Pagoda gaped in astonishment, especially the Cultivators from South Heaven.

In the blink of an eye, the entire world was filled with deathly silence.

When everyone finally realized the meaning of the words, they were filled with complete astonishment.

"This is beyond belief! Ridiculous!!"

“This is bald-faced cheating! He’s not even trying to hide it any more! It’s infuriating!!”

“So someone’s going to send more Demon Stones in?! Damned bastard! Who does he think he is? Does he really think that that this instance of the Demon Immortal Pagoda is entirely for him!?”

The Demon Immortal Sect disciples were panting, and their fury had reached a boiling point.

Most furious of all were the Cultivators from the lands of South Heaven. Their rage was filled with frustration and vexation. However, they had to admit that they had obviously lost to the people of this long dead, illusory world.

Furthermore, they had lost in a fashion that was virtually impossible to accept.

Fang Yu was the exception. She stood off in the distance covering her mouth to conceal her chuckles. She was almost shaking from laughter, and her eyes had turned into beautiful crescent moons that glowed with beauty.

As for the other six Paragons, they appeared to be a bit embarrassed as they looked over at Ke Yunhai, wry smiles on their faces.

Ke Yunhai sat cross-legged in mid-air, staring blankly at the string of words. His expression flickered a few times, and he muttered to himself. Then his body flickered. Under the shocked gaze of hundreds of thousands of Demon Immortal Sect disciples, he flew toward the pagoda.

“Paragon Yunhai, what are you....” said one of the other Paragons.

“He’s definitely going to punish that guy!” said someone in the crowd. “For someone to cheat so brazenly is something that he can’t accept!”

“I’m not sure. All of a sudden I started thinking about Ke Jiusi....”

As the crowds of disciples hesitated, Ke Yunhai neared the Demon Immortal Pagoda. He stopped outside the 40th level, then calmly pulled a bag of holding out from within his robe. Everyone gaped in astonishment

as he pushed the bag up against the surface of the pagoda. Then he pulled out his Paragon's medallion.

Instantly, the bag of holding sank into the pagoda.

"Keep it up, son," he said with a laugh. "Force your way up to the 90th level for your old man!" With that, he returned to sit cross-legged up in mid-air, completely ignoring all the crowds who were watching him.

After a moment of silence, a huge commotion exploded out.

"It's Ke Jiusi! Dammit! I knew there was something going on behind the scenes!"

"Not fair! This is brazen cheating! I can't accept this!!"

"So, it was Ke Jiusi all along!" said a First Peak Conclave disciple, gnashing his teeth. "That guy!!"

"Only he could have so many magic items," said a Second Peak Inner Sect disciple, his heart filled with madness and jealousy. "He forced his way to the 40th level. This is... it's just...."

"Cheating is one thing," said another disciple. "But how could you be so unabashed about it? He's actually refilling Demon Stones in the middle? Ridiculous!!"

The disciples were in an uproar. As for the South Heaven Cultivators, their hearts were pounding. Quite a few of them had gotten the feeling recently that something fishy was going on with Ke Jiusi.

That was especially true of those who knew Meng Hao. Most of those people could tell at a glance that something strange was happening. After all, the matter of Meng Hao becoming Ke Jiusi was not a secret among the group from South Heaven.

Even the people from the Ji Clan knew. However, for some reason, perhaps because of Ji Xiaoxiao, the people from the Ji Clan did not have any excessive amount of killing intent toward Meng Hao.

Han Bei could only smile wryly and try to control her ragged breathing. She couldn't think of anything to say. However, her admiration for Meng

Hao had reached the pinnacle.

Wang Lihai's face twisted, filled once with frustration, then fury, and finally, helplessness.

Patriarch Huyan's pupils constricted. He had long since found out that Meng Hao was Ke Jiusi, and had intentionally avoided him. Although his own identity hadn't been revealed, his jealousy toward Meng Hao had reached a pinnacle, and transformed into flames of rage.

As for Fang Yu, she had a strange expression on her face as she looked at the 40th level. It was impossible to tell what she was thinking.

The feeling which prevailed in the hearts of the Cultivators from the Eastern Lands, Northern Reaches, Southern Domain, and Black Lands was... helplessness. Facing up against a cheater like this, there was really nothing else that they could feel.

Although many of the Demon Immortal Sect disciples were furious, there were quite a few who spoke out for Meng Hao. These were the Sect silkpants, and the members of the Demon Entente. Their support for Meng Hao caused the uproar to grow even more tumultuous.

Amidst the clamor, the Paragon of the Seventh Peak, the old man with the transcendent demeanor, slowly cracked open an eye, let out a cold snort, and then said, "PIPE DOWN!"

The shocking sound caused everything to shake.

Immediately, the disciples of the Sect closed their mouths. Their minds trembled violently.

"The Demon Immortal Pagoda shouldn't even be opened in this age," continued the old man. "It was arranged today especially for Ke Jiusi."

There was no further explanation, only this direct statement of fact. However, the minds of everyone present were sent spinning. At the same time, they all were thinking of the same question.

Why did no Elders or even Elite Apprentices appear to enter the pagoda?

Obviously, the pagoda had been opened specifically for Ke Jiusi. There

were clearly people in the Sect who already knew that, and thus opted not to participate. Regardless of Elite Apprentice or Elder, if they participated, then they would owe a huge favor to the Fourth Peak.

Everyone watched on silently as the glow of magical items surrounded Meng Hao on the 40th level. Magical items and talismans were unleashed freely as Meng Hao shot out from the 40th level.

Another one of the top 100 Daoist magics appeared, causing the crowds outside to smile bitterly. They could only watch Meng Hao, unable to say anything.

They looked on as the glow of magical items within the Demon Immortal Sect went from the 40th level to the 41st. Then the 42nd, 43rd... it only took a brief moment for it to appear on the 50th level.

Then the 60th....

The entire way, the glow of magical items lit the sky. As everyone watched, they gradually began to grow numb. The exception was at every ten levels, when the Daoist magic was announced, and their hearts filled with madness and envy.

Cheating. And replenishing along the way. What could compare to chicanery like that...?

As for anger, once the Seventh Paragon openly said that the Demon Immortal Pagoda had been opened specifically for Ke Jiusi, then who present qualified to be angry...?

Moments later, though, people simply couldn't control themselves, and began to discuss the matter amongst themselves.

"Humph. Even if the Paragons do help each other, cheating to obtain good fortune isn't as good as making progress yourself one step at a time!"

"That's right! Besides, who's to say whether or not he'll be able to get past the 70th level!"

The most frustrated of all were the Cultivators from South Heaven. They were by far the most jealous and also the most angry.

In truth, the South Heaven Cultivators were all cheating. They were like people who went to take a test, but knew what the questions would be ahead of time. But then, they entered the exam room only to discover that someone else had a teacher standing off to the side to help. Well... that sort of feeling was difficult to describe.

The young man from the Imperial Bloodline Clan of the Northern Reaches ground his teeth. "I curse you to die in there!" he thought.

Also in the group from South Heaven was a young woman. Her face was calm, but her eyes shone with a bright light as she looked at the Demon Immortal Pagoda.

"My Master told me there was something special about him...." she murmured to herself. "In fact, before coming here, he especially entrusted me to keep my eyes on him. Meng Hao, what is it about you that's so special my Master would show so much interest in you?" This young woman was none other than the Dao Child of the Blood Demon Sect of South Heaven, Li Shiqi! 1

61st level. 68th level. 69th level!

Meng Hao was scared out of his mind the entire time. The opponents he faced now were no longer Cultivators, but rather, bizarrely shaped Greater Demons. Some of them were enormous, big enough to squash him to death with a single swipe.

Without his shield, Meng Hao would have been dead many times over. It was amidst massive roaring sounds that he finally stepped into the 70th level.

Starting with this level, he was guaranteed one of the top 10 Daoist magics if he passed!

The top 10 Daoist magics were shocking in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, even in ancient times. In the modern Cultivation world, they were legends among legends!

As soon as he entered the 70th level, Meng Hao, before his vision even became clear, he suddenly heard a proud, lofty voice.

As soon as he heard the voice, Meng Hao gaped. The reason was because this particular voice filled him with a sensation of incredible unreliability.

“Hello, child. You want to pass through here? My Daoist name is Patriarch Reliance. Come, come. Allow the Patriarch to bestow you with some good fortune....”

*

1. Meng Hao met Li Shiqi in chapter 175, just after he escaped the Black Sieve Sect with the meat jelly. She made various other appearances throughout the rest of the story, including the Song Clan search for a son-in-law, where she stood on Meng Hao's side in chapter 189 when all his friends and enemies faced off. She was also present for many of the other major events in the Southern Domain.

Chapter 584: Withering Flame Demon

Magic True Self Dao

As the familiar voice echoed in Meng Hao's ears, he felt as if a gentle wind were blowing him back to those wonderful days in the vicious Reliance Sect.

Within that Sect was a wicked, wretched, duplicitous, unreliable old turtle....

Meng Hao's eyes widened as he saw a dark shadow appear up ahead. At the same time, the sky darkened, and snapping sounds could be heard.

The shield surrounding Meng Hao began to collapse, and nearly exploded. Then, a screech of pain could be heard, and the area up ahead of Meng Hao became light once again, revealing... a huge, fierce turtle, retreating at top speed.

The turtle was fully several thousand meters wide, with an anxious expression on its huge face. It then glared fiercely at Meng Hao.

Shocked, Meng Hao fell back a few paces as his cracked shield quickly repaired itself. As of this moment, he realized that without the shield, he would currently be crushed inside of that damnable Patriarch Reliance's mouth.

The Patriarch Reliance in his memory was far larger than this turtle in front of him. However, the unreliable appearance, his sneak attack method, and his tone of voice were all exactly the same as the Patriarch Reliance that Meng Hao knew.

A strange expression appeared on Meng Hao's face as he looked at this Patriarch Reliance. New hatred piled up in his heart. He thought back to the untold trials and tribulations he had gone through to help Patriarch Reliance, only to be ripped off in the end by the stingy old turtle.

In the end, Patriarch Reliance even tried to eat him! It was only because of the reminder from Guyiding Tri-rain, and his recitation of the Demon Sealing Scripture, that unreliable Patriarch Reliance was sent running.

“How strange,” said Patriarch Reliance, glaring at him. “Something about your expression seems a bit off. Don’t tell me you recognize this old Patriarch?” His expression was strange as he looked at Meng Hao and the shield surrounding him. He gritted his jaw, looking inexplicably hateful.

“The Patriarch hates cheating children more than anything else, and you’re obviously a cheater! You, you, you... you dare to try to pass through here with a shield! Bamboozler!!”

Meng Hao backed up a few steps. Looking Patriarch Reliance over carefully, he suddenly said, “Ancient Dao; tenacious desire to seal the heavens....”

After speaking a few words, there was no reaction whatsoever from Patriarch Reliance. In fact, he seemed even more astonished, confused, and curious.

“What the fudge! What are you doing, cursing me?”

Meng Hao backed up a few more steps, abandoning the Demon Sealing Scripture. After another look at Patriarch Reliance, he suddenly laughed.

The laugh contained a bit of bashfulness; at the same time, a strange light could be seen shining in his eyes. The entire expression caused Patriarch Reliance to tremble with astonishment.

“What the fudge! What gives? What the hell! What kind of fishy thing is going here? Kid, there’s something wrong with your expression....”

“Listen, bitch!” cried Meng Hao, “I’m not just gonna curse you, I’m gonna beat the crap out of you!” Roaring, he leaped up into the air and slapped his bag of holding, causing a vast quantity of talismans to appear.

Every single talisman emanated shocking power, blinding light, and incredible pressure. Patriarch Reliance’s eyes went wide.

“Too vicious!!!” cried Patriarch Reliance, retreating backward at top speed. The feeling he got from the talismans caused his heart to race with fear. Before he could retreat too far, Meng Hao waved his hand, causing the talismans to ignite. An immense, red glow could be seen, from within which exploded countless Thunder Dragons. Their roars filled the air as

they shot toward Patriarch Reliance.

Amidst the echoing booms, Patriarch Reliance shrieked and hollered, dodging back and forth. His rage billowed up, and he was about to say something when Meng Hao waved his hand again, causing seventy or eighty more talismans to fly out. As they exploded chaotically, the air shook and the ground was torn to pieces. Patriarch Reliance howled and charged toward Meng Hao's shield.

Meng Hao clearly had no intention of evading or dodging. He allowed the old turtle to slam into his shield, after which a huge explosion could be heard along with a miserable shriek. Patriarch Reliance immediately tumbled backward, during which time Meng Hao waved his arm, causing more than a thousand talismans to be hurled out.

These were all talismans personally created by Ke Yunhai. They needed no direction from Meng Hao. All he had to do was throw them out, and they would voluntarily transform into divine abilities and Daoist magic. Up above in the air, more than a thousand statues suddenly appeared, all of which instantly dove down toward Patriarch Reliance.

This barrage of attacks had Patriarch Reliance knocked into a daze. He shot backward relentlessly, his shell on the verge of being shattered, his heart filled with astonishment, as howls of rage emitted from his mouth.

"I surrender! The Patriarch surrenders! ... Fudge, you're such a cheat! I never cheat like this!!"

"I don't accept surrender!" growled Meng Hao. No matter what was said, he would have his revenge. He waved his hand again, causing another thousand talismans to appear. Bloodcurdling shrieks continued to echo out. Patriarch Reliance trembled as he attempted to flee this way and that. The feeling of frustration in his heart had reached a pinnacle.

"Dammit, DAMMIT!" howled Patriarch Reliance, "Is there a grudge between us?!"

BAM!

Meng Hao produced several hundred more talismans.

“What did I do to piss you off? Huh? Come on, tell me!!” Patriarch Reliance was on the verge of tears. He was incapable of evasion, and could do nothing more than retract his trembling limbs and head into his shell. “I was just born recently, I haven’t even grown up yet. How could I have pissed you off?!?!?”

“You haven’t pissed me off,” said Meng Hao. “But that doesn’t mean you won’t piss me off in the future!” He waved his hand again, causing more miserable shrieks to come from Patriarch Reliance.

“Stick your head out of your shell,” commanded Meng Hao, producing another large amassment of talismans and staring at Patriarch Reliance.

“I won’t stick my head out even if you beat me to death! You’re just a big bully! You’re incomparable! You... you’re impossible!!”

“If I don’t bully you now, then you’ll bully me in the future!” said Meng Hao coldly. He produced even more talismans, which he continuously tossed out. Booming filled the air, along with Patriarch Reliance’s miserable shrieks. He retreated more, weeping.

His shell was now almost half destroyed, and his body quivered as if from coldness. His head was pulled back tight inside, as if he really refused to stick it out even if he died.

Meng Hao looked at him, then leaped up onto his shell. He slapped his bag of holding to produce another magical item that Ke Yunhai had made for him. It was a small blade, seemingly dull, but in fact equipped with a fiercely sharp coldness. Meng Hao hefted the blade then squatted down and began to carve some words into Patriarch Reliance’s shell.

“Meng Hao’s turtle!”

After carving the three words, Meng Hao patted the turtle shell, then smiled complacently.

“We’ll call it quits today. It might be difficult for you, but I hope that in the future you’ll remember that you’re MY turtle!”

Patriarch Reliance glared at him, clenching his jaw. He knew that Meng Hao had carved something onto his back, and had long since made an

inward determination to pay back this insult.

Meng Hao stamped his foot and flew up into the air, preparing to move on to the 71st level. However, as soon as he flew into the air, he suddenly seemed to think of something. He looked down just in the moment in which Patriarch Reliance stuck his head out of his shell.

Meng Hao suddenly smiled, then subconsciously pulled out a talisman. Frightened, Patriarch Reliance retracted his head as fast as lightning, then howled, “Didn’t you say that we would call it quits today?! You, you, you... you tricked me!!”

Meng Hao’s body flashed and he suddenly appeared directly in front of Patriarch Reliance, who was retracted in his shell. His powerful shield made it so that he wasn’t afraid at all of any sort of sneak attack by the turtle.

“I’ll let you off this time,” said Meng Hao earnestly, “but I’m still trying to decide whether or not to destroy you to get the reward for this level.”

Patriarch Reliance trembled within his turtle shell. He then opened his mouth to spit out golden beam of light that shot toward Meng Hao. It pierced through the shield, transforming into a magical symbol.

The magical symbol was something that looked like a seed, which emanated colorful light as well as an indescribable pressure. It gave off a feeling of splendor, which instantly caused the rest of the world to grow dark, as if the sky itself had dimmed.

Because it contained a Dao of Heaven and Earth, existing in a place above the natural laws of the world, anyone who cultivated it would have a great Dao!

This was one of the top 10 Daoist magics of the 3,000!

Even in the Demon Immortal Sect, this was truly an incredible and shocking magical technique. Its origin was unclear, and even in ancient times few people understood it clearly.

Meng Hao took a deep breath as he examined the magic. His heart began to beat out of control. Other than the Soul Divergence Incantation,

this was the most powerful Daoist Magic that he had seen in the entire time he had been in this ancient world of the Demon Immortal Sect.

“I wonder what Daoist magic this is?!” he thought.

He took a deep breath and raised his hand to push his finger down into the magical symbol. Instantly, his brain filled with a roaring sound.

The mark required no enlightenment. As soon as his finger touched it, it rushed into his body to his heart, where it transformed into a seed.

This... was the seed of a great Dao, one of the top 10 Daoist magics. It required no enlightenment. In fact, enlightenment was useless. This seed would only sprout in the mind of someone destined to receive it!

If destiny existed between him and this seed, it would always be there. Were there no destiny, then forcing it would be useless!

The illusory seed rapidly transformed into nine parts, seven of which rushed toward his seven nascent souls.

The other two remained in his heart.

The instant the seven seeds made contact with his Nascent Souls, they began to tremble. Shockingly, they rapidly began to solidify from something illusory into something real. It seemed... that Meng Hao had acquired their approval, and that they had chosen to sprout within him!

Meanwhile, in the outside world, the eyes of all the Demon Immortal Sect disciples were fixed on the glow of magical light on the 70th level of the pagoda. This was especially true of the Cultivators from South Heaven.

Even Ke Yunhai's expression was one of increased anticipation. As for the other Paragons, they were watching closely as well. All of them knew that this was a chance to get one of the top 10 Daoist magics.

In this moment, the sky above the Demon Immortal Sect suddenly filled with roiling clouds. A red glow filled the lands, and a beam of bright light shot down. As soon as the beam of light appeared, the Seventh Peak Paragon suddenly opened his eyes, which glowed brightly.

“This is....”

The light fell, turning blurry, and then splitting into three parts.

The meaning of such a sign was something that most people wouldn't understand. However, the Paragons present all watched on with serious looks.

Ke Yunhai began to pant slightly. Any other matter that occurred would not have left him so visibly shaken. However, since it affected Ke Jiusi, he couldn't help but be moved. His eyes shone with a strange light, and he almost couldn't bring himself to believe that what was happening was true.

The three beams of light split again, turning into nine beams of light. In the blink of an eye, those nine beams of light... shockingly merged together into the form of an enormous figure.

It was a somewhat indistinct figure, but it was still possible to see that it was Meng Hao's face!

It was like a gigantic, magical image, shocking enough to cause Heaven and Earth to tremble.

Next, the magical image opened its mouth and began to speak with an archaic voice that filled the entire Demon Immortal Sect.

"One bloodline, transformed into three souls. Three souls tempered into nine divinities. Nine divinities refined into my true self. I am... Withering Flame Demon Magic True Self Dao!"

In this same instant, for some apparently unfathomable reason, one of the three inverted Demon Mountains hanging up above the Demon Immortal Sect, the mountain which seemed to be formed of molten stone... suddenly trembled!

Everyone, including the Seven Paragons and all the disciples, were completely shaken.

Chapter 585: The Voice of Lord Li

Three inverted Demon Mountains. One was completely formed of ice and frost, containing boundless coldness. The second was crimson red like blood, almost like an immense pile of corpses. Between those two was a mountain of molten rock, like fire, that brimmed with the most supreme dignity.

The mountain that was currently trembling was none other than the Demon Mountain of molten stone.

It trembled only slightly, but the incredible rumbling shook the minds and hearts of everyone within the Demon Immortal Sect. The seven Paragons, including Ke Yunhai, could not be taking the matter more seriously. All of them actually rose to their feet to look at the Demon Mountain.

The rest of the disciples didn't quite understand what was happening, but what they did know was that considering the Demon Mountain was trembling, obviously... whatever was happening inside the Demon Immortal Pagoda involved Heaven-defying good fortune.

The faces of the Cultivators from South Heaven all changed dramatically. Most were filled with mad jealousy, as well as the wish that they could become Ke Jiusi.

Fang Yu took a deep breath. Although she had been somewhat unsure regarding Meng Hao's identity, now that she saw the enormous magical sign in the sky, she suddenly realized that he was indeed Ke Jiusi.

"That little brat...." she thought, a smile brightening her eyes.

Off on the distant mountain peak, Zhixiang was panting as she looked up at the Demon mountain of molten rock. Her eyes widened.

"Withering Flame Demon Magic True Self Dao... so it's that art. Just what sort of Heaven-defying lucky opportunity has Meng Hao come across? He's actually acquired a Daoist magic that has a deep connection to Molten Rock Demon Mountain!"

Everyone had different thoughts and reactions. The one similar thing shared by everyone was intense jealousy and frustration regarding Meng Hao.

In the moment that the Molten Rock Demon Mountain trembled, a muffled voice spoke out from within it, seemingly from within a seal. Its cadence was odd, and the sound of it echoed out everywhere.

“The Withering Flame Demon Magic once again appears under Heaven. We sealed the unresolved Karma, and cultivated the True Self Dao. Finally, everything will... eee?” The voice suddenly stopped talking in mid-sentence.

After a long moment, a light sigh could be heard from within the Molten Rock Demon Mountain. “Night....”

The sound echoed out throughout this world, causing everyone to feel shocked. Within the Demon Immortal Pagoda, Meng Hao’s eyes snapped open, and they were filled with a strange light. In his mind, the seed of the Daoist magic was solidified, and would never fade.

This Daoist magic seed was separated into seven strands which were connected to his seven Nascent Souls. Although his Cultivation base had not changed, Meng Hao felt as if there were something different about it.

Muttering to himself, he rose to his feet and looked down at Patriarch Reliance, who was still tucked away cautiously in his shell, looking out at Meng Hao. Meng Hao chuckled.

“Old turtle Reliance, we’ll be meeting again in the future. See you later.” With a laugh, he shot up toward the descending beam of light.

Just when Meng Hao was about to touch the beam of light, Patriarch Reliance stuck his head out of his shell and arrogantly shouted, “You’re the old turtle! Your whole family are all turtles! Come on! BRING IT! I’ll give you some good fortune! Since you came you ... AHH!?!?”

Even in the midst of his self-righteous rant, just when he thought he was able to earn some face back, before he could even finish speaking, Meng Hao, who was just about to fuse with the glowing light, stopped in place

and turned to glance back at him.

That glance caused Patriarch Reliance to start shaking all over. A whizzing sound could be heard as he retracted his neck and head at top speed.

“You damned, perverted cheater!” he grumbled within his shell. “Get outta here...! One of these days, I’m gonna grow up, and then, I’ll get my revenge!”

Meng Hao looked thoughtfully at the several thousand meter wide turtle Reliance, and his eyes lit up.

“The previous generations of Demon Sealers captured this unreliable old turtle to be my Dao Protector. That basically means that they prepared a mount for me. However, after all these years, I still haven’t gotten a real mount....

“I wonder what it would feel like to have an old turtle as a mount?” Having reached this point in his train of thoughts, he suddenly began to palpitate with eagerness. After all, he knew that once he got back to the lands of South Heaven, it would be impossible to further punish the old turtle.

With that, Meng Hao moved out from within the light and shot back down to stand on Patriarch Reliance’s back. The instant that happened, Patriarch Reliance quivered. Inwardly, he was filled with intense regret, and was scared witless. He had no idea what Meng Hao was planning to do.

“Alright, spit it out,” said Meng Hao with a smile. “Do you admit it or not? You’re my turtle!”

Patriarch Reliance remained in his shell, gnashing his teeth. After a long moment of thought, he suddenly realized that this Meng Hao had suddenly begun to emit an enormous and terrifying aura. It was obvious that he had produced another vast quantity of talismans.

On the verge of going mad, Patriarch Reliance, feeling even more in the wrong, shouted, “I admit it! I admit it, alright? You big bully! I’m... I’m just

a tiny little turtle, that's all! You'll, you'll, you'll... you'll get what's coming to you!"

"As long as you admit it, then I'm happy," said Meng Hao, finding a comfortable position and sitting down. He still held all of the talismans in his hand. "Now, let's go. Take me out of the 70th level!"

Patriarch Reliance stood stock still, stunned. No matter what he had imagined, he could never have predicted that Meng Hao would make such a demand. Even as he stood there stupefied, Meng Hao tossed out the talismans.

When they landed on Patriarch Reliance, a huge booming echoed out. Divine abilities and magical techniques shook everything. The sky above was rent, and Patriarch Reliance let out a miserable shriek and instantly began to move at top speed.

"Yeahhhh, that's the right attitude," laughed Meng Hao. "Come, come. Fly up into the air!" He held talismans in his hand like a whip. Beneath him, the turtle was like a little pony, completely under his control. Patriarch Reliance was on the verge of tears as he carried Meng Hao up toward the bright light.

He felt intense regret. He regretted his own courting of death. Just when his opponent had been about to leave, he had to shout out those last few words. The result... was that the damned, inhuman creature had returned for him.

Filled with a feeling of maltreatment, Patriarch Reliance let out a venting roar as they fused into the light. In the blink of an eye, both of them vanished.

When they reappeared, they were in the 71st level.

On the outside world, everyone, including Ke Yunhai and even Zhixiang, stared, dumbfounded at the 71st level.

In addition to the glowing dot which represented Meng Hao, they could also see an additional, massive glow that looked like... the outline of a turtle.

Soon, it became apparent that Meng Hao was riding the turtle.

The Demon Immortal Sect disciples seemed to be on the verge of going insane.

“How could there be a turtle in there?”

“That turtle is huge! It must be several thousand meters wide! Dammit! DAMMIT! Ke Jiusi has gone way overboard. He’s a cheater? Fine. He has an incredible dad? Okay. But, but, but... but how could he cheat even more WITHIN his cheating!?!?”

“What exactly does he think he’s going to accomplish with such a gigantic turtle?!?”

Even more in a frenzy were the Cultivators from South Heaven. Their organs almost seemed to be on the verge of exploding out of their bodies, and their expressions filled with intense envy and jealousy. The jealousy even turned into hatred, filling them with very complex feelings.

“Patriarch Crow Divinity sure lives up to his reputation....” thought Zhao Fang with a bitter smile. He looked at the 71st level and sighed.

Wang Lihai’s hands were clenched tightly into fists, and his eyes brimmed with frustration and, even more so, helplessness.

Han Bei could only blink, completely at a loss for words regarding Meng Hao. His current actions overlapped with the deep impression he had left on her years ago; it suddenly gave her the intense premonition that, in the future, he would have limitless possibilities.

“Relying on his status and the power of his Clan? Could he piss me off any more?” said the young man from the Imperial Bloodline clan of the Northern Reaches. “Even more brazen, he is riding such an enormous turtle as a mount! That’s only because the identity he got has a great dad! Dammit!” Usually, it was other people in the Northern Reaches who had such thoughts about him. This was the first time in his life that he had ever felt jealous of another person.

However, at the moment, he had no choice but to admit that he felt intense jealousy toward Meng Hao, and even felt as if what was happening

was unfair.

Ke Yunhai cleared his throat and looked at the other six Paragons. He made no attempt to explain, and was in fact also somewhat puzzled. At the same time, though, he was quite happy.

Even as everyone watched on with complicated emotions, Meng Hao and the giant turtle were surrounded by the glow of magical items. They rose up from the 71st level to the 72nd. Then the 73rd, and the 74th....

When they reached the 80th level, all of the disciples in the Demon Immortal Sect, including the Cultivators from South Heaven, felt their hearts tightening. What they were thinking about wasn't whether or not Meng Hao would be able to pass this level. Instead, they were wondering about what good fortune he would seize as he did.

To watch with their own eyes as someone seized all of the good fortune that they had dreamed about for their entire lives was truly driving them mad.

If Meng Hao were doing by means of his own skill, then it would be one thing. In that case, at least they could console themselves in some way. But instead, he relied on his identity, and cheating, to the extent that they almost coughed up blood.

"I refuse to accept this!" said one of the Ji Clan members through gritted teeth, his hands clenched tightly at his sides.

Similar reactions could be seen in both the Ji and Fang Clans, with the exception of Fang Yu. The sizable group of Cultivators from other areas in the Eastern Lands were the same. In the end, it didn't matter what they were thinking, though. They could do nothing to prevent the blinding glow they currently saw on the 80th level.

Inundated by that glow of magical items, the 80th level seemed to be on the verge of collapse. Everyone could just barely make out the image of the turtle charging around violently. A moment later, a boundless glow shone out from the 80th level, along with an incredible roaring sound. An ancient, undulating voice began to speak, its cadence odd, its pace neither quick nor slow.

“Since you have passed the 80th level of the Demon Immortal Pagoda, you shall be bestowed with one of the top 10 Daoist magics... Nine Heavens Destruction.”

This voice caused everyone to stare blankly, not because of the ancientness of the voice, but rather, because of the voice’s manner of speaking.

Zhixiang’s eyes went wide, and she began to pant, a look of disbelief written on her face.

“That’s....”

The seven Paragons, including Ke Yunhai, all stood up. Their expressions all changed, even more so than they had when the previous Demon Mountain had been shaken.

The suns around them trembled and distorted. Clearly, they had been thoroughly shaken by the appearance of this voice.

“That’s....”

“That’s the voice of Lord Li!!”

Chapter 586: I'll Take You the Rest of the Way

The Seven Paragons instantly began to grow even more shocked.

“The voice of Lord Li!!”

“Impossible! Lord Li is sleeping! If he had woken up, then the three Demon Mountains would immediately shine for tens of millions of meters in all directions, and the two Holy Lands would be unsealed. Everyone would know, and all the experts in the Ninth Mountain and Sea would come to offer their respects!”

“This isn't Lord Li, but it's definitely his voice? But why?”

“Something about the voice seems off... as if it's weak?”

As everyone in the outside world was astonished, in the 80th level of the Demon Immortal Pagoda, everything was collapsing. Meng Hao sat cross-legged on top of Patriarch Reliance. Up ahead of him was a violet-colored mark that flickered with violet light.

As the light spread out, the collapsing world grew silent, and everything stopped moving.

The voice echoing about in the outside world could also be heard around Meng Hao, and its source... was none other than the violet mark in front of him.

The top 10 Daoist magics didn't require enlightenment, just good luck. After acquiring one of them, if destiny called for it, it would become a seed of Daoist magic. If there was no connection, no amount of pleading would do any good.

Meng Hao raised up his right hand silently. As soon as it touched the violet mark, a tremor ran through his body. The violet mark fused through his finger into his body. Then, it magically appeared in his mind, transforming into an illusory scene.

Within that scene, he could see a vague figure lifting its hand up. As it

lifted its hand up, a first Heaven arose. Another wave of a hand caused it to split into two, forming two Heavens.

In the end, there were nine. Nine Heavens Destruction. All things become ancient.

“You have a destiny that is connected to this magic. I deliver this Dao to you.... It complements the Withering Flame Demon Magic.... I’ve been waiting a long time. Could it be that you’re the one I’ve been waiting for? Come. Pass the 99 levels. Pass the three mountains. Pass the two lands. If you can come to stand in front of me... if you can win my approval... then you... are my successor.” When Meng Hao opened his eyes, the voice seemed to continue to echo in his ears. His eyes were filled with blankness, but they quickly grew clear.

Within his mind, the violet symbol transformed into the seed of a great Dao. However, it was rough, unrefined. Meng Hao would need to continue to contemplate it before being able to unleash it fully.

As he opened his eyes, the world in front of him resumed its collapse. As it did, the 81st level neared.

“That voice....” thought Meng Hao, his eyes filled with a touch of perplexity. “Something seemed odd about the voice. His status was definitely different than the average person. The way he spoke was the same. He... who was he?” He took a deep breath and looked at the bag of holding given him by Ke Yunhai. The Demon Stones, talismans, and magical items therein were already running low. However, the two Daoist magics that he most wanted to acquire hadn’t appeared.

“The Nine Heavens Treasured Body Seal, and the secret technique of Fleshly Sanctification....” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. Without hesitation, he slapped his hand down onto Patriarch Reliance. The turtle, feeling as wronged as ever, shot toward the 81st level.

As soon as they entered it, roaring filled the area and rose up into the sky. Meng Hao’s protective shield was surrounded by the vast quantities of talismans and magical items that he tossed out into the air. Wailing and shrieking, Patriarch Reliance used all his evasion abilities as they roared

along.

81st level. 82nd level....

Meng Hao charged forward, forcing his way up. He used the magical items and talismans given him by Ke Yunhai to force his way through every barrier. As he proceeded onward, the disciples of the Demon Immortal Sect panted. As of now, they had to admit that... Meng Hao was obviously about to reach the pinnacle!

83rd!

84th!

85th!

The glow of magical items seeped out from within the pagoda, shining on everything in the area. By the time Meng Hao reached the 87th level, the entire area was filled with a bright glow. He was using up even more Demon Stones, as well as vast quantities of talismans. More than half of his magical items had been destroyed.

Using this unsightly method in which no cost was spared, he finally forced his way to the 89th level.

As soon as he entered, the view around him changed. What appeared in front of him was, shockingly, an ancient battlefield. Countless Cultivators could be seen in all directions, all of them engaged in fierce warfare.

As soon as Meng Hao appeared in the middle of the battlefield, the Daoist magics of all the surrounding countless Cultivators roared directly toward Meng Hao's shield, instantly causing it to almost be destroyed.

The level of difficulty here was unprecedented as far as Meng Hao was concerned. Heaven and Earth shook; all he could do was throw out more and more talismans, and destroy more and more magical items.

Despite everything, the 89th level was difficult beyond compare.

He was currently positioned in the exact center of the battlefield, the ends of which were not visible. Besieged on all sides, this was a position the he was fundamentally incapable of reaching on his own. Even with all

the talismans and magical items forged with Ke Yunhai's life force, it was still difficult for him to make even the slightest progress.

Countless Cultivators and innumerable divine abilities seemed to be on the verge of completely overwhelming him.

His face was pale white, and Patriarch Reliance appeared to be on the verge of gasping his last breath. As it turned out, he actually had no hatred for Meng Hao. During their path of battle up to this point, they had even come to form something almost like a friendship.

"At the most, I can hold out for twelve more breaths...." thought Meng Hao, his face flickering. He would quickly run out of Demon Stones, talismans, and magical items. In twelve breaths of time, he would no longer be able to fight back, and he would be teleported out in defeat.

"Don't tell me I'm really going to have to wait for that second chance...." he thought, breathing in deeply. He didn't want to have a second chance. He wanted to get everything he needed in one shot. If he was forced to try a second time, it would mean Ke Yunhai would have to forge even more magic items for him. Meng Hao wasn't willing to see that happen.

In this critical moment, the Demon Immortal Sect disciples on the outside were watching with rapt attention. Everyone was thinking different things; however, virtually, all of the Cultivators from South Heaven were hoping beyond hope that Meng Hao would fail.

They desired nothing more than Meng Hao to falter here. It was a case of 'if I can't have it, then nobody else can have it either.' Almost as if their negative thoughts were actually effective in some way, Meng Hao had already wasted nearly an hour in the 89th level.

From the perspective of the onlookers, the glow of magical items was beginning to shrink and grow dim. This caused the South Heaven Cultivators to start to get a bit excited.

One of the Array Cultivators from the Eastern Lands Ji Clan was usually quite proud of the fame of his name. However, he apparently forgot that momentarily and suddenly said, "He's gonna fail!! Hahaha! He opened the devil's gate and strode a crooked path with his corrupt methods! But in the

end, he has no way to achieve victory. He definitely won't be able to get past this level!

"Heaven and Earth are deep and profound; the wind is vast and mighty. Cultivators like us must rely on our own power! How could we possibly rely on the power of others? This guy has had an unfair advantage today, so he will certainly meet defeat in the end!"

Even as everyone railed against Meng Hao, as everyone hoped that he would fail, the glow of his magical items continued to shrink down and get darker.

However... it was at this moment that Ke Yunhai's eyes filled with determination. He suddenly sprang into motion, moving with incredible speed to appear outside the 89th level. He lifted his hand, within which appeared his Paragon's medallion. His expression was solemn, and his hair whipped about him as he raised the medallion up to push it against the surface of the tower.

The other six paragons saw what he was doing and instantly began to speak to attempt to stop him.

"Yunhai, you can't!"

The Seventh Paragon, the old man with the transcendent demeanor, seemed especially moved. He directly appeared next to Ke Yunhai and said, "Yunhai, think three times before you do this!"

Ke Yunhai was silent for a moment. Looking at the Seventh Paragon, he said, "My limit has been reached. I won't live more than a few more months."

The old man hesitated, looking at Ke Yunhai for a long moment before finally sighing. "If you do this, I'm afraid you won't even last that long."

"Old Seventh, you have lived your life for the Dao, and have no children. You don't understand the responsibility of being a father. Right now, I only have one child, Jiusi. It doesn't matter when exactly I return to the dust. I just hope that after I leave, he can be as happy as before.

"Jiusi has always been a silkpants, and I've never been able to rest at

ease because of that....” Ke Yunhai sighed and glanced at the other Paragons. “But now, he’s chosen the path of body tempering. Since that’s the case, I will spare no effort to help him acquire the Nine Heavens Treasured Body Seal and... the mysterious art of Fleshly Sanctification.” Without any further hesitation, he shoved his Paragon’s medallion up against the outside of the pagoda.

When they touched together, Ke Yunhai’s body suddenly trembled. He was old to begin with, but now he grew even older. His aura instantly grew weaker.

It was at this same time that, Meng Hao, within the 89th level, ran out of talismans. His magical items were exhausted, and his protective shield was virtually completely faded. Booming sounds could be heard as it began to explode.

“It’s over....” he sighed. He watched as the shield exploded, and countless magical techniques threatened to overwhelm him. However, it was at this moment that a towering figure suddenly appeared to stand in front of him.

The figure’s face was the same one that Meng Hao had seen when he first arrived in this world.... Ke Yunhai.

Ke Yunhai stood by Meng Hao, as if he were his entire world. He was like a tree, protecting Meng Hao from the wind, blocking all of the countless divine abilities shooting toward him.

The divine abilities, Daoist magics, and countless figures, all suddenly came to a standstill. Everything grew still; the entire world became quiet.

When Meng Hao saw the figure, he trembled. His heart seized as he realized that he recognized the figure as.... Ke Yunhai.

Ke Yunhai smiled at Meng Hao, then reached out and tousled his hair. A doting smile appeared on his face. A look appeared in his eyes that seemed to say that no matter the occasion, the person there in front of him was his young boy, still not yet grown up.

“Jiusi, don’t be afraid. Daddy’s here to take you the rest of the way.”

It was a simple sentence, but as soon as Meng Hao heard it, it caused

uncontrollable emotions to swell up within him. He thought of his own father, but at the same time, the image of his own father that existed in his mind seemed to overlap with Ke Yunhai. In this moment, he actually forgot that he wasn't really Ke Jiusi!

"Dad...." he said, gaping at Ke Yunhai. One breath earlier, he had been on the verge of failure. The next breath, he had hope. The intensity of the reversal was such that the image of Ke Yunhai was branded onto his heart.... It was the image of... a father.

"Don't worry," laughed Ke Yunhai. "Your dad isn't dead yet. We're going to get through this battle together. Our dad and son team is going to pass this level together!" With that, he turned and waved his hand. Heaven and Earth began to collapse, and a terrifying, indescribable power transformed into a roaring whirlpool that began to sweep about. As it expanded, everything it touched, collapsed. The sky grew blurry, and all the figures in the area were transformed into flying ash.

Next to Ke Yunhai suddenly appeared a floating oil lamp. The wick of the lamp was a phoenix and its body was a dragon!

Meng Hao took a deep breath, and his heart filled with incredible enthusiasm. He nodded his head, then stood up by Ke Yunhai, by his father, and proceeded forward.

One in front, one behind. One father and one son!

Patriarch Reliance's eyes went wide as he stared at Ke Yunhai. His mind trembled, and his expression filled with fear. His head shrank back into his shell as the gleam of realization filled his eyes. Now he understood Meng Hao's background.

"Dammit. His dad's a Paragon! No wonder he's so crazy. No wonder he can bully me so easily!"

Chapter 587: Why Are You Doing This?

Ke Yunhai took up the lead. As of now, he seemed to have returned to the way he was in the prime of his life. His Cultivation base was at its peak, although Meng Hao had no way to comprehend what realm it was in.

“Jiusi, in the Nine great Mountains and seas, the path of Cultivation is comprised of Spirit, Immortal, Ancient, and Dao!” He waved his hand, and the world collapsed. The 89th level, which had been so difficult for Meng Hao, was destroyed in an instant.

As the 90th level neared, another battlefield spread out in front of Meng Hao. It was boundless, such that in the sky above, nine suns could be seen. The land was ancient and archaic. Meng Hao could see countless giants on the battlefield, and even giant Demons!

It seemed as if this battlefield were even more ancient than the Demon Immortal Sect.

“This place is a reflection of the Archean world. It is neither real nor false. It exists within a thought.... According to legend, the Archean world is the origin of the Nine Mountains and Seas.” Ke Yunhai moved forward, waving his hand. Countless incoming roaring figures instantly turned into ash.

Meng Hao stood behind Ke Yunhai, his expression one of excitement.

“It is said that the Nine Lords of the great Nine Mountains and Seas actually come from the Archean world. They are not spirits of the Nine Mountains and Seas. That includes our Lord Li of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

“Of course legends are just legends. They might be true, they might be false. Either way, you should know the story.” Ke Yunhai stamped his foot down, and a roaring sound filled the air. Ripples expanded out in all directions. Everything that existed for tens of thousands of meters in all directions began to shake, and then directly exploded into pieces.

“Your father is at the peak of the Ancient Realm, half a step into the Dao Realm. Originally speaking, I should have limitless longevity and be able to... enjoy a life as long as that of the Nine Mountains and Seas.” He proceeded forward, and the land beneath his feet began to shrink. He pulled Meng Hao along by his arm, striding forward with seemingly boundless steps.

Patriarch Reliance watched them from far off in the distance, and his heart suddenly trembled. He plastered himself down onto the ground, praying that Meng Hao had already forgotten about him.

Meng Hao moved along with Ke Yunhai, having completely forgotten about Patriarch Reliance. In a single moment, they were now in a completely different location on the boundless battlefield.

“However, Lord Li returned the mandate of Heaven to the masses,” he said softly. “He believes that for Cultivators to cultivate eternal life is an injustice to Heaven and Earth. He buried the path to the next life, sealed the Dao Realm so that it cannot be tread. In the end, we must forfeit our lives. That is how... the limit on longevity began.”

He stood there, his long hair draped around him, looking very much like a Paragon.

Or, you might say that... he truly was a Paragon. He pushed his hand down toward the ground. Instantly, it began to rumble, shattering into multiple layers, which then collapsed into each other.

“This level... is now passed,” he said. He lifted his hand, and the entire world was shattered into fragments. All the lives on the battlefield were destroyed, and a huge crater spread out on down below. There, in the deepest part of the crater, a coffin could be seen.

When Meng Hao saw the coffin, his entire person filled with rumbling. The surface of the coffin was carved with nine butterflies.

“According to legend,” Ke Yunhai said coolly, “a coffin existed in the Archeon world. Although it existed for countless years, no one ever knew who rested inside of the coffin, nor did anyone know where it came from.” The entire world around them vanished. At the same time, a seal

appeared, flying out to float in front of Ke Yunhai.

Ke Yunhai looked at it, and smiled. He turned, waving his sleeve to cause the seal to shoot toward Meng Hao.

“Assimilate this seal. Father will stand guard over you.”

As soon as the seal touched his forehead, it vanished. Meng Hao’s body trembled, and, shockingly, five huge characters appeared in his mind.

Nine Heavens Treasured Body Seal!

This was exactly what Meng Hao had wanted to acquire, one of the top 10 Daoist magics specifically focused on body tempering!

The seal spun in a circle in Meng Hao’s mind, surging up with a power of expulsion. It almost seemed as if this Daoist magic was not destined to be with Meng Hao, as if it was not something he could gain enlightenment of to turn into a great Dao seed.

Seeing the Daoist magic suddenly beginning to grow faint, Meng Hao’s mind shook. It was in this moment, however, that a warm hand clasped down onto his shoulder.

“Don’t worry, father will help you subjugate the magic!” As soon as the gentle voice entered Meng Hao’s mind, he grew calm. At the same time, an indescribable pressure exploded out from Ke Yunhai. As it bore down on Meng Hao, he did nothing to interfere with it. However, the seal in his mind began to tremble and struggle in frustration.

In response to the struggling, Ke Yunhai let out a cold snort. All struggling was destroyed, completely shattered. The seal lost any will of its own. It remained in Meng Hao’s mind, slowly fusing in, transforming into the seed of a great Dao.

“I erased its will,” said Ke Yunhai with a smile. “Although the Dao will is gone, it still does not conform to your spirit. You won’t be able to cultivate it right away. Since it insisted on disobeying you, I had no choice but to destroy it.

“Okay, let’s go. On to the next level!” With that, he turned and headed

forward. Meng Hao took a deep breath and followed in his tracks.

The two of them passed the 91st level, the 92nd level, and the 93rd level....

Meng Hao didn't need to do anything the entire time. Everything was handled by Ke Yunhai. He was cool and unhurried, waving his hand to destroy worlds. The sight of it left Meng Hao completely shaken.

If Ke Yunhai could do this here, there was no need to even mention what he could accomplish in the outside world.

Earlier....

The Demon Immortal Sect disciples outside watched Ke Yunhai push his hand against the surface of the pagoda and then close his eyes in meditation. As soon as he closed his eyes, shockingly, a second dot of light appeared on the 89th level.

In addition to Meng Hao, there were now two glowing dots. This dot, however, was incredibly shocking. It might even be better to call it a sun than a dot of light.

"That's... that's Paragon Yunhai? It's... it's really him! This is too... too..."

"That's definitely Paragon Yunhai...."

Everyone could do a little more than stare in complete stupefaction. Never could they ever have imagined that cheating... could possibly be carried out to this shocking extent.

Almost as soon as the sun appeared on the 89th level, the level collapsed. Meng Hao and the sun then proceeded on to the 90th level. Within a few breaths of time, a brilliant glow filled the sky as the 90th level was passed!

At the same time, countless beautiful flowers descended down in the area around the Demon Immortal Pagoda. They merged together to form one gigantic lotus.

Many people instantly recognized what this was. This was one of the top 10 Daoist magics. It didn't count as a secret technique; this was the one

and only body tempering Daoist magic known as the Nine Heavens Treasured Body Seal.

Even as an unprecedented surge of jealousy filled the hearts of the onlookers, suddenly, the beautiful flower began to show signs of instability. Immediately, the hearts of all the onlookers quivered.

“Incompatible! It’s incompatible! Hahaha! Ke Jiusi has no way to gain enlightenment of this particular Daoist magic!”

“The will of Heaven! This is definitely the will of Heaven!!”

Yet, even as their hearts raced, suddenly, pressure from Ke Yunhai spread out. Everyone watched dumbfounded as the pressure exerted by a Paragon caused the will of the previously unstable flower to be erased, and it was forced into submission.

The scene instantly caused the Demon Immortal disciples to stare with wide eyes. The ones who had just spoken instantly revealed expressions of incredible frustration.

Odd looks filled their eyes, and the exact same question spun through all of their minds.

“Dammit! Why couldn’t I have such an awesome dad!?!?!?”

A second question then filled the minds of some of the onlookers.

“How come my dad isn’t a Paragon...?”

By this point, they had no energy left to cry out about things being unfair. Ke Yunhai’s actions had obliterated any such arguments to the point of being dust and ash. It didn’t matter what anybody cried out, this father and son team would battle together....

It didn’t matter if you were talking about the Fang Clan or the Ji Clan, the Eastern Lands, the Northern Reaches, the Southern Domain, or the Black Lands. Everyone watched in a daze at the Demon Immortal Pagoda floating there in the sky.

They watched as Ke Yunhai, Paragon, escorted Ke Jiusi through the levels.

Fang Yu blinked, her heart feeling a bit unsettled.

“I can’t let dad find out about this....” she thought.

Zhixiang’s eyes were wide and she was panting. At the moment, even she was filled with intense jealousy toward Meng Hao.

Everyone was filled with complicated feelings as they watched the bright, sun-like dot of light on the outside of the Demon Immortal Pagoda. It charged through the levels. 94th. 95th. 96th....

Finally, it reached the 99th!

All of the observing Demon Immortal Sect disciples who were watching began to pant. It was as if they had forgotten about everything else except for this highest level of the pagoda.

The 99th level exceeded anything Meng Hao could have imagined. There was no danger here, no battlefield. There was only a valley. Within the valley was a lake, next to which was a house. Sitting cross-legged outside of the house was an old man.

The old man was fishing, and as Ke Yunhai and Meng Hao approached, he paid them no attention.

Meng Hao stood silently behind Ke Yunhai. Ke Yunhai came to a stop by the old man, and likewise said nothing.

After a long moment passed, the old man finally spoke.

“This does not conform with the rules.”

“I don’t have much life left in me,” replied Ke Yunhai coolly. Hearing this caused Meng Hao’s heart to tremble.

“It still doesn’t conform with the rules,” said the old man. He sighed.

“I’ve made many sacrifices for the Demon Immortal Sect. I’ve carried out Lord Li’s commands without hesitation. That’s not enough?” He turned his head to look off into the distance.

The old man said nothing at first. After a long moment, he sighed, then made a grasping motion with his right hand. Instantly, a seal appeared in

the palm of his hand. It seemed to be formed of countless magical symbols, and contained a sense of shattered beauty.

“Fleshly Sanctification,” said the old man. “It is a secret art, not really a Daoist magic.” He looked at Meng Hao for a moment, and Meng Hao’s mind shook. That single glance was enough to pierce completely through him.

“Interesting,” said the old man, a serious look filling his eyes. He waved his hand, causing the seal to shoot toward Meng Hao and enter into his forehead.

“Night would have difficulty creating a copy of this art. However, since I approve, then after you leave this place, as long as I still exist, you can fully activate it. If I’ve already perished...” The old man shook his head, but said no more.

As for Ke Yunhai, he didn’t ask any questions about what had just been said. He turned to leave with Meng Hao.

As they made their way off, the old man suddenly looked up at Meng Hao once more. His eyes seemed to be filled with both understanding, and sorrow.

“Yunhai,” he thought, “considering you know the truth of it all, why are you doing this...?”

Chapter 588: This Life Will Do

Ke Yunhai took up the lead and Meng Hao followed. The two of them left the valley and headed off into the void.

Meng Hao felt a bit uneasy. Considering his personality and ability to concentrate, it shouldn't be this way. After all, everything here was illusory. Furthermore, he hadn't attempted to deceive Ke Yunhai. Therefore, there was nothing to feel uneasy about.

And yet, he was still somewhat nervous. He feared losing this identity. You might say that his original goal had been good fortune; now that he had acquired it, there was no reason for such uneasiness.

But the feeling didn't go away. He feared waking up from this dream. He feared that after Ke Yunhai discovered that he was not Ke Jiusi, he wouldn't look at him with that thoughtful, loving expression ever again.

In one breath, I can call you father. With the next breath, I can't even open my mouth.

This was the feeling that caused Meng Hao to feel such uneasiness.

He feared losing what he had acquired.

Fatherly love. In Meng Hao's memory, the image of his father was already blurry. During his time spent in this illusion, he continued to be distracted to the point that he was forgetting that he wasn't Ke Jiusi.

"Dad...." he said softly. His heart was filled with bitterness as he saw Ke Yunhai moving forward, getting further and further away from him.

Ke Yunhai stopped and turned back, his eyes filled with a smile, and that same old doting expression. He softly tousled Meng Hao's hair.

"Don't let your imagination run wild," he said.

Meng Hao stared back, somewhat in a daze. His eyes felt moist, and at the moment, he didn't want to think about whether or not Ke Yunhai knew the truth about everything. He didn't want to consider all of that. There was only one thing he wanted to consider.

If there really is such a thing as destiny that caused us to become father and son in this place, then... I really am your son.

If this illusory world can count as my previous life, then you are my father from my previous incarnation.

Perhaps I am doomed to leave this ancient, illusory world, doomed to no longer have you as my father, doomed to no longer be your son. In that case, let the feelings we have between father and son that exist in this illusion... be something that I never forget.

Sir, you are my father.

I, sir, am your son.

Meng Hao nodded his head.

With a smile, Ke Yunhai clasped his shoulder and then the two of them flickered, disappearing from the 99th level and appearing outside of the Demon Immortal Pagoda.

As soon as they appeared, they became the focus of attention of all of the Demon Immortal Sect disciples. The gazes were filled with envy, jealousy, internal conflict and helplessness.

As soon as Ke Yunhai and Meng Hao left the Demon Immortal Pagoda, it began to shrink down, eventually transforming into a beam of light that shot up into the fissure up in the sky. As it did, the fissure rapidly began to mend itself; in the blink of an eye, there was no fissure at all left behind.

There was only....

A transparent staircase. It was hard to say when it appeared, but it stretched down from the heavens all the way to the ground, floating there above the pit between the Third and Fourth Peaks of the Demon Immortal Sect.

The light of the staircase did not emanate out, but rather, seemed to circulate about inside. It rose up far into the heavens, and if you looked closely, you could just barely make out a huge vortex at the top.

When he saw the staircase, Meng Hao gasped in shock. However, he

quickly realized that the other Demon Immortal Sect Cultivators seemed completely indifferent to its appearance, almost as if... they couldn't see it!

However, as Meng Hao glanced out at the crowds, he suddenly saw Ji Xiaoxiao. From her expression, he could guess that she had seen the staircase.

“Could it be that only outsiders can see it?” he thought.

Now that Meng Hao had appeared, the South Heaven Cultivators were now concealing themselves within the crowds of other Demon Immortal Sect disciples.

They had no choice but to hide from and avoid Meng Hao. Although they had been going wild with jealousy moments ago, and despite the fact that this was an illusory version of ancient times, considering that Meng Hao had the identity of Ke Jiusi, if they tried to fight him, they would lose, even if they had a hundred lives.

They could only avoid him with great care. If they revealed their identities, they put themselves in critical danger. In contrast, of course, Meng Hao had no qualms about revealing himself.

That was because... with their identities, none of the South Heaven Cultivators could do anything to threaten him even the slightest bit.

Even still, despite how they were all concealing themselves, they could all see the staircase stretching up into the sky above the mountain peaks, and it caused their minds and hearts to tremble.

“That's....” The young man from the Imperial Bloodline Clan of the Northern Reaches once again lowered his head and hunched his back. However, he was now panting, and his eyes glowed with a bright light.

“Could that be...?” Fang Yu's pupils constricted. After a moment's thought, her eyes went wide.

“The critical element needed to open the Third Plane!” thought Zhixiang. She stood off in the distance, breathing heavily, her hands clenched into fists and her eyes shining with excitement.

Even further off in the distance was Patriarch Huyan, who had left quietly much earlier. He was also starting to get very excited.

Even as everyone was thinking their various thoughts, Ke Yunhai led Meng Hao away. The ripples from the Demon Immortal Pagoda faded. There were others who had acquire some smatterings of Daoist magic. However, the Demon Immortal Pagoda had been opened specifically for Meng Hao, and he was the only one to have acquired the indescribable good fortune that he had.

Withering Flame Demon Magic True Self Dao, Nine Heavens Destruction, Nine Heavens Treasured Body Seal, and finally, the secret technique of Fleshly Sanctification. These were Meng Hao's shocking acquisitions.

That was not even mentioning how he'd gotten the chance to punish Patriarch Reliance, as well as many other subtle matters. To Meng Hao, the Demon Immortal Pagoda had been nothing less than Heavenly destiny.

He returned to the Fourth Peak without stopping anywhere along the way. When he got back to his Immortal's Cave, Xu Qing was there meditating, her body surrounded by swirling light. A slight smile could be seen on her face; clearly she was immersed in gaining enlightenment of Daoist magic.

He didn't disturb her, but rather, sat down cross-legged to study the seeds of Daoist Magic which existed inside of him.

There was one that looked like a crimson flame, which was none other than the Withering Flame Demon Magic True Self Dao!

As for the Nine Heavens Destruction, the Nine Heavens Treasured Body Seal, and the last one... the secret art of Fleshly Sanctification, these arts existed in Meng Hao's mind, and could be seen, but not felt.

Meng Hao had the feeling that these three great Daoist magics would require continued contemplation before he could employ them. Thankfully, he would not forget them after he left this ancient, illusory world.

Having reaching this point in his train of thoughts, Meng Hao started to get excited. That was because in addition to all of that, there was one more thing he had acquired... the Mountain Consuming Incantation!

As of now, Meng Hao had fundamental control over the technique. Although he could only employ it up to the first level, according to the introductory information, that was enough to incarnate the body of a mountain outside of his fleshly body.

That in and of itself would make the power of his fleshly body exponentially higher.

“By cultivating it to the peak, I can extract the souls of mountains and then incarnate their wills, and cause the power of myriads of mountains to descend!” Meng Hao’s eyes filled with a look of satisfaction. It was truly possible to say that his journey into the Demon Immortal Pagoda had pushed his good fortune to the pinnacle.

There were other magical techniques, restrictive spells, and other miscellaneous methods that he had picked up. Currently, they all existed in his mind. However, unless he actively gained enlightenment, then once he left this place, they would disappear.

He tried to brand the information onto a jade slip, but experienced no success and eventually gave up.

“The Mountain Sea Scripture... is most likely impossible to acquire,” he thought. A bright glow appeared in his eyes as he contemplated the matter for a moment. In the end he put it aside. However, within his mind, he could remember that voice he had heard in the 80th level.

Time passed, half a month. Meng Hao sat in meditation in his Immortal’s cave for the entire period of time, gaining enlightenment of the Daoist magic.

Xu Qing emerged from meditation a few times. They would simply look at each other and smile. They knew that their time here was limited, and that they needed to take advantage of every moment possible to be enlightened regarding Daoist magic. There was little time for idle chatting.

Finally one morning, Meng Hao sat cross-legged outside of his Immortal's cave, studying the Fourth Peak. Within him, the enlightenment of the Mountain Consuming Incantation had already been branded on his mind. The first level of the incantation was almost completely cultivated when someone arrived, who, although he hadn't been expecting, did not surprise him.

It was a female Conclave disciple from another of the peaks. She was pretty, with bright, flickering eyes. She carried herself with a graceful bearing, and as she neared Meng Hao, she attracted quite a bit of attention from the other Fourth Peak disciples.

What they saw was a young woman, blushing, apparently finally have overcome her shyness and mustered some courage. She came to a stop before Meng Hao and bashfully said, "Big bro Jiusi, I have a few questions about cultivation that I was hoping you could help me with."

Her features, her voice, and her figure transformed into something shockingly alluring. Anyone who looked at her would feel their heart pumping with eagerness. Quite a few of the Fourth Peak disciples were looking at her, and all of them seemed to view her as being so amazing that she was nearly god-like.

Her face was beautiful, as was her body. Her skin was so delicate it seemed the wind could break it. She had a pure expression that was at the same time naturally charming. All of it made it so that the term 'extraordinary beauty' couldn't even be used to describe her.

Meng Hao recognized her instantly. His entire body covered with goosebumps when he heard her speak. "I don't have the time," he replied.

She looked delicate and charming, as if she might fall over from the slightest blow. She bit her lip, seemingly mustering her courage. Anyone watching on would surely feel that it was a crime to refuse this young woman.

Meng Hao was about to do just that when he suddenly noticed a flicker of ill intent in the young woman's eyes. Clearing his throat, he rose to his feet and then proceeded forward.

The young woman was none other than Zhixiang. She lowered her head and followed Meng Hao off into the distance, surrounded by the envious murmuring of the other Fourth Peak disciples.

As they proceeded along, all of the Demon Immortal Sect disciples who saw the two of them stared with wide eyes, their hearts filled with fury.

“Another female disciple has fallen into his hands!”

“Dammit! How many has it been so far? When will it be my turn for something like that to happen?!”

Eventually they reached the vicinity of the Second Peak, whereupon Meng Hao turned impatiently to look at Zhixiang.

“Alright,” he said, “tell me how I can help you.”

“Straight to the point, I see,” she said with a smile. “Well, you’re a man, and you know that you owe me. However, what I’m most curious about is, what exactly did you encounter in the 80th level to cause the voice of Lord Li to bestow you with Daoist magic!?” Although she spoke with a smile, she clearly took her words very seriously.

When Meng Hao heard this, his pupils constricted. He looked at Zhixiang, his heart thumping.

“That was... the voice of Lord Li?” he thought.

Chapter 589: An Ancient Tale

Although inwardly his mind was racing, his expression didn't show any trace of that. He simply looked at Zhixiang with an enigmatic smile.

She blinked. Considering Meng Hao's expression, it was impossible to determine what he was thinking, and she could only inwardly curse his craftiness.

"Fine, if you don't want to tell me then just forget about it," she continued with a laugh. "Let's change the subject. The two of us had an agreement, and you owe me some help." A shrewd look appeared on her beautiful face.

"Actually," replied Meng Hao with a casual laugh, "the truth of the matter is that we don't have any formal agreement with each other. However, considering how you've helped me out throughout the years, I don't mind returning the favor. I can help you out a little, but regarding anything too complicated, my hands are tied."

"Don't be in such a hurry to refuse," Zhixiang said carefully. "If you help me, you'll also benefit. Considering your personality, I know that you'll require a thorough explanation before you make your decision." Meng Hao did nothing to prevent her from continuing.

"Let me tell you the current facts of the matter. Afterward, you can make your own determination about whether or not to help me. Either way is fine with me." A sudden breeze caused Zhixiang's hair to suddenly spread across her face, making her look indescribably seductive.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever. He didn't speak, but instead waited to hear what she had to say.

"We first encountered each other in the Bridge of Immortal Treading. I assume you're already aware that the bridge was created by one of the three Demon Emperors of the Demon Immortal Sect!

"Those three Greater Demons were the Frost Soil Demon Emperor, the Withering Flame Demon Emperor and the Blood Coral Demon Emperor.

All you have to do is look up and you can see the dwelling places of those three Greater Demons here within this illusory ancient world.” In accompaniment with her shocking words, she pointed up into the sky.

Meng Hao’s mind reeled. He had never expected Zhixiang to reveal such shocking matters. He looked up at the three inverted Demon Mountains up above. The first time he had caught sight of the Demon Mountains, he had had his own speculations. Now that he heard Zhixiang’s explanation, he could combine it with what he already knew to be relatively certain that she was not lying!

Of the three Greater Demons of the Demon Immortal Sect, the one who created the Bridge of Immortal Treading was none other than Frost Soil Demon Emperor Han Shan!

Meng Hao’s pupils constricted. He looked up at the distant mountain of frost, and got the feeling of some type of separation, as if it had sealed itself away from the world.

“A long time ago in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, the Demon Immortal Sect was the number one great Sect. That was because it had Lord Li, who was in fact the person who founded the entire Sect!

“He was the Lord of the Ninth Mountain before the Ji Clan.... Among Lord Li’s subordinates were two great generals who supported the Heavens, and three Greater Demons to act as Dharmic Protectors! Of course, one of those generals was none other than the later Lord Ji.” Zhixiang spoke all of these words calmly, but they caused Meng Hao’s mind and heart to tremble.

He kept his expression solemn as he looked back from the three Greater Demon Mountains up above. As he returned his gaze to Zhixiang, he realized that he was suddenly much more curious regarding her goals and motives here in the Demon Immortal Sect.

“I am a disciple of the Demon Immortal Sect,” she went on. “So, I know quite a bit about all these matters. The Demon Immortal Sect has a total of four Heavens. The First Heaven is comprised of the Seven Peaks. The Second Heaven is comprised of the three Greater Demon Mountains. The

Third Heaven is made up of two Holy Lands.... As for the Fourth Heaven, that is where... Lord Li is!

“That is the Demon Immortal Sect, which was once... the number one Sect in the Ninth Mountain and Sea!” By this point, Zhixiang’s eyes shone with a strange light that seemed to contain pride and dignity.

“Assumably, you have already made some speculations about the two so-called two Holy Lands. They are actually the lands of the two great generals, and their Clans. Because of their extraordinary service, Lord Li eventually bequeathed their lands with the word ‘Holy.’

“Therefore... those two lands are two great Holy Lands of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

“As for the names of these two great Holy Lands, one is Fang, and the other... is a name that cannot be spoken out in the world without incurring great calamity. As of now, we can only say Ji!” As Zhixiang’s words filtered into Meng Hao’s ears, his mind filled with a roaring sound. At long last he understood this most ancient of stories!

He had long since become aware of the matter of the Ji Clan seizing the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and becoming its new Lord. However, this was his first time hearing that the other of Lord Li’s generals came from a Clan named Fang! Meng Hao’s mind was spinning.

He immediately thought of Fang Yu, and of the Fang Clan in the Eastern Lands!

For some reason, he had the feeling that this Fang Clan was the same Fang as the name of that great general, as well as the Holy Land. How could he ever have imagined that the Fang Clan would have such an astonishing origin! 1

“Considering how astonishing the two generals’ Clans were, and how shocking the three Greater Demon Emperors were, then... since they were in subservient positions to Lord Li, I can’t help but wonder just how powerful Lord Li must have been!?” All of a sudden, he recalled the words he had heard within the 80th level of the Demon Immortal Pagoda.

“When Lord Li achieved his Dao, he decided to no longer monopolize the mandate of Heaven, but returned that mandate to the masses. He caused the Dao Realm to become invisible, and imposed restrictions on longevity. He sealed the path one could tread to see him, and no longer appeared in the flesh. The two Holy Lands were forced to seal themselves!

“After that, the three Greater Demon Mountains were also sealed!

“Later, Lord Li fell. Some people say he went missing, others say he died in battle. There are many legends. Eventually, war was waged over the two Holy Lands. That war affected all of the Ninth Mountain, and in the end... the Heavens were placed on top of Li, and the Ji Clan gained victory!

“The Demon Immortal Sect was part of that war, and as a result, it was destroyed.... The Bridge of Immortal Treading was also shattered. The three Greater Demon Mountains collapsed, and the three Greater Demons perished. The Ji became the new Lord, and the Fang Clan was out.

“As the Demon Immortal Sect reached its end, a handful of survivors managed to flee, sticking together to form the modern-day Demon Immortal Sect.

“That war was like a foul wind and a bloody rain of carnage for the Ninth Mountain and Sea.... Obviously, I didn’t experience it, but the records within the Sect contain clear descriptions.” At this point, Zhixiang stopped speaking.

Meng Hao stood there silently for a moment, breathing somewhat raggedly. Great waves surged through his heart. Based on everything he knew, it seemed to him that the things Zhixiang was telling him, although perhaps not completely accurate, were at least seventy to eighty percent true.

“That is the story of the Demon Immortal Sect!” continued Zhixiang.

“Within the Demon Immortal Sect, there are two great legacies. One is that which was shockingly famous throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea, the great... Mountain and Sea Scripture. According to legend, the scripture is formed of nine manuals, any one of which gives you the right to be a Mountain and Sea Lord!

“Years ago, Lord Li possessed the ninth manual!

“Unfortunately, the only way to acquire the Mountain and Sea Scripture is by means of a special method prescribed by Lord Li. After he fell, the legacy dissipated. Even the current Lord Ji only possesses a smattering of knowledge of the Mountain and Sea Scripture, not the true scripture itself.

“That is why among the nine Lords of the great Nine Mountains and Seas, Lord Ji is the weakest!

“As for the other legacy of the Demon Immortal Sect, many restrictions were placed on it. Nowadays, it is rare to find anyone who can meet all the requirements. Although... I do meet the requirements! That is why I am here to acquire... the Demon Immortal Body!” Although she was speaking softly, by the time she reached the final three words, her eyes glowed with a strange light.

Hearing all of this caused Meng Hao’s eyes to glitter.

“Long ago,” continued Zhixiang slowly, “Lord Li used his own body to form a type of physique cultivation called the Demon Immortal Body. Those who possess such a body will find it much easier to practice Demon magic cultivation. In fact, one can return to a truly natural state, incarnate a spirit of a Demon, and then transform into a matchless Greater Demon!

“In this manner, the Demonic Qi of the Ninth Mountain and Sea can be consumed, and good fortune can be split with the Ji Clan!

“What I want to accomplish can’t be done alone. In order to get this one chance, I have the backing of the full power of everyone in the Demon Immortal Sect. Therefore, if you help, you won’t just be helping me, but rather, the entire Demon Immortal Sect.

“When it becomes necessary, later on after you achieve Immortal Ascension, we can offer you shelter in the outside world. In fact, we might even recruit you to join us!”

Meng Hao looked at her for a moment. “Why me?” he asked.

“I don’t need much help from you here in the Second Plane. However, in the Third Plane, if you’re willing to assist, you can help me increase my

chances of success significantly.

“Actually, I’m not too certain of exactly what you can do. Perhaps, the fact that you have Ke Jiusi’s identity shows that you have some mysterious destiny connecting you to the Demon Immortal Sect.... Perhaps that is why the curse power in the Bridge of Immortal Treading didn’t affect you!

“That curse power is nothing other than the rancor of those who died in the Demon Immortal Sect that year. They feel rancor toward Lord Li, Lord Ji, and toward everything living. Such feelings have fermented for ninety thousand years, eventually transforming into a curse.

“Because of that curse, anyone who touches objects of the ancient Demon Immortal Sect at the wrong time, will disturb the dead souls and die instantly!

“It is only when the Third Plane opens that good fortune can be acquired. During that time, the curse is the weakest.

“Even still... there are some core areas in which the curse power will not be reduced at all, no matter what. So, I need your help... to forge a path to the place I need to go in the Third Plane!”

“Third Plane?” said Meng Hao, his eyes glinting sharply.

Zhixiang gave a cool laugh, apparently not fazed at all by the question. Her expression the same as ever, she replied, “The first two Planes of the ancient Demon Immortal Sect are guaranteed to open. However, the Third Plane depends on destiny or luck. To enter that Plane requires a lucky coincidence. However, all it takes is for one person to enter, and then the path will be opened to everyone who is within the Second Plane.

“For example, after you barged your way through the Demon Immortal Pagoda, a ladder appeared that we could all see, stretching up into the Heavens. That is destiny, and the entrance into the Third Plane. However, that entrance is only for you. You are the only one who can use it to enter the Third Plane.

“Once you enter the Third Plane, then the illusion around us will fade away. Everyone will appear along with you in the Third Plane.”

Having heard this, Meng Hao chuckled, but didn't say anything. However, Zhixiang responded with a beautiful light laugh of her own.

"Don't worry," she said, "I don't need your help getting into the Third Plane. The ones who need your help for that are all the other people from South Heaven. The Demon Immortal Sect has been preparing for this for a long time, and finally have uncovered a method to get me into the Third Plane on my own. Although, as soon as I enter successfully, so will all the others."

Meng Hao thought for a moment. "Not many upsides for me," he said.

Zhixiang looked at him for a moment. Actually, his words just now had caused her heart to start beating with excitement. She didn't fear requirements being made on his part; it was only by mutual benefit could they work together smoothly.

"Within the Demon Immortal Sect is the Demon Immortal Cistern. That cistern is the key to the legends. I plan to go there while in the Second Plane, in order to secure the qualification to enter it later. Only by a bit of deception can I go to the true location of the Demon Immortal Cistern in the Third Plane.... That is where I can acquire the good fortune to transform my body into the Demon Immortal Body!

"If you help me, then you'll be helping yourself. We can share the Demon Immortal Cistern. By bathing within, even if you don't qualify to get the Demon Immortal Body, you can still experience incredible strengthening of your fleshly body!

"In other words, this good fortune can be acquired by both of us!" Having made her greatest expression of good faith, she looked at Meng Hao expectantly.

Meng Hao was silent for a moment as he analyzed how much he could trust everything Zhixiang had said. After a long moment, his eyes filled with determination.

"I have one condition," he said. For some reason, a somewhat bashful expression appeared on his face. People who didn't know him very well might think it made him look very charming. However, to those who truly

knew him, such an expression was enough to fill one with abhorrence....

*

1. The Fang character for both the Holy Land and the name of Fang Yu's Clan is the same, 方.

Chapter 590: He Definitely....

“What condition?” replied Zhixiang, gaping. When she saw the bashful look on Meng Hao’s face, she suddenly smiled seductively, and her eyes glittered with a charming light.

“You sly fox!” she laughed. “So young and yet quite the ladies’ man already.” Suddenly, her expression turned solemn. “However, I warn you. I may speak a bit frivolously, but I know how to maintain my chastity. I’ve long since sworn myself to live for the Dao. I won’t even talk about matters of illicit love.

“Therefore, you might as well get rid of those dirty thoughts of yours, kid! I won’t agree!”

Meng Hao gaped in astonishment at Zhixiang.

“What are you talking about?”

“Don’t try to cover it up. Do you really think I couldn’t see that look in your eye? Humphh! I’ve encountered many similar situations before in my life.” She seemed to hesitate for a moment, then gritted her teeth and continued, “Fine, fine. Since there’s obviously some destiny between us, then I suppose I can promise to hold hands with you. However, that’s my bottom line!” It seemed that to her that this was a great price to pay. Without even waiting for Meng Hao to respond, she reached out and clasped his hand.

She just as quickly released it and then stepped back a few paces, her face somewhat flushed.

“Okay?” she asked.

“Huh?” It was only after a moment that Meng Hao finally put all the pieces together. He suddenly laughed bitterly. That wasn’t at all what he was interested in....

“I don’t really have any feeling toward older women....” he said with a dry cough.

When Zhixiang heard this, her eyes went wide, and a cold air suddenly

began to spread out around her. Meng Hao blinked, then leaned forward and, said in a low voice, “My condition is that I want to be the first one to step into the Third Plane.”

Zhixiang frowned, then gave Meng Hao a look.

“Do you mean...? Oh!” It took Zhixiang only a moment to react. She smiled mysteriously at him.

Looking a bit embarrassed, Meng Hao said, “I’ve been running a bit low on Spirit Stones recently.”

Zhixiang placed her hand in front of her mouth to cover up a smile. Such a condition was no trouble for her whatsoever, so she had no reason to refuse. As far as she was concerned, as long as Meng Hao agreed to help, it would be easy to comply with.

She went on, “The Demon Immortal Cistern is an important place in the Demon Immortal Sect. Because of the help of my Sect, I’m one hundred percent confident that within a few months, I can acquire qualifications for you to enter.

“The only thing you need to do is just need to come with me. If we familiarize ourselves with the place now, then when the Third Plane opens we can go back.

“How about this? Give me a month. I’ll do my best to acquire an identity that can get you into where we need to go, then....” Before she could finish her sentence, Meng Hao interrupted her.

“In the First Heaven of the Demon Immortal Sect,” he said coolly, his voice dripping with a domineering air, “I can go anywhere other than the Immortal’s Caves of the other six Paragons. I don’t need any identity from you.”

Zhixiang’s eyes widened as she stared at Meng Hao. Gradually, a look of envy and jealousy appeared. Even she couldn’t help but feel indignant at the situation. She’d already forgotten that the person in front of her had a Paragon for a father.

Then she thought of her own identity, and how the Sect had prepared for

years, how they had expended vast resources and personal wealth, just to give her these few months of time in which to succeed.

However, compared to Meng Hao and his identity, all of that counted for almost nothing....

“In the ancient records of the Sect,” she said, “there is information regarding certain people in the Sect. One of the entries is about Ke Jiusi. You were an overbearing silkpants who committed countless unimaginable misdeeds. Anywhere you went within the Sect, chaos followed. You oppressed the people, both men and women alike. According to the estimates, by the time the Sect fell, you had over four hundred beloved, and more than three thousand children!

“You were definitely a....” She didn’t finish this particular sentence.

“For the most part, your life was a joke,” she continued calmly, “something no one would keep a record of. However, in the final war, you went all out, even expending your longevity. You didn’t fear death in battle, and ended up making illustrious achievements in the fighting. All of your beloved died, and you buried them in the First Peak.

“Your sons all died too, and you personally buried them in the Second Peak. As for the Fourth Peak, that is location of your father’s tomb. You ended up deciding to bury yourself there too.

“The day the Sect was destroyed, you and a few others chose to perish along with the Sect. You slaughtered many Ji Clan Immortals, and as death loomed over you, Lord Ji himself personally arrived. Because he prized your valiant heart, he offered you a way to keep on living. All you had to do was bow your head, something you had done many times in the past.

“But you didn’t bow your head. Instead, you lifted it up and laughed to the Heavens, then charged into battle once again. When the moment of your death arrived, you fell from above and landed into your coffin. In the last moment before you died, you uttered one final sentence.”

As he listened to all this, Meng Hao’s expression grew more and more complex. In the end, it almost looked as if he felt all of the things she was

describing had happened to him. He said nothing.

Zhixiang continued. "You said... 'Father, are you proud of me?'"

When he heard this, Meng Hao's mind felt as if it were exploding. He closed his eyes for a long, long time before opening them. For some reason, tears were streaming down his face.

They were tears that did not belong to him, but rather, came from another life.

"You can stop now," he said. His mood was dark as he suddenly spun and walked off into the distance, filled with sentiment.

Suddenly, Zhixiang regretted upsetting him. She was about to say something when she heard his voice drifting back.

"We'll meet back here in three days to go to the Demon Immortal Cistern."

Meng Hao returned to the Fourth Peak. He stood outside his Immortal's cave and looked up at the darkening sky. Evening was falling, and the sun was setting. Within his mind, Meng Hao saw the images of everything that had happened with Ke Yunhai after he came here.

"He is my father in this life...." murmured Meng Hao. He thought again about how Ke Jiusi must have felt. It was a complexity that no outsider could possibly understand. In this world, in this Heaven and Earth, from ancient times until modern, only Ke Jiusi could possibly have understood. Except now... there was one more person who could.

Only the two of them could have such a sympathetic resonance. Only they had experienced such similar things, and such similar complex emotions.

"A son wants to care for his parents, but they aren't there any more...." Meng Hao closed his eyes. If he didn't understand the Soul Divergence Incantation, he would believe Ke Jiusi to be dead. However, now that he did understand it, and heard Zhixiang's story, Meng Hao suddenly had a strange feeling.

He could imagine how Ke Jiusi's flesh and bones had faded as the years passed. The Demon Immortal Sect became nothing more than corpse-filled ruins. Finally one day, Ke Jiusi's body slowly formed back together from nothing inside that coffin. He opened his eyes.

He finally saw the sky again, and his Sect. He looked around at all the things that had once been so familiar, only to realize that everything was now different. He was the only person left. He missed his father, and regretted his silkpants lifestyle. That regret then transformed into tears.

He had most assuredly wept for a long time atop the Fourth Peak.

He had most assuredly looked out at everything and felt as if he were living a life filled with pain.

He had most assuredly drunk alcohol in front of his father's tomb, blabbering like an idiot and knocking his head against the ground as he kowtowed.

He had most assuredly visited all the grounds of the Demon Immortal Sect. He had seen all the corpses, including those belonging to his relatives and friends, the people he had hated and the people he had liked. All of those people had become corpses, and their thoughts were nothing more than wisps on the wind.

After returning to the Fourth Peak and looking out at everything, he had realized that he was the only protector of this world.

Perhaps the most correct thing to say was not that he was the protector of the Demon Immortal Sect, but rather, the protector of his beautiful memories, especially the memories of his father.

As of this moment, Meng Hao understood. He understood Ke Jiusi's heart, and what he was thinking.

"You're definitely next to me," thought Meng Hao, "or perhaps within my soul. You're watching me live this version of your life, treading a different path than you. Every time I look at father, you are most assuredly using my eyes to look at him too."

Meng Hao glanced up again at the evening sky for a moment, then

closed his eyes again.

Two days later, it was the appointed time to meet Zhixiang. Meng Hao left the Fourth Peak and traveled with her toward the Seventh Peak!

This was the final peak in the First Heaven, and also the most important one.

Behind the Seventh Peak was a vast, hazy forbidden zone. Disciples without the proper authorization were not permitted to step even half a pace inside. In fact, few people actually knew what lay inside the haziness.

After entering it, nothing would be visible. One could only use a command medallion to find one's way through the mists to the destination.

Zhixiang had such a command medallion, but Meng Hao didn't.

When the two of them reached the indistinctness, they caught sight of two enormous stone statues that looked like Demons. They had eight arms and four heads, and were fully three hundred meters tall. They glared out fiercely in all directions.

Each of the two statues held a gigantic stone greatsword in hand. They were criss-crossed, stabbed down into the earth to form a door of swords.

The enormous door didn't seem to offer any hindrance to any who wished to pass through it. However, if anyone attempted to do so without the proper qualifications, they would be instantly killed.

Zhixiang's face was covered with an expression of piety and awe. She kneeled in front of the statues and used both hands to hold aloft a purple-black jade slip. It was a command medallion that emanated a warm glow as it floated up into the air toward the right-hand statue. As it landed in one of the statue's hands, the statue's eyes suddenly flickered and opened. It slowly pulled its sword up out of the ground, revealing a path.

A powerful, rumbling voice filled the air. "Third class qualifications. Where do you intend to go?"

"The Demon Immortal Cistern!" replied Zhixiang immediately.

“According to the regulations,” said the awe-inspiring voice, “you may travel thirty percent of the paths in this place, and may stay for no more than 38 hours.”

Zhixiang took a deep breath as she tried to stifle her excitement. It had taken quite a bit of power from the Sect, plus a special technique as well as a hefty price, to be able to bring this command medallion with her into the Second Plane.

It was a command medallion which provided third class qualifications. Even that was something rare, and was one of the reasons she was convinced she would be able to acquire great rewards in this place.

As she stood up, the command medallion flew back to her. She carefully reached out to take it; after all, it represented third class qualifications, which made it incredibly valuable. After putting it away, she bowed deeply to the two statues. Then she walked forward to step onto the path between the two swords. She looked back at Meng Hao with a bit of a snide look. As far as she was concerned, the Ke Jiusi from this time period would most likely only be able to acquire fourth class qualifications.

Meng Hao looked up silently at the statues for a long moment before walking forward. As he neared the door of swords, the sword belonging to the right-hand statue suddenly began to rumble.

A blinding light shot out from the eyes of the statue as it looked down at Meng Hao, its gaze filled with seeming intelligence.

After only a glance, it seemed to be able to examine him inside and out. It slowly lifted up the stone sword to reveal a path.

“Paragon’s qualifications. You may go anywhere you wish, and stay inside indefinitely.”

Zhixiang’s eyes went wide, and her brain filled with a roaring sound. She stared blankly at Meng Hao, madness rising up in her heart.

Chapter 591: Demon Immortal Cistern

“How can you have Paragon’s qualifications?!” asked Zhixiang angrily, glaring at Meng Hao as he strolled up to her through the door of swords.

As soon as she asked the question, though, she instantly felt stupid. How could she have asked such a nonsensical question...?

The fact that he really did have Paragon’s qualifications no longer left her feeling shocked, but rather, humiliated. It wasn’t just a personal humiliation, either, but a humiliation of her entire Sect.

All of the power of her Sect had been utilized, vast resources had been wasted, all to get her a third class qualification command medallion. However, in the blink of an eye, someone had appeared in front of her who had qualifications that vastly exceeded her own; Paragon’s qualifications.

Anyone who faced such a situation would go crazy and be filled with jealousy and envy. Who wouldn’t feel that the situation was frustrating and unfair? Zhixiang was now feeling exactly what everyone else had felt outside the Demon Immortal Pagoda not so long ago.

“I just asked my dad,” said Meng Hao casually.

The more he acted in this way, the more Zhixiang felt repulsed. She gritted her teeth and clenched her hands tightly into fists.

“The most annoying people I’ve ever met in my life are silkpants like you,” she said with disdain. “So what if you have Ke Jiusi’s identity? So what if you have a Paragon for a dad...?” By the time she reached this point in her tirade, even Zhixiang could sense the acrid tone in her words.

Meng Hao chuckled, but said nothing. Zhixiang watched fuming as he walked forward through the mist looking like he didn’t have a care in the world. Finally, she had no choice but to suppress her anger and follow him.

After only a few steps, though, Meng Hao suddenly stopped in place and looked at Zhixiang.

“You lead the way,” he said. “I can go anywhere I want, but your path is limited to the Demon Immortal Cistern. I’ll follow you.”

Zhixiang had just managed to suppress her indignation, only to have it explode out again. She took a deep breath, trying to console herself by looking at the bigger picture. She angrily nodded her head and walked forward.

Meng Hao followed, watching Zhixiang’s lithe figure as she made her way through the mist. There was something strange and beautiful to the scene.

As the two of them hurried forward, the mists parted ways for them, revealing a twisting path. Zhixiang took the lead position and Meng Hao followed. They proceeded onward for the time it takes an incense stick to burn. Eventually, the mists once again began to spread out, revealing an area roughly three thousand meters wide.

A mountain was visible, although it wasn’t very tall.

A waterfall fell down the side of the mountain into a pool of undulating water. Upon first laying eyes on the scene, there was no sound whatsoever. However, moments later, Meng Hao could hear the sound of rippling water.

The water poured into the pond, the sounds of birds drifted about, and the fragrance of flowers filled the air. Everything was overwhelming to the senses; there even seemed to be an aura of Immortal Spirits in the air, fragrant and sweet. Meng Hao took a deep breath, and all the Qi and blood in his body surged.

“So this is the Demon Immortal Cistern?” he asked. He glanced around, his gaze eventually coming to rest on the waters themselves. They were clear, making it possible to see all the way to the bottom. A faint, strange kind of mist rose up from the surface, making the entire scene look like a multicolored illusion.

Ancient, ornamental rock formations were scattered about, many of them carved with Demonic creatures that seemed to be imbued with Demon Spirits. The entire scene seemed like something celestial.

“If it’s not the Demon Immortal Cistern, then what is it?” said Zhixiang grumpily. “Your backyard fishing pond?” The complex jealousy and envy she felt had only dissipated by about half.

Ignoring Meng Hao, she walked forward, looking somewhat excitedly at the Demon Immortal Cistern. She raised her right hand to brush against some of the ornamental rocks, a look of piety filling her face.

“It all seems so simplistic, doesn’t it?” asked Meng Hao.

“Simplistic?!” Zhixiang shot back, spinning to glare at him angrily. She looked quite provoked. “It might be simplistic to you, but my Sect spent countless years preparing, and expended vast resources to get me here! This is the culmination of generations of hard work and persistence. All the hopes and dreams of an entire Sect all come down to this place.

“My Sect paid a steep price for this ‘simplicity,’ and many people even died!

“You say this place is simplistic, but that’s only because of your identity. Anyone else but you would be completely destroyed by the mists, even Immortals. The restrictive spells here would even cause people in the Dao Realm to frown.

“In the past, those two sword-wielding statues outside slew no less than ten Dao Realm Paragons!”

Meng Hao frowned, looking at Zhixiang with cold eyes.

“Watch your tongue,” he said. “You’re the one who invited me here.”

Zhixiang took a deep breath. After a moment of silence, she bowed to Meng Hao.

“I forgot my manners,” she said. “I’ll make it up to you.”

With that, she bowed again, then turned and pushed her hand up against one of the ancient rocks. Meng Hao watched as she sent her mind inside of it. Then, he approached the edge of the cistern, squatted down, and looked into the waters, a strange light shining in his eyes.

“So this water can alter the makeup of your body?” he thought. “If a

person is qualified, it can transform their body into a Demon Immortal Body? Presumably, such qualifications are not the same as the qualifications needed to enter this place, but rather, possessing some strange body type.” Thoughtfully, he dipped his right hand into the water.

As soon as he touched it, a tremor ran through him. He felt something like a cold current surging in through his fingers into the rest of his body.

Zhixiang opened her eyes. “The both of us came to this ancient time in soul only,” she said coolly, apparently having recovered her composure. “Everything here looks real, but is in fact false. As such, there is no need to test out the waters. You can’t absorb anything. It’s useless.

“Alright, I’ve left my mark, now I need to familiarize myself with the area so that we can return here after we reach the Third Plane. You also need to leave a mark here. That way, your aura will be here in the Third Plane, and you can come back.” With that, Zhixiang began to make her way around, observing the area, studying it. It seemed as if she wanted to commit everything about the area into memory.

Meng Hao ignored her. Eyes glittering, he suddenly walked into the cistern waters.

Soon, he was floating chest-deep in the water, whereupon he closed his eyes. Around him, he could sense a pulsating coldness within the water that surged toward him and entered his body.

With a frown, he left the pond, water vapor pouring off of him.

“It really is useless,” he said coolly. “It seems this cistern is designed specifically for the fleshly body, and is useless to souls.” Following Zhixiang’s directions, he left a mark in the corner of one of the nearby stones, then turned to leave.

Zhixiang didn’t seem to have any suspicions at all about his behavior. In fact, if he hadn’t tried out the cistern, she would have found it to be odd. To test out the water personally was only natural.

The two of them didn’t speak as they made their way back and then eventually parted. Earlier, Meng Hao had never thought that the casual

words he had spoken would cause Zhixiang to be so upset.

After leaving the hazy world, Meng Hao returned to the Fourth Peak where he meditated for a few days. Then one evening, he quietly returned, entering the mists with a strange look in his eyes. Retracing his steps from earlier, he hurried back.

It didn't take long for him to once again reach the Demon Immortal Cistern.

"There are definitely things about the Demon Immortal Cistern that Zhixiang is hiding from me. I can't believe that such an important cistern can be entered so simply.

"There definitely must be some mysterious aspects to the waters.

"In any case, the cistern waters can temper the fleshly body, and in a much gentler way than the Underworld Cave. This really does suit my needs as far as strengthening my fleshly body!" With that, he took a deep breath and strode directly into the cistern waters. Only his head floated above the surface as he closed his eyes and felt the massive cold current around him.

It felt as if strings of ice were boring into his body. In the blink of an eye he was shaking; his Qi and blood surged. Gradually, he began to absorb the coldness.

His fleshly body was already strong; he had experienced the tempering of the Underworld Cave, and had come to master the Mountain Consuming Incantation. However, for quite some time he had not been able to break past a certain point. No matter how hard he tried, when he was in the First Anima, the most power his fleshly body could wield was that of the Third Anima.

"Maybe this place can make me even stronger," he thought. As his Qi and blood raced, mist began to rise up on the surface of the water. The mist formed into streams that poured into his mouth and nose until it looked almost like he was breathing smoke.

His physical body gradually began to grow stronger. Every strand of

coldness that burrowed into his flesh and blood exerted stimulating power that seemed to temper his body from the inside out.

This was a completely different method than that of the Underworld Cave.

Time passed. Meng Hao wasn't sure how long it was before he opened his eyes. A rumbling sound filled his body as the bottleneck he had previously been stuck at suddenly burst. Finally, he could achieve a fleshly body strength equal to the Fourth Anima, while he was only in the First Anima!

Pulses of power filled Meng Hao. He could sense that with the terrifying, explosive power within him, he could destroy metal or stone with a single punch.

"The further down I go, the more cold it gets," he thought, his eyes filling with determination. He had long since decided that he needed to take advantage of his time in this ancient world to strengthen his fleshly body as much as possible. In his analysis, his fleshly body was the most important thing other than Dao magic enlightenment that he could take out from this place.

Taking a deep breath, he sank down further, until he was at the midway point in the waters. His body trembled, and cracking sounds could be heard from within. Something about his body seemed irregular as the cold currents pressed down onto him.

The cold was boundless, majestic, and mad as it poured into him. He didn't even need to make an effort to absorb it. The cold streams found him, as if they thirsted to become a part of him.

Meng Hao trembled as he caused his Qi and blood to continue to flow.

What Meng Hao didn't know was that although the Demon Immortal Sect of this time period was not at its most flourishing point, it was in a much better state than it would be later, during its period of decline. Right now, it was filled with abundant resources, for example, this cistern. Its state of accumulation during the past tens of thousands of years had led to its current state of boundlessness.

The accumulation of coldness here... was terrifying. Similarly, the nourishing power it provided to the fleshly body was incredibly shocking.

Meng Hao's body had reached a fearful state, and only continued to grow stronger and stronger.

"If I could keep this up, then eventually, I could have a fleshly body equivalent to the Seventh Anima while only in the First Anima! Wouldn't that mean that... I would have... a Spirit Severing fleshly body!?!?" Within the cistern waters, Meng Hao's eyes opened to reveal a bright, hair-raising glow.

Chapter 592: Slaying Immortals Wouldn't Be Difficult

Meng Hao closed his eyes again as he floated there. Coldness poured into him, burrowing inside, fusing with his Qi and blood, circulating through him. He could sense his fleshly body growing stronger.

There seemed to be something strange in these waters, some Heavenly power that could use gentleness to cause the fleshly body to be remolded. There was no pain, but the coldness from the cold currents gradually caused Meng Hao's body to grow stiff. After fifteen or twenty hours, even his soul was showing signs of growing hard.

It was at that point that Meng Hao, floating there in the middle section of the pond, suddenly opened his eyes. Without hesitation he shot up, bursting out from the surface of the water to appear outside. His body quivered, and white mist floated up off of him. Cracking sounds could be heard from the ground beneath his feet as ice began to stretch out in all directions, with him at the center.

He sat down cross-legged to meditate. A few days passed before he opened his eyes. Within them could be seen a bluish glow, which came from the poisonous coldness inside him that he still hadn't dispelled.

"This place is excellent for tempering the fleshly body. However, it also contains a poisonous coldness, which takes time to dispel from within. If I don't dispel it, it would eventually cause grave danger to my life." Frowning, he sighed and then looked at his bag of holding.

"It's too bad this is an illusory world, so consuming the medicinal pills from here doesn't do any good. The only thing of value are the places here for training and cultivating the fleshly body.

"If I was able to consume the medicinal pills here, well, considering the Dao of alchemy in this age, my results would be exponentially better." After a few more moments of thought, he rose to his feet and left. He planned to return to the Fourth Peak to rest and wait for the poisonous

cold to be completely expelled. Then he would return again to immerse himself in the cistern waters.

As he passed back through the mists, Meng Hao was filled with a feeling like that when you can see a great treasure right in front of you, but have no way to take it. He was a bit depressed.

Gradually, he left the hazy area. As he passed the two statues and the door of swords, he suddenly stopped in place. A brilliant glow could now be seen in his eyes.

His eyes sparkled and his mind raced as a new idea suddenly began to form.

“The medicinal pills here are illusory, and therefore useless to me.... However, there is an endless supply of medicinal plants, even types that are extinct in my time, but are common here.

“In that case... what if I concoct my own pills?” He began to pant with eagerness.

“Illusory medicinal plants can be used to create real medicinal pills. In fact... I’ve done that before!!” He took a deep breath, and his eyes seemed to shine as brightly as if they contained suns. His heart trembled from the shock of this new idea. The more he thought about it, the more it seemed like he could do it.

If he did, Meng Hao wasn’t sure if he could... actually influence the fundamental structure of this ancient, illusory world!

“Back in the Violet Fate Sect, I made something from nothing! During my Violet Furnace Lord promotion, I used an illusory item to concoct... a medicinal pill made from nothing!! 1

“I wonder if I can use a similar method here to concoct... a similar pill made from nothing, that conforms to the nature of this place!?” Meng Hao’s fists clenched and his body trembled. This idea seemed almost like lunacy and he wasn’t sure if he could succeed. Speaking purely in terms of the Dao of alchemy, though, it was possible!

“It is difficult to create something from nothing even just once, and even

with my skill in the Dao of alchemy. A lot depends on destiny and luck!”

He closed his eyes for a moment. When he opened them, they shone with determination. His body flickered as he shot toward the Fourth Peak. As he sped along, those who caught sight of him felt jealously pricking at their hearts. Because of what had happened at the Demon Immortal Pagoda, Meng Hao’s reputation as a Demon Immortal Sect silkpants had grown even beyond what it was before.

After returning to the Fourth Peak, he found that Xu Qing was still sitting there meditating. Compared to Meng Hao, Xu Qing possessed a level of diligence that he could never attempt to overtake.

However, every person’s destiny and fortune is different. Techniques that suited Xu Qing might not necessarily suit Meng Hao. The opposite was also true.

Several days later, all of the disciples in the Fourth Peak knew that their young Lord had apparently gone crazy. He unexpectedly had begun concocting pills, which caused a huge stir on the Fourth Peak. Eventually, word spread to the other peaks, and soon everyone knew about it.

It didn’t take long for all sorts of thoughtless gossip to begin to spread. Of course, no one dared to say anything openly; after all, the silkpants members of the Demon Entente were all very supportive of the matter.

When Meng Hao mentioned his desire for mass quantities of medicinal plants, the Demon Entente sprang into action. Once the huge amounts of medicinal plants began to roll in, Meng Hao’s entire life consisted of four things.

Daoist magic enlightenment, medicinal pill concocting, body tempering in the Demon Immortal Cistern, and dispelling the poisonous coldness.

When it came to concocting medicinal pills, he used the Fourth Peak’s pill concocting workshop, which belonged to Ke Yunhai. Once Meng Hao took it over, the entire Fourth Peak began to fill with the sound of exploding medicinal pills.

The sounds might echo out in the dark of night or in the middle of day.

Whenever they were heard, everyone knew that the young Lord had once again failed to concoct a batch of medicinal pills.

Meng Hao was a bit ashen-faced; this was not the outcome he had hoped for. His Dao of alchemy came from a time tens of thousands of years in the future. The current Dao of alchemy was different, and he needed time to adjust before he could unleash his full potential.

Worst of all, Meng Hao found that so far, he could only concoct illusory pills, and was unable to truly create something from nothing. Perhaps it was because of the illusory nature of the world he was in.

It almost seemed as if there was some force interfering with him, making it so that the medicinal pills here were eternally categorized in a different way. Unfortunately, Meng Hao's concoctions were outside of that scope, and were thus not permitted to appear.

However, he didn't allow himself to become dejected, nor did he give up. He continued to experiment, trying to find that same feeling he had experienced back in the Violet Fate Sect. Time went by, and soon an entire month had passed.

By the end of that month, there wasn't a single person in the Seven Peaks of the Demon Immortal Sect that didn't know Meng Hao was concocting pills. The rumblings coming from the Fourth Peak became just another one of the sounds of the First Heaven of the Demon Immortal Sect.

Considering how many countless times he had failed, and the unthinkable amount of medicinal plants he had wasted, it was good that the Demon Immortal Sect had such vast resources. Such wastage would cause even most mid-sized Sects to groan in complaint.

That was especially so considering that... he was using medicinal plants which were considered precious even in this age. Every failure of his caused other disciples to secretly feel stabs of pain in their hearts.

Although he hadn't succeeded yet, Meng Hao had actually gained quite a bit. His Dao of alchemy was gradually assimilating into ancient times. Slowly, a new path appeared in the Dao of alchemy that consisted solely of

Meng Hao. Furthermore, he had attempted so many concoctions that his proficiency with the process actually vastly improved.

Also during that month, he gained complete enlightenment of the first level of the Mountain Consuming Incantation. It was firmly branded in his mind, and could be taken away when he left the Second Plane.

As for the poisonous coldness within him, it was now more than half expelled from his body. If it weren't for his continued immersions within the cistern, it would have long since completely vanished.

Actually, his control over the poisonous coldness had reached the point that as long as he didn't have contact with the cistern water, it would naturally dissipate.

During the month, Meng Hao's fleshly body experienced incredible changes. Even he was shocked by the outcome. The bizarreness of the Demon Immortal Cistern was thoroughly shocking. Right now, even when in the First Anima, his fleshly body had the power of the Fifth Anima.

According to his estimation, if he could reach a level of fleshly body strength equal to the Seventh Anima while in the First Anima, then when he actually entered the Seventh Anima... his fleshly body would truly be that of Spirit Severing.

If he encountered Patriarch Huyan in such a state, Meng Hao was confident that the battle would not be as difficult as before, and he would be able to destroy the man in soul and body.

"Unfortunately, to reach the level of the Sixth anima with my fleshly body would involve sinking down to the very bottom of the cistern... after which I would need a month to recover from the poisonous coldness.

"Furthermore, if my calculations are correct, I would need to go through that process at least ten times. Essentially, that's almost a year of time." Meng Hao continued to think about the matter as he walked through the various districts of the Demon Immortal Sect.

As he was walking, he suddenly stopped in place. In that instant, ghost images sprang up from everything around him, the sky, the land and the

world. It lasted only for the space of a few breaths, and then everything went back to normal.

“That’s the third time this month,” Meng Hao thought with a frown. He could sense that the Second Plane was reaching the point of dissipation. When it vanished, all of the people from South Heaven would leave, and their journey into the Demon Immortal Sect would reach its conclusion.

“If it comes quickly, it will be within days. At the slowest, it might last two more months.” Meng Hao felt a bit of regret. There simply wasn’t enough time for him to reach the incredible strength of the Sixth Anima.

His body flickered, and he reappeared on the outskirts of the Demon Immortal Sect. It was a relatively remote location, deserted and quiet, a place where few people ever came.

He looked down at the ground, then glanced around the area again. Finally, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a Wooden Time Sword. This particular sword was branded with multiple seals that he had used in recent days to reinforce it.

He looked at the sword, and then the ground. A gleam of decisiveness filled his eyes.

“If I don’t give it a shot, then I’ll always regret it. Although I’m eighty to ninety percent sure it won’t work, there’s always that slight possibility...” With that, he waved his right hand, causing the Wooden Time Sword to stab down into the ground. In the blink of an eye, it was buried deep down.

“Of all the magical items I possess, only the Wooden Time Swords need to be immersed within the power of Time. Even the slight chance of success would mean....

“When I return to reality, I might be able to have a sword with tens of thousands of years of Time! With the power of such a sword, a single slash could cut away tens of thousands of years! Even slaying Immortals wouldn’t be difficult!

“A treasure like that is worth a bit of a gamble!”

1. He created a pill from nothing starting in around chapter 286.

Chapter 593: Meeting South Heaven!

Meng Hao's eyes flickered. He turned and made his way off into the distance. In the end, he picked three other similar places in the Demon Immortal Sect where he concealed Wooden Time Swords in the ground.

Currently, he had a total of ten Wooden Time Swords, which he could use to unleash the first form of the Lotus Sword Formation.

To bet four of the swords on a possibility that was most likely impossible was a huge gamble for him.

"Each one of these Wooden Time Swords represents a vast collection of Spirit Stones...." he thought. Enduring the pain of it, he hid one sword after another. Every time he did, he buried his dreams and hopes along with it.

Meng Hao selected the four locations very carefully. In fact, the four different locations were places that, according to his memories of the First Plane, were still relatively intact.

That way, just in case the swords really did appear in the Third Plane... then they would be easy for him to recover.

As night fell, Meng Hao hovered in mid-air, looking out across the lands. He glanced at the four places where he had buried the swords, and the anticipation in his eyes grew stronger.

"If I succeed, then my path of cultivation can continue even more smoothly. If I don't succeed... then at least I will have no regrets." He made one more final look to ensure that he had committed the various locations to memory. Then, he made his way to the Fourth Peak.

More time passed by. Another half month was gone. The ghost images continued to occur with increasing frequency. The interval between the occurrences was shorter, and every time they occurred, they lasted for several breaths of time.

In fact, on one occasion a few days ago, Meng Hao had been concocting pills when the ghost images sprang for a few dozen breaths of time. During that time, he almost had the feeling that he had left the illusory

ancient world.

He hadn't seen Ke Yunhai recently. Even when he went to pay his respects and wish Ke Yunhai good health, it was only through the closed door of the Immortal's cave. When Ke Yunhai spoke to him from inside, his voice seemed somewhat tired.

He wasn't sure what Ke Yunhai was doing, but whenever he heard the man's voice, he felt calmer. Ke Yunhai was his father in this life, and as far as Meng Hao was concerned, the most valuable thing he had acquired in this illusory world.

Xu Qing still had not finished with her secluded meditation. However, she had clearly experienced success in her enlightenment. Every time Meng Hao looked at her, she was experiencing different transformations of the soul.

She seemed completely immersed in Daoist magic. Although she was not consummately beautiful, there was now a vague air to her that was both unforgettable and fascinating.

"It should be any moment now," murmured Meng Hao as he sat there cross-legged in the Immortal's cave. "The ghost images are growing more intense and more frequent. Everybody must be getting very antsy by now." He looked out at the evening sky and the dark clouds that were gathering up above.

Recently, he had not of his own initiative sought out any of the other South Heaven Cultivators. He had kept to himself, trying to concoct his medicinal pill from nothing, or achieve enlightenment of the Daoist magics.

Of course, all of the Cultivators from South Heaven were extraordinary individuals. Each one had inside information from their various Sects or Clans, as well as methods to evade Meng Hao. He was well aware of that. He could either mobilize the entire Sect to try to find them, or just not look for them at all. He preferred the latter.

Meng Hao was confident that they... would come looking for him.

When they did, it would be the whole group, except perhaps for Patriarch Huyan, who Meng Hao would kill at first sight.

Sheets of rain began to descend onto the Demon Immortal Sect. The entire world turned hazy, and as Meng Hao looked out at it, he had a strange feeling. He wasn't sure if the world he was in was hazy, or if the rain was hazy... or if it was both.

It was much like how he viewed the future.

The rain fell until the third night watch before it started to lighten up. The land was covered with coldness that transformed into fog. When the sun rose, the fog slowly began to grow thin and then dissipate, transforming the haziness into clarity. Everything looked like a beautiful oil painting.

At dawn, a sword came!

It was impossible to say where the sword came from, but it shot directly toward Meng Hao. None of the protective spell formations on the Fourth Mountain did anything to stop it; apparently there was something special about this sword.

The sword came to a stop a meter or two in front of Meng Hao, where it hovered in the air. A mottled glow emanated up from its surface. Just barely discernible on the sword were the traces of a mark made by a soul.

It was one character.

Fang.

Meng Hao smiled. The people he had been waiting for were finally showing their faces.

He made a grasping motion with his right hand, causing the sword to fall into his hand. He sent out his Divine Sense to sweep it over, and immediately, a message transmitted into his mind.

After hearing the message, his smile grew even wider. After a long moment, he closed his eyes.

Noon passed, and evening was approaching by the time he opened his

eyes again. His body flickered, transforming into a beam of light that shot past the First Peak and out of the mountainous region toward an area near the main part of the Sect where the Outer Sect disciples resided.

When Meng Hao finally arrived, no one was out and about. Everything was quiet as he headed toward a set of three connected residence buildings. As he neared a location between the second and third residence buildings, he waved his hand, causing a door to open up. Without hesitation, he entered.

Instantly, dozens of gazes fell upon him.

The residence was large and filled with dozens of waiting people. As Meng Hao looked around, he could see that they were separated into various groups.

Even within those groups, there were various subdivisions based on whichever area the people were from. After all, even though some of them might wish to kill others, they knew that they had to look at the bigger picture, and the trouble that it would cause if something like that happened.

The largest group of all, shockingly, was the Ji Clan. They had seven people, all of whom were Inner Sect disciples. Their eyes shone brightly, and although they didn't speak, they made no effort conceal their extraordinary demeanors, nor their arrogance and pride.

Of the group of seven, three were women and four were men. There were two among them who were the most conspicuous. One was Ji Xiaoxiao, the other was a young man who had the glittering mark of a trident on his forehead. He emanated a sense of danger, and reminded Meng Hao a lot of the Ji Clan member he had killed most recently, Ji Mingfeng.

This young man was none other than Ji Clan Array member, Ji Mingkong!

However, of the seven Ji Clan members, the one that drew Meng Hao's attention the most was neither Ji Xiaoxiao nor Ji Mingkong. Instead, it was an ordinary looking youth of short stature who stood behind them,

smiling.

The youth seemed ordinary, but after looking at the seven Ji Clan members, that youth was the only one who caused him to feel a sense of danger.

It was merely a sense of danger, though. Meng Hao could not detect any bone-deep hatred from any of them, the type that said they wouldn't rest until he was dead. Apparently, they did not have any idea at all that Meng Hao was connected to the death of Ji Mingfeng.

He glanced at Ji Xiaoxiao. She looked back at him silently.

In addition to the seven members of the Ji Clan, there was also the Fang Clan. Fang Yu looked at Meng Hao with a slight, enigmatic smile. Behind her were two men whose eyes glistened with displeasure as they coldly measured up Meng Hao.

Meng Hao recalled what Fang Yu had told him about three members of the Fang Clan coming to the Demon Immortal Sect. Obviously, these were the other two from the Fang Clan.

What was most intriguing to Meng Hao was that, although the right hands of these two men seemed ordinary, he could tell that they were not. He was familiar with the usage of the diaphanous Fang Clan glove. A single glance and he could tell that they were wearing just such gloves.

In addition to the Ji and Fang Clans, there were four or five others from the Eastern Lands. Most of them were grouped near the Ji or Fang Clans, but were eclipsed by those blazing suns of that part of the world. They didn't look very extraordinary at all in comparison.

However, their Cultivation bases were clearly beyond ordinary. As Meng Hao looked them over, his gaze came to rest on a tall, slender man who stood next to Fang Yu. He was smiling, but within the gentleness of his look was a viciousness buried deep down. Inside, he was obviously an ambitious and ruthless person.

As for who he was, Meng Hao wasn't quite sure. However, considering where he was standing, he could formulate some guesses.

“Don’t tell me this guy is chasing after the explosive dragon?” he thought. He suddenly felt a bit of admiration for the man’s bravery.

In another direction were the people from the Northern Reaches. From what Meng Hao understood, the Northern Reaches was a savage and uncivilized region. In some ways, it might be better than the Western Desert, but it was vastly different from the Southern Domain or Eastern Lands.

Actually, Meng Hao knew that the so-called Northern Reaches were actually a land of exile. The Cultivators there were mostly people that other locations couldn’t tolerate, who eventually sought their fortune in the Northern Reaches.

Of course, what the Northern Reaches proclaimed to have was freedom. Complete and ultimate freedom.

Most of the Sects there were rebel Sects from other areas. The Clans were usually formed from scattered remnants of other Clans. One example was the so-called Imperial Bloodline Clan.

According to rumor, that clan had previously given rise to several Immortals. Because of that, descendants had a strong foundation and were able to expand and grow. Eventually the group split. One half perished and the other half traveled to the Northern Reaches where they became this new Clan.

There were a total of eight Cultivators from the Northern Reaches. All of them looked very bizarre, and none of them grouped together. Each one remained isolated.

The tyrannical and haughty air that they emanated was readily apparent. Of the eight of them, three were women and five were men. Each one seemed like a viper, cold and grim. There was one of them, a young man, who stuck out more than the others. He had the eyes of a phoenix, and beautiful features. He appeared to be smiling, but it was a cold smile that made one feel as if a frigid wind was blowing through you.

This was none other than the member of the Imperial Bloodline Clan.

There was another young man who had a strange birthmark that almost didn't appear to be a part of his body at all. It seemed to be slowly wriggling across his face, a shocking image that would make anyone who glanced at it look twice.

Next to that group were the people from the Southern Domain.

As he laid eyes upon them, Meng Hao's eyes softened a bit. The Southern Domain... was his home. Most accurately speaking, he was someone from the Southern Domain.

There were a total of seven people from the Southern Domain. From the way they were organized, Meng Hao could quickly see which alliances now existed between various Sects and Clans.

Wang Lihai and Han Bei were together, which meant that the Wang Clan and the Black Sieve Sect were in cooperation.

Song Yunshu was nowhere to be seen. If Meng Hao's guesses were correct, Song Yunshu had most likely met his fate at the hands of Ji Xiaoxiao. She surely had killed him to remove him as a witness.

Eventually, Meng Hao's gaze came to fall on one of the women from the Southern Domain. Although her physical features were unfamiliar, as soon as their eyes met, Meng Hao gaped.

"It's her...."

Chapter 594: Pain in the Whole Body

Meng Hao's memories of her were somewhat vague. He had actually not interacted with her much at all. In fact, if he recalled matters correctly, they hadn't even met each other.

There was only one thing connecting them, and that was the Song Clan's search for a son-in-law. In the end, although they were clearly strangers, they were still connected together.

Most accurately speaking, this was... Meng Hao's beloved from the Song Clan.

Because she was a daughter of the Song Clan, it was impossible for her to have a second beloved, not after the search for a son-in-law. Her reputation and the face of the Song Clan could not permit that.

After Meng Hao fled, the Song Clan did not speak of the matter to outsiders. However, to the young woman, the entire matter came as quite a blow.

She had always been a tender and delicate girl. Although she had outstanding latent talent, her heart was weak. That made it hard for her to be strong. She was like a flower in a greenhouse, who feared the rain of the outside world.

That was how Meng Hao remembered Song Jia. She was beautiful and had gentle eyes, with a tender weakness deep within her expression. 1

Now, however, a hundred years had passed. Song Jia had changed. Her eyes were filled with strength, and the weakness that she had concealed deep in her heart all those years ago had been shed. She had grown up.

She had been left with no choice other than to grow up. After the matter with Meng Hao, she had no chance to choose a new beloved. Strangely, the Song Clan Patriarch made no extra demands of her, and in fact treated her quite politely. It made her feel almost like she was an outsider.

She hadn't understood it back then, but many years later she came to realize that none of it had anything to do with her. Starting with that

search for a son-in-law... everything had changed.

She had come to understand that in addition to her identity as a member of the Song Clan, she had acquired some other mysterious background. The power of that background made it so that everyone in the Song Clan trembled like cicadas in winter when they faced her. It was as if they didn't know what to do with her.

All the resources of the Clan came to be at her disposal. In fact, it came to the point where she seemed to be even more important than her older brother, Song Yunshu. All her demands were complied with, which led to increasingly intense jealousy on the part of her older brother. The more he pushed against her, the more she had backed down. However, by the time the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane arrived, Song Yunshu had only become more aggressive than before.

In fact, in the First Plane, were it not for her being completely on guard, she might very well have died at his hands. That matter had filled her heart with intense pain.

She immediately recognized Meng Hao. The complicated feelings in her heart had been knotting up there for more than a hundred years. When their gazes met, she gave him a slight nod.

Meng Hao gazed back silently for a moment and then looked away.

When he saw Li Shiqi, he instantly thought of Wang Youcai, who joined the Reliance Sect along with Meng Hao that year. He also thought of Little Tiger, who he hadn't seen after leaving the State of Zhao. Perhaps he had left along with old turtle Reliance. 2

Before he realized what was happening, the feeling of the passage of time appeared in Meng Hao's heart. He sighed inwardly. Sometimes, it is only when encountering old friends that such a feeling will give rise to sighing and sobbing.

Li Shiqi smiled slightly, looking very cool and collected. Meng Hao nodded, then glanced over the other Cultivators from the Southern Domain. The rest were people he didn't recognize.

However, one of them gave him a feeling that reminded him of the Li Clan Dao Child who had died at his hands, Li Daoyi. 3

This new man was tall and strapping, with a gaze like a blade. He stood there like a sheathed sword, ready to burst into action and split apart Heaven and Earth.

This was the current generation Dao Child of the Li Clan, Li Tiandao!

There was another Cultivator who didn't look very impressive. It was an old, gaunt man who appeared to be all smiles, but whose expression was one of envy as he looked at Meng Hao. Meng Hao didn't recognize him, but as he stood there among the other Southern Domain Cultivators, he caused a feeling of loathing to rise up within Meng Hao.

He didn't see anyone from the Violet Fate Sect, the Solitary Sword Sect, or any disciples from the other Sects. He was a bit puzzled by that, but this was not the time to make inquiries.

Finally there were Cultivators from the Western Desert, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say the Black Lands.

There was Zhao Fang and Duo Lan, as well as two others that he didn't recognize. He didn't see Patriarch Huyan anywhere. 4

There were quite a few people he didn't know here; in contrast, everyone here seemed to know exactly who he was.

He was Ke Jiusi, son of a Paragon, the number one silkpants in the Demon Immortal Sect, one of the Masters of the Demon Entente. He was famous, which of course filled everyone here with envy.

That was especially so after the shocking events of the Demon Immortal Pagoda. The envy in some of these people was rooted deep in their hearts, and had transformed into deep jealousy.

To these people, Meng Hao was the Chosen of the illusory ancient Second Plane, brilliant and splendorous.

Glancing over them all, he grinned and leaned up against the doorframe. With a smile, he said, "Hello, Fellow Daoists. What matter is it that you

wished to discuss here with humble old me?”

He truly looked like a silkpants now, especially the way he leaned up against the doorframe. He seemed at ease, which caused everyone present to frown.

However, there was nothing they could do about it. They were Inner Sect disciples, and the difference between their status and Meng Hao's was like the difference between Heaven and Earth. In fact, many of them would never even dare to meet Meng Hao in person.

If it weren't for the fact that they were being forced by urgent circumstances, and faced with the potential of incredible profit that they couldn't simply abandon, then they would never be willing to allow Meng Hao to see them in such a position as they were.

Some of them had even considering trying to hide their faces, or use other methods to attend this meeting. However, as soon as they got near to Meng Hao, he would be able to sense who they were, so any attempts at concealment would be useless.

The only way to be completely safe was to stay far away from him. However, this meeting was far too important. They need to show the spirit of good faith, otherwise, there wouldn't even be the slightest chance of success.

That was why the Fang Clan and the Ji Clan had joined forces along with all the others. Their alliance had only one adversary, Meng Hao. They would combine all their power and then bring it to bear in the negotiations to come.

That was the only way they all would dare to meet with Meng Hao in person.

Such frustration was something that blazing suns like them would find difficult to accept in the outside world.

As Meng Hao's words echoed out, everyone was silent. Nobody responded. All of them began to exchange glances, until finally, the gazes began to fall onto the Ji and Fang Clans.

As for the Ji Clan, they maintained their silence and looked over at the Fang Clan.

Fang Yu cleared her throat and looked at Meng Hao.

“There’s something we would like to ask you to go the trouble of helping us with,” she said. “Of course there will be compensation, and a lot of it!” It wasn’t clear how Fang Yu seemed to understand Meng Hao so well, but as soon as the words came out of her mouth, his interest seemed to be sparked.

“It’s actually quite a simple thing,” she continued. “You’ve surely seen the staircase floating above the pit between the Third and Fourth Peaks. All you have to do is climb that staircase to the top, and then leave this place. That’s all.

“In exchange, each of us here will give you 100,000 Spirit Stones as compensation. Look... there are dozens of people here. Therefore, we’re talking about millions of Spirit Stones. That’s quite a bit of profit for very little work, don’t you think? You really need to listen to your big sis here.” She winked at him, after which he began to perform some calculations.

“Hmm. I don’t think so, big sis. I’ve been getting a lot of headaches lately.... Also my shoulder got twisted while I was practicing cultivation. And my legs. I think it might be that I just can’t acclimate myself to this place. Every day they ache constantly.” He rolled his eyes, pulling a long face.

As soon as he said this, unsightly expressions appeared on the faces of the others present. Although no one spoke, they were murmuring to themselves. A Cultivator getting a headache? Who would possibly believe that?

A twisted shoulder because of cultivation? It’s not like he was practicing the Spider and Toad Skill. How could he possibly twist his shoulder...?

And then there was the expression ‘can’t acclimate.’ This made them want to curse him. None of them had experienced anything like that, and yet Meng Hao had?

Furthermore... all of them had entered here in soul only. Who had ever heard of a soul that 'couldn't acclimate.'

"Look here, at my neck. It hurts really bad, right here." Massaging the spot, he sighed and continued, "I think I need to go back to my Immortal's cave and lay down for a bit. I'll have my dad call some of the Junior Sisters over to do some massage and other blood-flow invigoration techniques. As for this favor of yours, I'm afraid I really can't help out."

Everyone else was on the verge of going crazy, but had no choice other than to suppress their fury. From their perspective, Meng Hao was brazenly showing off his own identity and the fact that he had a Paragon as a dad.

He was going to call some Junior Sisters to massage him and stimulate his blood flow...? This caused all of the male cultivators to clench their jaws tightly.

Next, Meng Hao said something that arose even more fury. "Well then, it's starting to get dark out. Dad's waiting for me to eat dinner, so I should go. See you!" Yawning, he turned to leave.

"ENOUGH!" roared Fang Yu, clenching her fists tightly. "You're constant yapping about 'my dad this' and 'my dad that.' Is Ke Yunhai really your dad?!" As soon as the words left her mouth, Fang Yu regretted speaking them.

Meng Hao stopped in place. He turned to look at her coldly. "Even though I don't actually know who my father is," he said, "that doesn't have anything to do with you."

Fang Yu truly wished to enter the Third Plane. However, she also was looking out for Meng Hao's best interests. The words she had spoken just now had only come out in the heat of anger.

"Look...." she continued quickly, "all we want you to do is climb a staircase. Then you can lead us out of the Second Plane and into the Third Plane. It's a simple thing for you! Besides, you can acquire a lot of good fortune in the Third Plane. In addition, it will put you on good terms with everyone here. When you get back to South Heaven later on, then your

path....”

Meng Hao understood all of that. Furthermore, he felt no ill will at all coming from Fang Yu, and as such, also felt no hostility toward her. His expression softened a bit.

“I can take you all into the Third Plane,” he said coolly.

“However, 100,000 Spirit Stones isn’t enough. I want half of what you acquire within the Third Plane!

“If all of you agree, then we can conclude this bargain now. All of you can swear an oath from your heart; if you break it, you will become one with the Dao. We Cultivators place a lot of importance on oaths, especially ones that have to do with cultivation. You don’t want to cause entanglements that will hinder progress in your Cultivation base and eventually cause you to be destroyed in body and soul.

“If you don’t agree, then I’ll consider the matter ended, and we can just wait peacefully for the Second Plane to collapse.

“Whatever choice you make, make it quickly.” With that, Meng Hao turned to leave.

“Don’t you want to go to the Third Plane?” called out Wang Lihai.

Without even looking back, Meng Hao said, “What I’ve acquired in the Second Plane is already sufficient. It doesn’t matter at all whether I go to the Third Plane or not.” With that, he made his way off into the distance.

*

1. Song Jia appeared a few times throughout the story. The majority of her characterization occurred in chapters 186, 189, and 190.
2. Wang Youcai and Little Tiger joined the Reliance Sect at the same time as Meng Hao. After reencountering Little Tiger in chapter 71, Meng Hao came to the conclusion that he killed Wang Youcai to acquire the precious pearl treasure. However, Wang Youcai later turned out to be alive and a member of the Blood Demon Sect. He

made his first reappearance in chapter 120 and following chapters when he participated in the Blood Immortal Legacy tournament. He was also at the Song Clan search for a son-in-law starting in chapter 187, where he behaved oddly but also stood by Meng Hao.

3. Li Daoyi was the Dao Child who Meng Hao fought in the Blood Immortal Legacy tournament. After severing his arm, they faced off again at the Song Clan search for a son-in-law. Later, Meng Hao killed him in chapter 304.
4. Zhao Fang is the guy Meng Hao offered to watch out for in exchange for protection for the Golden Crow Tribe. Duo Lan is the Chosen from the Butterfly Demon Sect.

Chapter 595: The Love of a Father is Like a Mountain!

Everyone left behind stood there silently, wrestling with their thoughts and emotions. Their fury toward Meng Hao might be raging to the Heavens, but they were also left with no other alternatives. The staircase had appeared because of Meng Hao, and he was the only one who could climb it.

They had tried, of course, all of them. But all they could do was see it, not touch it.

A few days later, they all met again. Everyone stood in front of Meng Hao and swore an oath promising that after the Third Plane ended, they would give him the share that he had demanded initially.

Oaths were made and witnessed, all based on the Dao. In the future, it didn't matter what these South Heaven Cultivators acquired in the Third Plane, they would have no basis for complaint. If they broke their promise, the oath would still stand. Any hesitation on their part could influence their Cultivation base.

If it was just some words, or an ordinary oath, it wouldn't be anything extraordinary. However, when the time came to speak the oath, Meng Hao unexpectedly produced a seemingly simple, and yet also dangerous and vicious Daoist magic.

It was something that anyone at the Foundation Establishment stage or higher could cultivate, called Dao Certification.

A few days ago outside Ke Yunhai's Immortal's cave, Meng Hao had requested to have this very Daoist magic. It was specifically used in this ancient age to bind agreements using Daoist magic.

With it in place, if the agreement was broken, the soul would be shredded, the great Dao would be unreachable, and the Cultivation base would decline.

There was nothing anyone could do. In order to get into the Third Plane,

they had to cautiously swear their oaths, using the Dao Certification as a pledge, and then complete the agreement. There were some people who refused at first, but Meng Hao didn't need to do anything. All it took was some pressure from the others, and they finally gritted their teeth and accepted.

After all, nobody was willing to be the one to pay a heavy price while others paid nothing.

There was one thing nobody seemed to notice. Although everyone assumed that everyone else was present, Zhixiang and Patriarch Huyan were missing.

Meng Hao also swore an oath. According to their requirements, he would climb the mighty staircase. However, he would pick the exact time. He also promised that in the coming days here in the Second Plane, he would not use his power and influence to exert pressure on them. They would no longer need to be so cautious and do everything from within the shadows.

They had been waiting for such a promise for a long time. Many wondered if anyone from their Sect or Clan who had come here in the past had ever deal with anything as frustrating as this.

Up to now, they hadn't dared to make any public appearances, or go anywhere near the Fourth Peak. In fact, whenever they saw any silkpants flying through the air, they would duck their heads for fear of Meng Hao showing up.

Their days had passed in this manner for months now, and they had endured as long as they could. At long last they could relax a bit and enjoy sunlight of this ancient time....

After the agreements were all formalized, Meng Hao realized that the time to leave this place was fast approaching. He would depart from this ancient, illusory world, and return to reality.

In truth, none of the things here were things he couldn't part with. The silkpants lifestyle, his identity, all of it was merely a dream. When waking up from the dream, it could all be forgotten.

However, there was one thing that he wasn't willing to forget; his father from this life, Ke Yunhai.

The fatherly love that he displayed made Meng Hao want to be immersed here and never wake up. He didn't want the dream to end, and didn't want to forget Ke Yunhai. In this illusory ancient world, he had finally experienced what it felt like to have a father at his side.

That feeling made up for some of the sorrow that had lurked in his heart for so long.

He gave up on Dao magic enlightenment. Other than concocting pills, he spent most of his time sitting cross-legged outside of Ke Yunhai's Immortal's cave. Although Ke Yunhai never opened the door, Meng Hao stayed, occasionally saying one thing or another.

That was how life went on, peacefully and quietly. There were no shocking events. Everything was ordinary. Xu Qing was still in secluded meditation, never having opened her eyes even once. Meng Hao was used to such a lifestyle by now. In fact, on more than one occasion, he thought to himself that if things continued on this way forever, it wouldn't be so bad.

Half a month later, the ghost images were appearing just about every day. Meng Hao knew that he needed to leave. The unwillingness to part, and the complicated, embarrassing thoughts, all sent him into a melancholy state of mind.

He looked up at the sky. He looked out at the lands around him. He looked at the Seven Peaks of the First Heaven. He looked at the Fourth Peak. He looked at Ke Yunhai's Immortal's cave. Then he closed his eyes and thought about all the things that had occurred here.

In the very beginning, he had admitted that he was wrong. Later, he was whipped. After that, inside the Demon Immortal Pagoda, he was doted upon by Ke Yunhai, his father in this life. All of these things were unforgettable memories for Meng Hao.

He suddenly had the strong desire to offer thanks to Ke Jiusi. He wanted to thank him for sending him to this place. He wanted to help Ke Jiusi

achieve his aim, and do the same for himself.

“The love of a father is like a mountain....” Perhaps this new line of thinking influenced his Dao of alchemy.

That night would be the last night he concocted pills in the Second Plane.

As for what medicinal plants he used to concoct the batch of pills, Meng Hao didn't even remember. He was submerged in his respect for Ke Yunhai, in the beauty he had experienced in the past days, and in the emotions that existed between father and son. That was what he was thinking about as he placed the ingredients into the pill furnace.

The flavor and aroma of these medicinal plants represented various shades of Meng Hao's heart. They mixed together as he began to concoct, and he completely disregarded any thoughts of success or failure. There were only memories. Memories of everything that had happened in his place. Memories of Ke Yunhai and his fatherly love. Memories of his own childhood, and the vague image of his own father.

No moon hung in the night sky.

Meng Hao concocted without even thinking about it. Soon, the pill furnace began to thrum with an indescribable sound. It sounded like a song of Immortals, like a funeral dirge, sometimes cheerful, sometimes melancholy.

The song contained reluctance to part as it slowly drifted out. It echoed about the Fourth Peak, causing everyone to suddenly lift up their heads and look toward the location atop the mountain from which the song originated.

It was like a wind that swept over the hearts of everyone present. It caused ripples to appear that nudged the memories in their hearts, making them recall their past.

Within the depths of their own memories, everyone was different.

Some were like children who had just grown up. Such ones looked at the stooped figure of their father and realized that he was already an old man,

and then... they felt pain in the depths of their heart.

Others remembered how they used to be when they were young. When their father was strict, rebellious thoughts would bubble up in their hearts and they would grumble inwardly: "Would you just stop blabbering!?"

However, after many years passed, when they faced their white-haired father as he lay sick in bed, they would clasp his emaciated hand. Tears would stream down their face, and they would moan to themselves, "Father... please, just talk to me a little bit more, okay?"

There were many people who subconsciously ceased to practice cultivation. As they recalled the past, they stared up at the mountain peak and began to weep silently.

Xu Qing opened her eyes. As she looked around blankly, pain rose up within her. She thought about her home, and the vague image of her long dead parents.

"I want to go home...." she murmured.

The song echoed out from within the pill furnace to fill the entire Fourth Peak. Meng Hao didn't know it, because he was completely lost in thought. Concocting pills is like making music, or carving wood. One can take inexpressible thoughts and feelings and pour them inside the creation.

The sound of the medicinal pills being concocted had started out ordinary and mediocre. But now, it contained emotion. It contained Meng Hao's thoughts and feelings, almost as if it had a life of its own, a spirit. The music of it exceeded all the sounds that nature could produce.

After all, the most moving thing of all is love.... And although romantic love is beautiful, it pales in comparison to the selflessness of family love.

Gradually, the disciples on the Third Peak and the Fifth Peak heard the song of the pills being concocted. The song needed no explanation; as soon as they heard it, they stopped cultivating and stood there mutely. Everyone began to think of their father.

More and more disciples grew silent as the song washed over them, various images rising up from their memories to fill their minds.

Father is right there, a pipe in his mouth, his face covered with wrinkles. As he turns his head, he smiles in a way that calms me. Then he tousles my hair.

The sun is shining and I'm sitting on father's shoulders, high up in the air, laughing happily. Back then, I didn't know that my laughter was my father's happiness.

I don't want to see his strong, steady hands slowly grow thin and wrinkled....

Wang Lihai heard the song and immediately stopped meditating. He looked off into the darkness of the night, and then thought back to his own strict father.

Han Bei sat there silently, and her heart suddenly felt as if it were tearing into pieces. She lowered her head as she thought of her father, and how he had limped they strolled together through the Black Sieve Sect all those years ago.

Soon, people in the Second and Sixth Peaks also heard the song. It was filled with the love of a father, fierce and incapable of being dispersed. Even the most evil person in Heaven and Earth would begin to reminisce when they heard this song.

I remember when you raised your hand at me, sir, and I glared back furiously. I fought back, then left and slammed the door. I never saw your trembling body, and the look of disappointment in your eyes.

One rainy evening, I was sick in bed. I opened my blurry eyes to see you, your hair white, prostrating in front of the statues of the gods, praying for me to be restored to health. You bustled about, you sold everything, all to make sure that I recovered properly.

When I saw that, my hands started to shake, and my heart tore. I wanted to open my mouth and say... father, I was wrong.

The song of the pills being concocted gradually reached the First Peak and the Seventh Peak. All of the regions of the Demon Immortal Sect's First Heaven could hear it. Everyone was listening, including Outer Sect

disciples, Inner Sect disciples, Conclave disciples, Elders... everyone. Even the most powerful people in this world, the Immortals, were affected by the song, and began to reminisce.

A resonance was created, and memories floated up. In this instant, the entire Demon Immortal Sect was completely silent, except for the song.... Everyone was listening to it, and thinking of the past.

The Paragons of the First, Second, Third, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Peaks... six Paragons, all heard the song. They looked up toward the Fourth Peak, their expressions mournful. They could see Meng Hao concocting pills, and they could hear Meng Hao's voice within.

Even the Paragon who hated Ke Jiusi the most, could do nothing more than sigh.

"He's... finally grown up. Brother Yunhai... I wish you... good luck on your journey."

It was in this moment that another sound rose up within the Demon Immortal Sect. It was the sound of bells... a death knell....

Chapter 596: The Oil was Exhausted and the Lamp was Dry

On the Second Peak, Song Jia leaned up against a pine tree, staring blankly in the direction of the Fourth Peak. At some point, perplexity had filled her eyes, and tears had begun to stream down her face.

The song of the medicinal pills echoed within her ears, giving rise to layer after layer of ripples within her heart. One scene after another rose up from her memories.

She saw images of her father, and images of herself....

Some people call a daughter a 'pearl in the palm.' From what Song Jia remembered, she... was the pearl in her father's palm.

The song of the medicinal pills echoed out, rising and falling, floating throughout the First Heaven. A million people heard it and were affected, even Fang Yu. She sat there silently, complex emotions filling her. She felt both agitated and reminiscent. She reminisced of her father, scholarly, seemingly gentle but also very strict. She also reminisced about her childhood, along with all the soft and sweet things that had happened.

What made her most agitated was that within the song coming from the Fourth Peak, she could clearly sense a family love coming from Meng Hao toward someone that wasn't actually his father.

"Dad," she murmured, "did you really make the right choice back then?" At some point, her eyes had filled with tears. She thought back to when she was small, how she would often see her mother weeping, while her father stood at the window, looking off into the distance, a profound, complex look in his eyes.

Within that look was a type of love that Fang Yu didn't understand back then. After growing up, when she thought back to it, she realized that it was love. It was not love for her, but love for someone far, far away, someone who existed in some unknown place.

The love of a father and the love of a mother are completely different.

The love of a father is more reserved, more silent, like a mountain. When you are a child, your father is your guardian angel. When you are a teenager, things change. He becomes an obstacle. After that, you come to view yourself as the superior, with him beneath you.

Once you reach middle age, though, you look at that mountain and you suddenly realize that he has been there all along, watching you proudly. However arrogant you were, however selfish and narrow-minded, he would forgive you. Forgive you without even saying a word.

You will feel forlorn, and will suddenly come to a realization. That... is the love of a father.

When you have it, you might not feel it deeply. However, once you lose it, you lose the Heaven of your heart!

When a child wishes to care for a parent, only to find that the parent is no longer there, well... that is a sorrow that gives rise to the most profound of weeping.

As Meng Hao concocted, the song of the medicinal pills echoed throughout the First Heaven. Throughout the seven great mountain peaks, a million disciples were immersed in silence. Even the Paragons were lost in thought.

They listened to the song and recalled images of the past....

In the past, I viewed myself as incredible. Sir, you said many things back then. You tried to involve yourself in my affairs, but at that time, I felt that you had changed from before. I felt that I was capable of flying on my own.

But then, my wings were broken, and I became very exhausted. After flying for a long time, I suddenly looked back and thought of you, sir, and about all the things you told me. By the time I looked back, however, all I could see was your tomb. I stood in front of your tomb and wept. I wanted to say: "Father... I was wrong."

In the past, I looked down at you, then turned away, leaving you to prove myself. Years later, after I conquered the world, I came back to you in all

my glory to look at your shocked face. Instead, what I saw was how proud you were of me, sir. Pain filled my heart. By that time, your hair had long since become white. I embraced my aged father, and whispered:

“Father, I’m back.”

Tears rolled down Ji Xiaoxiao’s face as she immersed herself in her memories. She thought of many things....

Within Li Shiqi’s mind floated the image of her Master. She didn’t know who her father really was. When she had opened her eyes for the first time, the first person she saw wasn’t her Master, but someone else.

However, at some point in her life, she had come to view her Master like a father.

She called him Master, but in her heart, she called him father.

She was adopted, having lost her parents when she was still wearing swaddling clothes. As she grew up, she became beautiful. However, from a young age, she had been cursed with a strange deformity. It was only because of her Master’s efforts over the years that she was able to live a normal life.

Without her Master, there would be no Li Shiqi.

Once, long ago, he had taken her to look for clues about her hometown. After much searching, Li Shiqi finally spoke up, her voice soft. “Master, there’s no need to search any more. In this life, you are my Master. I hope that in the next life, you can be my father.”

The song of the pills being concocted continued to echo out. Every single person was moved emotionally; everyone was affected, influenced....

Meng Hao’s expression was blank. These medicinal pills, this batch, this pill furnace and its song, were all filled with reluctance to part from Ke Yunhai, as well as Meng Hao’s desire for that love of a father.

He was completely unaware that at some point, a white-robed figure had appeared behind him. The figure had long hair, and was emaciated. His entire person emanated an aura of time, and archaic ancientness.

It was none other than Ke Jiusi.

He stood behind Meng Hao, staring at the pill furnace as if he could see into eternity.

The medicinal pills were being concocted by Meng Hao. The song of the pills, though, contained the voices of both Meng Hao and Ke Jiusi.

Then, the death knell began to toll. The sound rang out again, and again, and again....

A death knell was not rung upon the passing away of every disciple. Even Conclave disciples did not qualify for something like that, nor Elite Apprentices.

Only people who had rendered incredible services to the Sect would qualify to receive the death knell of the Demon Immortal Sect, as a means of protection on the way to the underworld.

Other than such people... only when a Paragon perished would the ringing of the death knell be heard in the Sect....

When the ninth bell tolled, Meng Hao suddenly trembled. He slowly lifted up his head, as did Ke Jiusi.

“Bells....” he murmured. Fear filled his heart, and suddenly he didn’t care about anything. He didn’t care about the pill concocting, or the illusion, or the ancient times. He didn’t even care if this batch of pills really were Celestial Pills, nor whether or not he succeeded in concocting them.

His body shook, and a realization as dark as night swept over him. Trembling, he rose to his feet.

In that instant a roaring sound could be heard from the pill furnace. The medicinal pills and the furnace itself suddenly exploded; their connection to Meng Hao was broken, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. The blood spattered down onto the exploded remnants of the medicinal pills; this was blood filled with his indescribable thoughts, thoughts that carried his unceasing love for a father.

“Dad....” Without hesitation, Meng Hao rushed outside.

He left the pill concocting workshop, completely unaware that within the shattered remnants of the pill furnace were nine destroyed pills. However, the batch had been a batch of ten. All of the medicinal strength of the nine destroyed pills had merged into the tenth pill.

That tenth medicinal pill appeared, glittering brightly as it began to transform from something illusory into something real!

The pill also absorbed Meng Hao's blood, which contained his true feelings and emotions. Because of that, the pill... began to thoroughly transmogrify. This was creating something from nothing!

However, it didn't matter that the medicinal pill was something from nothing, nor that it met all the qualifications that Meng Hao had dreamed of. Within his mind, there was no medicinal pill. There was only his anxiety, an anxiety so intense that he forgot who he was....

He rushed out of the pill concocting workshop, out of the Immortal's cave, out of the entire area he was in. He transformed into a beam of light that shot with incredible speed toward Ke Yunhai's Immortal's cave.

The death knell sounded out throughout the seven great mountain peaks of the First Heaven.... DONG.... DONG.... When the thirteenth toll was reached, Meng Hao arrived at Ke Yunhai's Immortal's cave.

Seeing that the door was sealed shut tightly, tears began to pour down Meng Hao's face. He kneeled in front of the door.

"Father!" His voice wasn't very loud, but it filled the entire Fourth Mountain. His eyes were wet. He wasn't sure when, but at some point, he had thoroughly immersed himself into this ancient, illusory world. Ke Yunhai had appeared to fill a void of fatherly love that had existed in his heart since he was young.

That void was something that Meng Hao usually kept carefully hidden away. He did not want anyone to touch it, not even himself.

But then, Ke Yunhai had appeared in this ancient illusion, and that void... had been filled.

Meng Hao's heart was being ripped into pieces. To him, Heaven and

Earth had lost all color. An indescribable feeling surged over him; he felt like his body had been turned into a black hole that was consuming his soul and his life. His everything.

“Father....” Tears streamed down his face as he looked at the door of the Immortal’s cave. The death knell continued to echo about. It had now tolled nineteen times. Every bell toll caused a green beam of light to surround the Fourth Peak. Currently, nineteen glowing rings of light surrounded the mountain.

As the tears rolled down Meng Hao’s face to drop to the ground, the door to the Immortal’s cave began to open silently. Ke Yunhai’s exhausted voice could suddenly be heard from within.

“Don’t cry.”

Meng Hao’s head shot up immediately, and his body began to tremble. Without any hesitation, he rushed inside. The Immortal’s cave was dark, but he could still see Ke Yunhai sitting there cross-legged on his stone bed.

Ke Yunhai was even more ancient than before. He seemed to emanate an aura of complete decay. White nodes of light pulsed out from him; it seemed his body was currently in the processes of passing away into meditation.

As for the lamp next to him... the oil was exhausted and the lamp was dry. Its light was weak, as if the slightest wind could blow it out.

An enormous coffin rested off to the side, its surface carved with auspicious beasts. It seemed ordinary, but if you looked closely, you would be able to see how incredible it was.

“Jiusi, don’t cry....” he said hoarsely, looked at Meng Hao with a tender expression. “You’ve grown up. Daddy can’t stay with you forever. From now on, you’ll need to rely on yourself.... However, there is one last thing I can do for you. Before I pass away into meditation, I will give you the precious treasure of a lifetime, forged personally by me!”

The death knell outside had reached the fifty-seventh toll. When it reached ninety-nine, the soul would disperse. Along with the ninety-nine

rings of light created by the bell tolls, it would return to Heaven and Earth, and enter the underworld....

Note from Er Gen: The love of a father is like a mountain. For many years, I didn't understand this. I truly came to understand what it means to be a father eight years ago, when I became a father. Then I understood how the love of a father and mother are different. When I was young, I read an essay by Zhu Ziqing, called *Retreating Figure*. I didn't understand it then, but many years later it came to mind. Every time I read it, I understand it more, and the meaning becomes more profound. Every time I read it, I understand more about what it means to be a father.

Today, I won't ask for any monthly vote tickets. Instead, I wish a safe journey through life to all fathers. (Brothers and Sisters, please spend more time with your father. Take more opportunities to wish him well. It wasn't until I had my own child that I realized how difficult it is for a father and mother to raise a child.)

Chapter 597: I'll Make You Proud, Sir

“With the Soul Divergence Incantation, you can cultivate an undying soul. Unfortunately, the difficulty level is too high for you.... However, this coffin can help you to cultivate the art. With it, even should great calamity arise, you... can continue to live!”

He only spoke a few sentences, but even that left Ke Yunhai gasping for breath. His face was pale, and the white nodes of light flying around him grew more dense. They circulated around his body, making it look almost like a glowing halo surrounded him.

He looked kindly at Meng Hao, his gaze filled with doting kindness and the reluctance to part. And love.... He feared the child he left behind might be bullied, might be lonely or taciturn.

Meng Hao bit his lip as he kneeled wordlessly in front of Ke Yunhai, tears flowing.

“There’s no need to cry,” said Ke Yunhai. “If men cry too much in our day and age, then their Dao becomes unstable. Come here, kid....” He raised a shaky hand, and Meng Hao, tears dripping, walked forward to stand in front of him.

Ke Yunhai’s hand, covered with so many wrinkles, gently patted Meng Hao’s head.

“You’ve grown up....”

“Dad....” Meng Hao looked at the pervasive death aura, and withered Ke Yunhai, and his heart felt as if it were tearing into pieces. His body trembled as his heart suddenly filled with the intense sensation that his father was about to leave him.

He... had long since taken Ke Yunhai to be his own father.

“Everyone dies eventually, that is something we can’t change. Lord Li returned the mandate to the masses. I am a Paragon of the First Heaven, I must respect that decision....”

“Why?” murmured Meng Hao, the tears pouring down. “Why do you

have to respect it!? We Cultivators practice cultivation to gain eternal life, don't we? What's the point in abandoning eternal life?!"

Ke Yunhai was silent for a moment before raising his head. His gaze seemed to penetrate out of the Immortal's cave to some distant place in the future. The death knell outside had reached the sixty-ninth toll. The sound of it echoed out endlessly.

"We Cultivators don't just practice cultivation to gain eternal life. No, we pursue the Dao.... For those who strive after the Dao, life is a morning and death is an evening. For those who seek the Dao, when evening comes, of what use is longing...?" Ke Yunhai lowered his head to look at Meng Hao.

"Death and life are not important to me. Without Lord Li, your father would have long since died countless times over.... I do not fear death. The only thing I am uneasy about... is you...." Ke Yunhai tousled Meng Hao's hair. He was already running very low on energy, but his eyes were filled with kindness, and an increasingly strong doting indulgence.

"I should have perished many years ago," he continued. "But I was worried about you, so I put things off until today. If it were possible, I would accompany you a bit further, just like in the Demon Immortal Pagoda, me in the lead, you following... off into the distance." He smiled, but his face was pale. More and more white nodes floated around him, making his smile seem somewhat distant.

"Dad...." said Meng Hao, pulling at Ke Yunhai's hand.

"All of your brothers and sisters have already gone. Now that I'm leaving, you won't have any relatives left in the world.... I hope that in the future... you will learn to be a bit more sensible." As Ke Yunhai gazed at Meng Hao, the kindness in his eyes grew stronger, as did the reluctance to part. It was exactly as he said; what he was concerned most about in his life, was the child who kneeled in front of him now.

If there were even a little bit of hope to buy more time, he would seize it, and watch Ke Jiusi truly grow up.

Meng Hao wasn't able to give voice to what he was feeling deep in his heart. He felt stabs of pain, as if his world were falling apart. It was as if

there were a vortex inside of him, sucking in all of his thoughts.

He could only clasp Ke Yunhai's hand tightly with his own. He could only cry. He opened his mouth, but no words came out, not even one.

"Don't be sad. Your brothers and sisters are waiting for me. I'm their father too. I need to spend some time with them, also.... Jiusi, daddy hopes that one day, when I'm in the underworld, you'll make me proud...."

Outside, the bells had tolled eighty-nine times. Ke Yunhai's body was now completely surrounded by spinning white nodes of light. The hand that Meng Hao held began to grow faint. The only thing that was clear now, was Ke Yunhai's kind smile.

His eyes had begun to fade. During the last ten tolls of the death knell, they would lose all of their brightness. They would transform into countless dots of light that would then vanish into the air.

Meng Hao's heart felt as if it were being torn into pieces. His body quivered as he attempted to hold tight to Ke Yunhai's disappearing hand.

"Dad....."

Suddenly, Ke Yunhai's fading eyes once again seemed to focus, as if he were using all the last bits of his life force to look at Meng Hao. He looked almost as if he were in a daze.

There in front of him, he saw a figure slowly materializing behind Meng Hao. It was a man in a white robe, whose features looked completely different than Meng Hao's. He had long hair, and looked young, but also seemed to be filled with an endless ancientness.

This was none other than... Ke Jiusi!

Ke Jiusi looked at his father with tears in his eyes. He slowly knelt down, his body superimposing with Meng Hao's.

A smile appeared on Ke Yunhai's face. He had long since put all the pieces of the puzzle together. He nodded, and slowly reached his hand out to touch Meng Hao's forehead. Or... perhaps he was touching Ke Jiusi's forehead.

In that instant, images appeared in Ke Yunhai's mind. He saw the destruction of the Demon Immortal Sect and Ke Jiusi's shocking final battle. He saw how Ke Jiusi returned to life and watched over the Demon Immortal Sect alone for tens of thousands of years.

Ke Jiusi looked at Ke Yunhai. Tears streamed down his face as he softly said: "Dad.... I learned to be a bit more sensible.... I'm sorry for everything before.... I'm sorry. Father... everything was my fault...."

At long last, he was able to see his father again. At long last, he was able to say those words to his Father.

The words were Ke Jiusi's, and they were also Meng Hao's. Two people, one set of words. It was hard to tell if Ke Jiusi was borrowing Meng Hao's mouth, or Meng Hao was borrowing Ke Jiusi's soul.

"Dad.... I've grown up. You can stop worrying, sir. I will always make you proud...."

Ke Yunhai looked at Meng Hao and Ke Jiusi for a long moment. His face filled with a kind smile, a smile filled with admiration, and even more so, deep content.

"Thank you," said Ke Yunhai, his voice hoarse. "You, also, are my son. We are father and son in this life." He gave Meng Hao a profound look, and within that gaze could be seen doting indulgence and kindness. It was in that moment that the innumerable white nodes of light completely surrounded his body.

Meng Hao trembled as he realized that the hand which had been holding Ke Yunhai, was now holding nothing. The final lick of flame in the oil lamp, was extinguished.

"DAD!!" Tears rained down Meng Hao's face as he watched Ke Yunhai fade away. Outside, the ninety-ninth bell toll of the death knell could be heard!

One less than a hundred. Perfection was not permitted. The death knell protected the path, guarded the way. It could not have one too many, or one too less. Ninety-nine paths to the underworld.

That is the death knell which tolls when a Paragon perishes.

The sound of the death knell continued to echo about throughout the seven great mountain peaks of the First Heaven. In that moment, the million Cultivators in the Seven Peaks were kowtowing toward the Fourth Peak. Everyone, including the other Paragons, bowed deeply.

On the Fourth Peak, the sounds of weeping rose up. All of the disciples turned toward the direction of Ke Yunhai's Immortal's cave and began to kowtow on bended knees.

Ke Yunhai had perished.

As Meng Hao watched Ke Yunhai vanish completely, the sound of wailing drifted in from outside. He knelt there silently for a very long time before finally rising to his feet. Clutching his chest, he walked out of the Immortal's cave. Outside, he saw that all of the Fourth Peak disciples were present, looking in his direction. As he looked back at them, an expression of profound grief filled his face.

He looked up into the sky, and the sunlight poured into his eyes. For a moment, he thought he could see Ke Yunhai's shadow. Ninety-nine beams of light swirled around him, escorting him away. As Ke Yunhai made his way off into the distance, he turned his head slightly to glance at the lands below, and at Meng Hao.

As the sunlight poured down onto Meng Hao, he saw the image of himself when he first arrived in this illusory world. He remembered the first time he saw Ke Yunhai, and the kindness he had seen in his eyes, a kindness that could forgive anything.

After he killed Ji Mingfeng, he was whipped. He remembered hearing Ke Yunhai's voice transmitted into his ear, asking why he hadn't cried out yet. His heart had trembled.

Then, there were the magical items and talismans personally forged with Ke Yunhai's life force. In the Immortal Demon Pagoda, Meng Hao reached the point where he was sure he was defeated. It was then that a figure appeared in front of him, tousled his hair, and then kindly said, "I'll take you the rest of the way."

Meng Hao saw all of these things, and they transformed into a final image of parting....

Now, he finally realized that Ke Yunhai knew all along that he wasn't Ke Jiusi.

In the end, he had even thanked him. That proved everything. Then he had said that Meng Hao was also his son. He approved of Meng Hao....

All of it seemed like a dream. But it was a dream that Meng Hao wanted!

"The old man... is gone," he murmured. The light in his eyes turned into darkness, superseding everything else in the world. He coughed up a mouthful of blood, and then collapsed onto the ground.

Meng Hao was in a coma for two days. When he finally awakened, he saw Xu Qing watching over him anxiously. He didn't say anything. Xu Qing accompanied him to Ke Yunhai's funeral. The tomb was in a valley in the Seventh Peak, a tomb that contained no corpse, only an extinguished oil lamp.

Meng Hao was no longer an ordinary disciple. Nor was he an Elite Apprentice. He was now the Lord of the Fourth Peak, although he was a Lord who was not a Paragon.

He did not concoct any more pills, nor did he seek enlightenment of Daoist magic. He sat outside his Immortal's cave looking out into the darkness of night, and the bright sky of day. He wasn't sure what he was looking at. He just stared.

Several days later, the ghost images were appearing multiple times per day in the ancient, illusory world. Meng Hao knew that this place... was about to vanish.

"Living and dying. It can be a departure, but also a beginning." Meng Hao felt as if he had experienced a flash of insight. He closed his eyes and did not open them for a long time. When he did, he decided to head to the great staircase that led up into the sky. Before leaving, he happened to notice the medicinal pill which had been created from nothing. It brought him no joy. He gazed at it blankly for a moment, then carefully put it into

his bag of holding.

As he stood before the great staircase, he looked back at the Fourth Peak one more time. In that glance he placed the image of the Fourth Peak firmly in place in his memories.

Then he turned and stepped onto that staircase which none of the other disciples of the Sect could see. He began to walk up, one step at a time. As he did, all the Cultivators from the great lands of South Heaven watched him.

They were waiting. Waiting for Meng Hao to reach the very top of the staircase. Then the Second Plane would reach its conclusion, and the Third Plane... would open.

Chapter 598: The Third Plane

Meng Hao walked slowly, higher and higher. Soon he was high up in the sky, and almost at the top. He stopped just before he reached the final stair, looking down at the mountain peaks of the Demon Immortal Plane. He closed his eyes for a moment, and when he opened them, they were filled with resolve.

“Dad, I’m leaving now....” he said softly. Then he strode forward onto the final stair. A shocking rumbling sound filled the air, and the entire world began to shake.

Meng Hao could see and feel the shaking, but all of the Demon Immortal Sect disciples who weren’t from South Heaven had no clue at all that such things were occurring.

The South Heaven Cultivators could feel it, of course, and their faces began to fill with excitement and intense anticipation at the prospect of seeing the Third Plane with their own eyes!

When it came to the Demon Immortal Sect, the first two Planes always appeared. The Third Plane, however, had only appeared a few times throughout all history. It required great destiny or good fortune to make it open.

To be able to personally see the opening of the Third Plane made their hearts burst with passion.

Of course, the only one who could most truly witness the disappearance of the Second Plane and the opening of the Third Plane, was Meng Hao.

As of this moment, he was the only person who stood up in mid-air, looking down at all the people in the world below. When he reached the pinnacle of the great staircase, he looked down at everything, at the increasingly intense shaking, and the ghost images.

The ghost images would only appear for a moment before disappearing.

An invisible, imperceptible, illusory wind sprang up from nowhere. It did not cause anyone’s hair to lift up. Instead, it stimulated time.

Meng Hao watched all Seven Peaks of the First Heaven pass through ten thousand years in the blink of an eye. The lush vegetation on the mountain peaks withered and then bloomed again, completely changing in appearance.

He saw more extravagant buildings erected on the peaks, and he saw countless lives, people being born, growing old, dying. Ten thousand years.

Then he saw everything go pitch black. An enormous hand appeared, covering over the entire world. Within that hand, he could just make out an old man in a gold robe. He waved his sleeve, and the Heavens changed. The land was bathed in redness, and the stars tumbled about.

The ground shook. Meng Hao couldn't see much within the darkness, but he could see the two Holy Lands collapsing. The three Greater Demon Mountains shattered. The Seven Peaks of the Demon Immortal Sect's First Heaven split and cracked. Although the mountains were still in place, many parts were destroyed.

Buildings fell to pieces and disciples died. Meng Hao witnessed a great war that shook all of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. The war was fought in the pitch black, so he could not see things clearly, he could only sense them.

Soon everything faded away. After a long time, Meng Hao caught sight of a coffin on the Fourth Peak. A man emerged from within the coffin; he had long black hair and wore a white robe.

He stood silently on the Fourth Peak, as if he were watching over the lands below him, for an eternity.

All of this was tens of thousand of years of history, all passed in the blink of an eye. Meng Hao eventually closed his eyes, and when he opened them, reality had been restored to the world. There were corpses everywhere, just like before, and ruins.

Everything... was back to normal.

Meng Hao quietly closed his eyes again for a while. When he opened them, he was no longer up in the air, but rather, reclining in the coffin on

the Fourth Peak, looking up at the sky.

The sky was broken, just like he remembered it had been when he first lay down into the coffin.

It was like everything had been a dream, and now... he was waking up from the dream. Quietly, he recalled the images of everything that had happened in the ancient, illusory world. Eventually, tears began to seep out of the corners of his eyes.

“Was it really all just a dream?” He wasn’t sure how to tell. He slowly sat up and then crawled out of the coffin. As he began to walk away, he suddenly looked back, his mind trembling.

The coffin was familiar to him. It was the exact same coffin that Ke Yunhai had made for him back in the illusory ancient times.... Perhaps it was more accurate to say that he made it for Ke Jiusi, the precious treasure to be able to cultivate the Soul Divergence Incantation.

Meng Hao looked a bit absent minded as he stood there. After a long time passed, he turned and looked over the Fourth Peak. As far as what the place had looked like when he first arrived, he couldn’t quite remember clearly.

Now, though, even though everything was in ruins, it was all familiar to him. Every little thing was something that existed in his memories, unforgettable.

He silently walked to the edge of the top portion of the Fourth Peak, to the place where he had first seen Ke Jiusi. He stood in the same place, his back to the First Peak, and gazed toward the Seventh Peak.

It wasn’t the first time he had stood here. Back in the First Plane, he had wondered what Ke Jiusi was looking at. Now that he stood here looking out in the same direction once again, he knew all too well.

“You were looking at Father Ke’s tomb.” In the Seventh Peak was a mountain valley where one of the most powerful experts in the history of the Demon Immortal Sect had been buried after he perished. It was none other than... Ke Yunhai.

Meng Hao looked away, and then began to walk down the Fourth Peak. All the various details weren't exactly the same as they had been that year, but even still, Meng Hao was able to find places that he was familiar with.

As he walked, his face flickered with an expression of reminiscence. His heart felt heavy. He was like someone who had just awoken from a dream, a bit distracted, somewhat unsure of what was real and what was not.

The Fourth Peak was filled with ruins, and there were many areas that still had the restrictive spells from before. Just such a place suddenly appeared in front of Meng Hao. Gentle, warm light drifted out. It didn't look like much, but if he ignored it, or tried to enter it without using the proper method, then it wouldn't matter how powerful his fleshly body was, he would perish without a doubt.

The restrictive spell blocked Meng Hao's path. On the other side was a narrow mountain path filled with corpses. Meng Hao was very familiar with this path; it was none other than the way that led to his Immortal's cave on the Fourth Peak.

He stood outside the restrictive spell, his expression growing more complex. After a long moment, he closed his eyes. When he opened them, he lifted his right hand up and performed an ancient sealing incantation. Ghost images appeared, and he pressed out lightly up ahead of him.

There was no sound. The light of the seemingly eternal restrictive spell suddenly began to flicker rapidly. Gradually it grew thin, until finally, an opening appeared.

Meng Hao sighed, and stepped inside. A melancholy expression appeared on his face as he looked around at the corpses that littered the path. At the end of the path was the Immortal's cave in which he had lived for so many months in the Second Plane.

The door to the Immortal's cave was collapsed. The inside of the cave was empty, filled with dust. The Wooden Soldiers that Ke Yunhai had given him in the Second Plane were nowhere to be seen.

"Perhaps they don't even exist anymore," he thought to himself as he sat there in the Immortal's cave. This was the spot he usually meditated in the

Second Plane. From here he could see the sky and the lands. He sat there for a long time.

He knew that the other South Heaven Cultivators were using every method at their disposal, including methods gained in the Second Plane, to dig up treasures that remained in the Third Plane.

You could say that the Third Plane was like a Treasure Pavilion that had been broken open. Anyone who came here would be certain to have chances to acquire good fortune.

After a long time passed, Meng Hao finally stood up. He left what had once been his Immortal's cave, and began to walk toward... Ke Yunhai's Immortal's cave.

There were now no restrictive spells here. All of them had been destroyed in the great war. In fact, the door of the Immortal's cave hung in fragments. Except... the sight of the interior of the Immortal's cave left Meng Hao gaping.

The layout of the Immortal's cave looked exactly the same as he remembered it being from the Second Plane....

However, the entire place was untainted by even a speck of dust, as if someone came frequently to clean it.

Meng Hao stood there looking at the Immortal's cave for a long time, almost as if he wasn't even aware that time was passing by, and he had forgotten that this wasn't the illusory Second Plane. Three days later, he finally clasped hands and bowed deeply.

He bowed for the dream. He bowed for the father during that lifetime. He bowed for having fully awoken from the dream.

The feelings for his father during that life were ingrained in the depths of his heart, and were now a part of him. They could not be cut away, or lost.

He rose to his feet, his eyes filled with determination as he walked down the Fourth Peak.

After leaving the mountain, he took a deep breath and then flew into the air. His heart had now recovered by more than half from the experience in the illusion. His eyes glittered as he shot off into the distance.

Rumbling echoed out as he increased his speed. Then, when he was far, far off, he suddenly stopped in place. He looked down at himself, for the first time sparing a moment to examine his body.

“So, the results of the fleshly body cultivation in the ancient illusion... are still there!” His eyes flickered with a bright light. His time spent cultivating his physical body had not been wasted. As of now... even in the First Anima, he had a fleshly body that was as powerful as the Fifth Anima.

“I gained the most in the First Plane. In the Second Plane, I also exceeded everyone else, leading to my superiority and advantage.

“Well then. I think that in the Third Plane... I also need to be the biggest winner!” With that, his body flickered, and a screaming sound filled the air. Before it could emanate out very far, Meng Hao was already nowhere to be seen.

“If my fleshly body cultivation remained in place, then....” He shot forward, his gaze coming to rest at stop off in the distance. He didn’t realize it, but a bright glow had appeared in his eyes. Within his gaze could be seen anticipation, as well as a bit of nervousness.

“Well, I wonder if my plan of burying the Wooden Time Swords... has succeeded!?!?” He took a deep breath. If his plan had succeeded, then the rewards he could acquire would definitely be a defiance of Heaven.

Daoist magics and fleshly body cultivation were all good, and in fact, Meng Hao was quite content. However, what he looked forward to even more were the Wooden Time Swords. If he had succeeded, the he would be in possession of a precious treasure that could slay Immortals.

If he had succeeded with the swords, then Meng Hao would have a much deeper understanding of everything that had occurred within the ancient, illusory world. He would then be able to determine whether or not... he really could change the future.

Although he was aware that the possibility of success was small, he was still filled with expectation. His body flashed as he shot off into the distance at top speed. It didn't take long for him to find one of the four locations where he had buried a Wooden Time Sword.

Chapter 599: Sword Tip!

The locations he had selected were all remote corners of the Demon Immortal Sect, places he had noticed in the First Plane, which he was sure would survive.

As he neared the first location, he began to grow more nervous. Moments later, he arrived. He looked over the ruins in the area, and then took a deep breath and descended downward.

After looking around for a while, he looked down at the ground beneath him. He lifted a foot up into the air and then stamped down, again and again. Booming could be heard as the surface of the ground was destroyed. Countless bits of dirt and rock exploded up into the air as a huge crater appeared beneath Meng Hao.

Unfortunately, nothing could be seen within the crater....

Meng Hao's face was unsightly as he turned and began to search the entire area. It didn't take long before he had turned virtually everything upside down, and yet still hadn't found a single thing.

It appeared as if from the very beginning there had not been any sort of Wooden Time Sword buried here.

"I failed...?" he thought, his eyes flashing with an unyielding glint. He flew up into the air and shot toward the second location where he had buried one of the other swords.

After arriving, he searched the area thoroughly, but the result was the same. No matter how he searched, he could not find any trace of a Wooden Time Sword.

Next he went to the third area, but the result was the same.

His heart had now sunk down into his chest, and a bitter smile could be seen on his face. He was now very much certain that the idea he had come up with in the ancient illusory world, had failed.

Sighing, he headed to the last of the areas where he had buried a sword. It was an area relatively close to the Seventh Peak. Back in the illusory

world, the path to this place had been easy to follow, but now things were different. Danger lurked in all directions, even for Meng Hao. It took him several days to reach the Seventh Peak and the place where he had buried the fourth Wooden Time Sword.

At one time, it had been a mountainous forest. However, the forest had long since been burned into ash. After searching the ruined remnants of the forest for some time, Meng Hao finally found the place where he had hidden the sword.

After overturning the area, he found nothing but an empty pit. He let out a long sigh, and finally gave up all hope. He knew that this time, he had thoroughly failed.

He suddenly frowned. "Well, if I failed, then where are my Wooden Time Swords?" He opened his bag of holding and, sure enough, there were only six Wooden Time Swords inside. The four swords that he had buried were definitely gone.

There was something very strange about the whole matter, something that exceeded his imagination. There were many possible explanations, but the one that made the most sense was that although he had succeeded in burying the four Wooden Time Swords, someone else had come along and taken them before him.

He shook his head and was about to leave when suddenly, his gaze was drawn to the very edge of the deep pit he had just made. He saw something there that instantly caused a tremor to run through his body. He immediately began to breathe heavily as he stared at what appeared to be an ordinary, finger-nail sized fragment of wood sticking out of the mud.

That fragment of wood appeared to be rotten from the passage of time. It looked completely ordinary, stabbed as it was into the mud....

"That's...." Meng Hao panted as he suppressed the excitement in his heart. Exercising great caution, he picked up the wood fragment. It was irregularly shaped, but the tip was actually sharp.

It was almost like a sword tip!!

“This is a Spring and Autumn tree! This is the tip of a wooden sword!” His breathing grew more ragged, and his mind roared chaotically. Although he desired nothing more than to succeed, he wasn’t even sure how to tell if he had.

Right now, his mind was spinning as he closely examined the sword tip resting there on his palm.

“Eee? No... it looks like... this isn’t the wooden sword I originally buried here?” As he examined the sword tip, he realized that shockingly, it contained 30,000 years of Time power.

However, the wooden fragment was too small, making the power of Time unstable. Meng Hao could tell that if he tried to wield it, it would gradually fade away.

“If I had succeeded with my wooden swords, they would have been buried here for almost 100,000 years. However, this wooden fragment only has 30,000 years. Also, the physical appearance seems a bit different.” Meng Hao wasn’t quite able to determine exactly what was going on. Now he suddenly wasn’t as certain that he had failed in his attempt.

Without being able to look at the entirety of the sword, there would be no way to make a final determination. However, he did know that there was absolutely no sensation of the brand he left on his own wooden swords.

He carefully put the tiny wooden fragment away. It was impossible to determine if the fragment was part of the sword he had left here to pass through the years. However, considering that there were 30,000 years of Time power collected inside the tiny fragment, it could still be regarded as a precious treasure.

“If I truly failed, then all I lost were four Wooden Time Swords. By spending a few Spirit Stones, I can make more copies. If I succeed, though, then even if someone else took the swords away before I could, they were still personally created by me. If I ever run into them again, I’ll know, no matter how many times other people try to refine them.

“The heart of the swords contains my Time power. I will always be the original master of those swords.” Meng Hao’s eyes flickered. Although he still didn’t understand exactly what had happened, he didn’t want to spend any more time thinking about it. Looking up, he saw the Seventh Peak, and a sentimental look appeared in his eyes.

“That’s where Father Ke’s tomb is.” With that, he transformed into a beam of colorful light that shot off toward the burial location of the powerful experts of the various generations of the Demon Immortal Sect.

Along the way, he heard the sounds of explosions coming from various districts within the Demon Immortal Sect, as well as the occasional din of battle.

To the South Heaven Cultivators, the Third Plane was like a storehouse of treasures. There was good fortune to be acquired everywhere. However, that good fortune was not the same for everyone. It depended on how well prepared each individual was in the Second Plane, who had the greater understanding, and who had mastered more techniques to open restrictive spells.

Those were the keys to success. However, considering treasures were involved, it would be difficult to avoid friction and fighting. Therefore, fierce battles were to be expected.

Meng Hao ignored all of that. He didn’t actually need to do anything. Thanks to the oath-enforced agreement, whatever the others acquired in here, he would acquire far, far more.

As he proceeded forward, the sky gradually began to grow dark. Outside of the Seventh Peak was the Demon Immortal Sect’s graveyard. As he neared, a bright beam of light shot out from the middle of the Seventh Peak. At first, it wasn’t heading toward Meng Hao. However, at some point it seemed to realize who he was, then changed directions and headed toward him.

Meng Hao stopped in mid-air, his expression normal as he coldly watched on.

The beam of light moved with incredible speed, and emanated a potent

aura. It screamed through the air toward him, and as it neared, a young man became visible inside. It was none other than the Cultivator from the Imperial Bloodline Clan of the Northern Reaches.

His eyes flashed like lightning, and his face was filled with an expression of ferocity and coldness. He shot toward Meng Hao and was upon him in the blink of an eye. He flashed an incantation gesture, causing six illusory black dragons to suddenly shoot forth. Their shocking roars filled the air as they intertwined with each other. A terrifying pressure emanated out, slamming down toward Meng Hao.

Each of these six black dragons exceeded the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage. When they merged together, the pressure they emanated was similar to a Cultivation base half a step into Spirit Severing. This young Imperial Bloodline Clan Cultivator clearly had an incredible Cultivation base.

In the blink of an eye, the six dragons neared, filling up the entire world in front of Meng Hao. Each of the dragons was hundreds of meters long. Rumbling filled the air as their combined power shot toward him.

He gave a cold snort, and did nothing to dodge them or retreat. Instead, he strode forward and lifted his right hand up. His fleshly body seemed ordinary, but suddenly it exploded with a power equivalent to the Fifth Anima. Such strength was also the same as being a half step into Spirit Severing.

A fist descended, and a thunderous boom filled the air. The roaring of the six black dragons suddenly ceased as the shocking explosion rolled over them. Meng Hao's fist seemed to have kicked up a tempest capable of ripping them into shreds.

In addition, within Meng Hao's fist could be seen an illusory mountain. This was none other than manifested power of the first level of the Mountain Consuming Incantation that Meng Hao had gained enlightenment of. The fist shot out, a tempest raged, and a mountain descended.

BOOOOMMMMM!

The six black dragons were ripped into pieces. The face of the Imperial Bloodline Clan Cultivator from the Northern Reaches instantly fell. His eyes glowed with astonishment. He obviously had never even considered that Meng Hao could possibly be so powerful.

His original plan had been to kill Meng Hao in one decisive attack. If he failed, at least he would be able to feel Meng Hao out. Currently, though, when he saw Meng Hao's Cultivation base, his heart sank.

He immediately fell back in retreat.

"Elder Brother Meng, this was just a misunderstanding...." he said, his eyes flickering.

"First Anima," said Meng Hao coolly. His body roared as it exploded with the fearsome power of the First Anima. His fleshly body was now similar to the Sixth Anima. In the blink of an eye, Meng Hao's battle prowess exploded by double.

He took a step forward, then transformed into a green mist, within which was a black moon. He appeared directly in front of the young man, who he then punched without hesitation.

A boom could be heard. The young man from the Northern Reaches tried to block with both hands, and a black glow appeared around him. However, the black glow immediately collapsed, and he was sent tumbling backward, blood spraying from his mouth and a look of astonishment filling his face.

"You doubled your power in an instant!?!?" This young man from the Imperial Bloodline Clan of the Northern Reaches was named Liu Zichuan. Normally, he was wildly haughty, but at the moment, he was shocked to the core. Not a scrap of arrogance could be found in him. 1

Coughing up more blood, he forced himself to a halt. His eyes filled with ferocity as he wiped the blood from his mouth and glared at Meng Hao.

"Whatever," he said. "You're most likely already at your limit. To explode with double battle power is pretty incredible. You qualify to be my opponent. Well then, allow me to introduce you to something that's called

the Imperial Body....” Before Liu Zichuan could finish his lofty speech, Meng Hao coolly interrupted him.

“Second Anima!”

BOOM!

Meng Hao’s body instantly became even more shocking. His fleshly body was now equivalent to the fearsomeness of the Seventh Anima. His explosive battle prowess caused the sky to dim, and a fierce wind to spring up.

Liu Zichuan’s eyebrows shot up, and a roaring filled his heart. His mouth went dry, his mind spun, and his eyes went wide. He looked at Meng Hao with complete disbelief, his scalp completely numb.

“Dammit, dammit, this guy’s Cultivation base is freakish! This is definitely some Daoist magic from the Second Plane. It might even be one of the top 10!” Shocked, Liu Zichuan retreated without hesitation.

He fell back quickly, but Meng Hao was even quicker. He took a step forward and then waved a finger. Instantly the image of a mountain appeared, to shoot rumbling toward Liu Zichuan.

Liu Zichuan coughed up some blood, and his body nearly exploded. A profound sense of deadly crisis filled him. He was scared witless. He pushed his hand viciously down onto his chest, causing a pearl to be vomited up. The pearl transformed into a wide net that quickly enveloped Liu Zichuan. There almost seemed to be some power of the underworld fueling the net as it wrapped around him and shot off into the distance.

Because of that, Meng Hao’s illusory mountain only grazed past, and didn’t completely smash into him. Even still, Liu Zichuan coughed up some more blood. His heart was in chaos, and filled with terror as he shot away.

Meng Hao didn’t pursue him. Instead he stood where he was and coolly said, “You now owe me eighty percent of your gains. If you disagree, I’ll kill you....”

1. Liu Zichuan's name in Chinese is 柳子川 liǔ zǐ chuān – Liu means “willow.” Zi means “child” or “son.” Chuan means “river”.

Chapter 600: True Spirit—Night!

As Liu Zichuan fled off into the distance, he heard what Meng Hao said. If Meng Hao hadn't made a move against him just now, he surely would have laughed coldly with disdain. Right now, though, he could unquestionably sense Meng Hao's killing intent deep in his bones.

It didn't matter what type of identity he had, if Meng Hao said he was going to kill someone, he would kill them!

The words Meng Hao had spoken just now were filled with the intent to slaughter, and left Liu Zichuan's mind trembling. All of a sudden, he regretted trying to feel out Meng Hao.

"Dammit," he thought, suddenly depressed. "It's not like I'm the only person he made an agreement with. Everyone did! Why did I have to pick him to test out?" He did not dare to do anything to cause Meng Hao to question him. Here in the Demon Immortal Sect, if he dared to disrespect Meng Hao, he would be dead for sure.

"What if I could form an alliance with him...?" thought Liu Zichuan. His eyes glittered for a moment, but then grew dark. He suddenly realized, based on the short battle just now... there was no way for him to know Meng Hao's true strength.

He knew that Meng Hao was unfathomable, and had not unleashed his full potential. As for how much of it he had revealed, it was impossible to guess.

"The smartest thing to do is never provoke someone like him."

As Liu Zichuan fled into the distance, Meng Hao retracted his gaze and left the Third Anima, returning to the First. He closed his eyes for a moment, then opened them; they shone with the brilliant glow of a powerful expert.

"It's difficult to judge how weak or powerful I am exactly. However, if I could achieve the fleshly body strength of the Seventh Anima while only in the First Anima, then when I entered the Seventh Anima, I would

definitely have a Spirit Severing fleshly body!

“That would be a complete and thorough Spirit Severing fleshly body, compatible with my Cultivation base.... I could definitely slaughter someone of the First Severing!” His eyes flickered and he took a deep breath. With that, he continued to fly on toward the graveyard.

It didn't take much time before he arrived at a large stretch of ruins. This was the graveyard. There were corpses laying about everywhere, and the tombs of many of the past experts had been transformed into nothing but pits.

Funerary objects had long since been disturbed and taken away. There were few restrictive spells here now.

As Meng Hao looked around, his heart throbbed with pain. He continued on forward until he caught sight of a familiar location up ahead. The glow of a restrictive spell could be seen glittering, and Meng Hao's heart calmed down a bit.

It was the tomb of Ke Yunhai!

The tomb of a paragon. Inside was no corpse, only a small bronze lamp, long since extinguished.

Outside of the tomb were layer after layer of restrictive spells. They filled the entire area with flickering light, and would prevent any outsider from entering.

Meng Hao landed just outside the restrictive spells and looked at Ke Yunhai's tomb silently. An indeterminable amount of time passed. Tears rolled down his face.

After a long time, he kneeled down and gently knocked his head against the ground three times as he kowtowed to Ke Yunhai's tomb.

Then he looked up and murmured, “Thank you, sir. You're not really my father, but in that ancient illusion, you allowed me to feel the love of a father. You allowed me to be your son during that life.” Finally, he stood up and turned around. He no longer felt melancholy, but rather, his face glowed with the unswerving determination of a Cultivator.

As of this moment, Meng Hao was now fully awakened from the dream!

“Come on out,” he said lightly. “You’ve been waiting for a while now. If you don’t reveal yourself, then I’ll just leave.”

As his voice echoed about, a completely ordinary area not too far off suddenly began to ripple and distort. A woman appeared. She was... incredibly beautiful, with bright eyes, and a way of moving that exuded feminine charm. It was none other than Zhixiang.

“I guessed that you would come here to offer your respects to Ke Yunhai,” she said with a smile. “Waiting here saved me a bit of effort in tracking you down.”

Meng Hao didn’t respond, but looked toward the area behind the Seventh Peak. Past the graveyard was the area that previously had been enveloped by boundless mists. Now, though, there was no mist to be seen whatsoever.

The two enormous statues were also gone. The only thing visible was an enormous bright shield that shot up from within the ground and emanated an imperceptible glow.

This was a restrictive spell that covered a massive area. It might seem ordinary, but it was powerful enough to eradicate Immortals!

The area it protected was so important that the restrictive spell was fearsomely powerful even down to this day. In fact... throughout all the years in which the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane had been opened, no one had ever been able to enter the area beyond.

That was a truly forbidden area! No one was allowed to enter inside. Anyone who tried to do so ended up dead.

“Let’s go,” said Meng Hao coolly. As he began to move forward, Zhixiang smiled and then sped off into the air with him.

As they shot forward, Zhixiang felt a bit proud of herself. Back in the Second Plane, when they traveled this same path, she had been filled with incredible excitement. Now that they were in the Third Plane, she was sure that she wasn’t the only one to be feeling excited.

Thinking about this caused Zhixiang to smile. She increased her speed, passing up Meng Hao. He watched her as she passed, but didn't say anything.

The two of them proceeded on in that way, moving at top speed until they reached the glowing restrictive spell shield. This was actually the same location where the statues and the door of swords had been located previously.

Zhixiang's face was solemn. She took a deep breath as she pulled out her third class qualification command medallion from within her robe. She cautiously extended the command medallion forward until it touched the glowing shield. Suddenly, the shield in front of her began to flicker. Ripples spread out which then turned into waves that spread out across the entire restrictive spell.

A droning sound could be heard, echoing out in all directions. At the same time, a faint, low-pitched voice could be heard, filled with weakness and exhaustion.

"Third class qualifications. Where do you intend to go?" The rumbling voice sounded incredibly weak, and yet still awe-inspiring.

"The Demon Immortal Cistern!" replied Zhixiang immediately, taking in a deep breath.

"According to the regulations, you may travel thirty percent of the paths in this place, and may stay for no more than 38 hours."

The wording was exactly the same as before. Zhixiang was nearly exploding with excitement as a wide fissure appeared in the shield in front of her. She took a deep breath and then looked over at Meng Hao with a look of complacency.

In accordance with his agreement with her, Meng Hao followed her into the fissure, his expression the same as ever. His expression was normal, but inwardly, he was on guard, unsure of whether the method being used by Zhixiang would actually work.

As soon as she reached the fissure, Zhixiang passed through effortlessly.

However, as for Meng Hao, a beam of light from the restrictive spell shot toward him. It instantly enveloped him, almost like a bubble, locking his feet in place.

He was stuck inside the light, incapable of moving, but able to speak. His eyes cold, he said, “Zhixiang, what is the meaning of this!?”

Zhixiang turned back suddenly, her expression one of shock and worry.

“Impossible,” she said. “You left a mark inside, plus I have third-class qualifications. I should be able to take an extra person inside, especially one who left a mark. Could it be... that your mark was somehow erased?”

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. It was at this exact moment that the weak voice suddenly could be heard again.

“Paragon’s qualifications. You may go anywhere you wish, and stay inside indefinitely.”

As soon as the voice could be heard, the bubble popped. His body returned to normal, and he walked forward through the restrictive spell as easily as if he were walking down a level path.

Zhixiang stared, her eyes wide with disbelief. She took a few steps back and looked blankly at Meng Hao.

“This is impossible! We’re in reality now, not the ancient illusion. In the ancient illusion, you had the identity of Ke Jiusi, but here in the Third Plane, you’re you! How could you be a Paragon?!”

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever, but inside, he was filled with great waves of shock and confusion. It was exactly as Zhixiang said, and yet, what had happened just now really had happened!

He was silent for a moment before slowly saying, “We were able to leave marks here. Apparently, leaving vestiges of an identity isn’t that hard either. It’s just something special that you can do in the Second Plane, right?”

“But this is different,” said Zhixiang, her eyes wide. “The ancient illusion is Night.... It’s... it’s illusory. The marks are like memories. Hmm....”

Suddenly she gasped and looked at Meng Hao with a complicated expression. "I understand. It's Night! Night remembers you!"

"Night?" asked Meng Hao, his eyes glittering. He had long since come to the conclusion that Zhixiang knew a lot more about the Demon Immortal Sect than what she had told him.

For example, Night.

Meng Hao thought back to when he had first entered the Second Plane. He had heard someone on one of the mountain peaks giving a sermon about the Dao. He had mentioned a true spirit whose name was Night! 1

"It's not that I was trying to hide something from you," she said. "According to Sect rules, we aren't allowed to divulge such information to outsiders. However, since Night remembers you, then it doesn't really matter if I tell you. In Heaven and Earth, there are true spirits. As to how many exactly there are, I'm not sure.

"I only know that they are very, very uncommon. In fact, there are only ten or less!

"True spirits are completely unique in all Heaven and Earth!

"There is one whose name is Night. According to the legends, when it closes its eyes, the world is a dream. When it opens its eyes, the dream is shattered, and everything returns to the void.

"There is some destiny that exists between it and the Demon Immortal Sect. Therefore, it took up residence within the Sect, and became its true Demon guardian.

Meng Hao was shaken inwardly. After a moment's hesitation, he asked, "Where is it...?"

"It is beneath our feet, within the lands of the First Heaven. As for what it looks like, I don't know. All I know is that according to the stories that have been passed down from ancient times, true spirits are inauspicious. Some people have even said that the reason the Demon Immortal Sect fell was because of it. When the Sect was destroyed, no one could kill it, not even Lord Ji. Although, even if he had the power to do it, killing a true

spirit is an extreme taboo.

“Therefore, Night has been in the Demon Immortal Sect all this time. Occasionally, it will reminisce, and that is the origin of the ancient illusion of the Second Plane....”

Great waves of shock roared through Meng Hao. He began to breathe heavily as he looked at Zhixiang.

“You’re telling me that the ancient illusion we experienced was simply Night’s dream?”

*

1. The sermon which mentioned Night happened in chapter 567. Don’t forget that Night apparently spoke during that same chapter!

Chapter 601: Generous Zhixiang!

Zhixiang looked at Meng Hao thoughtfully for a moment, then nodded. It seemed that at that point, she suddenly thought of something else. She hesitated for a moment.

“It’s all legend,” she continued. “No one really knows if it’s true or not. Maybe it is, maybe it isn’t.... Furthermore, true spirit Night’s bizarreness can actually appear during any time.

“In the original Demon Immortal Sect, countless Chosen disciples attempted to research it. In their belief, Night possessed an ability like teleportation. However, it teleported, not through the physical realm, but through time.

“Therefore, many people staunchly believed that Night’s dream was no dream, but an actual teleportation through time. There was even much evidence collected to support that view.”

Meng Hao stood there thoughtfully for a moment, then closed his eyes. A long time passed before he opened them again. No trace could be seen of any change in his thinking.

“Whether it was an illusion or real doesn’t matter,” he murmured inwardly. “As long as I believe it was real, and is still connected to me, then Karma exists in my heart. Regardless of the facts, that is the most important.” Just now, he had felt somewhat confused, but after closing his eyes for a moment, he felt enlightened.

“Let’s go,” he said coolly. “The Demon Immortal Cistern awaits.”

Zhixiang looked at him for a moment and then nodded. They walked onward in single file, following the same path from before as they headed toward the Demon Immortal Cistern.

Before much time passed, they reached the location of the same cistern they had visited within the Second Plane.

The area was damaged and worn. Cracks could be seen everywhere, and many parts had completely fallen apart. Many of the stones had been

crushed, quite a few of which hovered about in mid-air. All of it made it seem as if it would be very difficult to approach the pond waters. Even the waters themselves were not as clear as they had been in the Second Plane; there appeared to be silt built up in some parts.

Most relevant of all, the waters were much shallower....

At first glance, the cistern looked like a huge pit. Before, it had been filled with water, but now, only a bit was left at the bottom, perhaps only ten percent of what had been there in the Second Plane.

When she saw that remaining ten percent of water, though, Zhixiang's eyes filled with excitement, and she let out a huge sigh. What she had feared most was coming here with the proper qualifications only to find that because of the passage of time, the cistern waters were completely gone.

Were that to have been the case, it would have meant she had completely wasted all of her effort. All of the preparations made by her Sect would have been completely for naught.

Everything had been a gamble, in which success could lead to a meteoric rise. However, failure, and the losses thus incurred, would have led to the decline of her Sect.

Zhixiang suppressed her excitement as she looked around the area. When she caught sight of the rock upon which she had left the mark in the Second Plane, she began to quiver and breathe heavily. She had to work hard to try to suppress her excitement.

Everything had worked out perfectly, even more smoothly than she could have possibly imagined. The key to it all was the stone with her mark on it. To enter this area, one needed the qualifications. To enter the Demon Immortal Cistern itself, one needed a second qualification.

That second qualification could only be acquired within the Second Plane, but not used there. Instead, the qualification could be retrieved in the Third Plane, and then cultivated.

If there was no Second Plane, and one went directly to the Third Plane, at

first, there wouldn't seem to be much difference. Zhixiang and her Sect, however, had used augury to ascertain with relative certainty that, because of the passage of time, and the great catastrophe, the restrictive spells in the area were thoroughly sealed, and would not approve of any intruder.

The only method of success was to get qualifications in ancient times!

Zhixiang took a deep breath, then turned toward Meng Hao, clasped hands, and bowed deeply.

"Fellow Daoist Meng, many thanks for all your assistance. I would now like to once again ask for your expertise in opening up a path. Please remove the curse power from the area and allow me to... succeed in entering the cistern waters!" She bowed to him once again.

Meng Hao understood that this was the extent of the help she needed from him. The entire area was broken and in ruins. It all seemed quite messy and chaotic, and even quite dangerous. Zhixiang was nervous because of the same thing that had made her nervous back in the Bridge of Immortal Treading; invisible curses.

The further one went along, the more terrifying the curses became. Anything that touched them would receive an intense jolt of backlash.

"Let me try," he said with a nod. He had given Zhixiang his promise, and would not go back on his word unless he came across something that was truly beyond his control.

Thinking back to his experience in the Bridge of Immortal Treading, he had some speculations as to the reason why he was not affected by the curses; perhaps it had something to do with him being a Demon Sealer. His eyes glittering, he walked forward, waving his right hand to cause some of the stones that were blocking their way to lift up into the air. The stones did not appear to be equipped with any sort of curse; it seemed to take almost no effort to lift them up and move them over.

Meng Hao continued forward, taking care of all the stones, even the ones that floated in mid-air. soon a path emerged, leading directly up to the cistern waters.

“Like that?” he asked, looking back at Zhixiang.

She gaped in astonishment, suddenly uncertain about whether or not the curses actually existed. If there were no curses... then it mean that bringing along Meng Hao for help was actually just giving him good fortune for free.

When this occurred to her, she felt distress in her heart. After all, she had promised Meng Hao that he could immerse himself in the waters with her. And yet, the water was quite low now.....

“There couldn’t possibly be NO curses, could there?” she thought. “Don’t tell me that if I got the proper qualifications, and my identity was acknowledged, then the curses wouldn’t target me?” With that, she ground her teeth and began to walk forward.

However, before she could take three steps, her face suddenly flickered. The color of her skin suddenly turned black; blood sprayed from her mouth and she retreated backward quickly.

She fell back four or five steps and then sat down cross-legged. She waved her right arm, causing a hundred golden needles to appear, which then stabbed into her body from various directions. Vast quantities of black blood oozed out, emanating a foul, rotten stench. Zhixiang’s face was as pale as death as she produced a small clay pellet. Enduring the pain of losing such an item, she crushed it, causing an amber-colored medicinal pill to fly out, which she immediately consumed.

A long moment later, she still felt incredibly weak, but the black color was fading away from her skin. When it finally disappeared, and her injuries were recovered, she looked up with an expression of fear toward Meng Hao. There was only about thirty meters or so between the two of them, but to her, it was a shocking distance.

Just now, she had neared a curse that hadn’t fallen. If she had truly entered into it fully, she would long since have been transforming into pool of black liquid.

Having seen what just happened to Zhixiang, Meng Hao began to think. He felt a little bit bad. He quickly began to inspect the area, but couldn’t

see anything particularly strange about it. It was as if the area really was a forbidden zone, except, the effects didn't apply to him at all.

"What do we do now?" asked Zhixiang. She was more than thirty meters away, her expression anxious, her eyes wide. Success was only a short distance away, and yet that distance seemed like the vast gully between Heaven and Earth, impossible to cross.

In fact, she hadn't even noticed yet that her clothing had already begun to rot. A wind blew past, causing some of it transform into ash and reveal the skin beneath.

Meng Hao wasn't any surer than her what to do at this point. He looked at the brackish water in the cistern and then glanced back at Zhixiang. "What if you hold onto me and I try leading you in?" he asked.

Zhixiang was silent for a moment. What had happened just now had left her completely shocked, and without any ideas of what to do. Even asking Meng Hao to bring the water to her would have been useless; to acquire the Demon Immortal Body required that she meditate within the cistern itself.

She clenched her teeth, and determination appeared in her eyes. The Sect had made far too many preparations to reach this point. All hope was placed in her. She would rather die in here than simply give up.

She took a deep breath, then nodded her head with an expression that meant she was ready to go for broke. She looked toward Meng Hao and then clasped hands once again and bowed.

"Many thanks for your assistance, Elder Brother Meng. Zhixiang will remember your kindness for the rest of her life!" The way she bowed caused the previously partially covered skin to be even more revealed to Meng Hao. All of a sudden, he caught sight of a thoroughly soul-stirring sight.

Suddenly becoming aware of this, Zhixiang's face reddened. She straightened up and then coolly said, "It's just a little bit of skin. If you like it, Elder Brother Meng, I can offer it to you as a gift."

The 'generousness' of Zhixiang's words caused Meng Hao to cough dryly a few times, and a strange look appeared on his face. He calmed himself inwardly. From the very moment he had met Zhixiang, he had felt her to have somewhat of a changeable disposition. Every time he ran into her, it was like she had had a different personality.

She was flirty at first, then licentious. Sometimes candid, and now... almost like a man in the way she spoke.

"No, forget about it...." he replied, clearing his throat. He walked toward Zhixiang, and as he neared, she raised her hand and clasped his arm. Then she took a deep breath, and a look of decisiveness filled her eyes.

He glanced at her again, then, without another word, turned and led her forward one step. Then two steps. Three steps....

Her body was trembling, and by the time they reached the place where her expression had changed the last time, she was incredibly nervous. However, this time she could not sense the curse like she could before. Although, her clothes were now rapidly disappearing....

By the time they had taken seven or eight steps, they were completely within the cursed area. Zhixiang's clothes were now totally gone, revealing a beautiful body that would cause any man to begin to pant.

It was curvaceous and beautiful beyond compare.

Meng Hao glanced her over and saw everything. In his recollection, this was his second time to see a woman's body. The first time had been when he saw Chu Yuyan's. Right now, though, the feeling he experienced was completely different.

As he compared the two, he occasionally smiled and nodded, occasionally frowned, and occasionally revealed an expression of wonderment.

Zhixiang looked at him, clenched her teeth, and then said out of the corner of her mouth. "What part do you like? I'll give it to you."

Meng Hao smiled and pointed.

Zhixiang's eyebrows raised up. She suddenly formed her right hand into the shape of a blade which then shot toward the part on her chest that he had pointed to.

Meng Hao's eyes went wide and he quickly stopped her. "Fine, you win. I don't need it, even if you keep chopping."

Zhixiang glared hatefully at him for a moment but didn't say anything else. She held on to him as they proceeded forward toward the cistern waters. Soon they entered the waters themselves, proceeding into the very center.

Although the waters were clearly brackish, something strange happened. A delicate fragrance began to emanate out of Zhixiang. As it spread about, it fused into the waters, causing them to churn. In the blink of an eye, they were no longer brackish, but instead, perfectly clear. In fact they even began to emanate their own delicate fragrance.

If analyzed it carefully, you would realize that the fragrance was the same as Zhixiang's.

Chapter 602: Good Fortune!

Meng Hao's eyes flickered as Zhixiang dragged him into the waters and then sat down cross-legged. There was not much water, only enough to reach Zhixiang's supple waist.

She pulled him to sit down cross-legged in the waters across from her. When his gaze fell onto her body, he cleared his throat.

"While I absorb the power of the Demon Immortal Cistern," she said lightly, "you can also temper your body. As it happens, I have a special type of physique; during the process of transforming my body into a Demon Immortal Body, I will emit a unique fragrance.

"That fragrance can be considered something like Heavenly materials or Earthly treasures when you fuse it into your fleshly body. Therefore... you can build up a lot of synergy with your best body tempering magics when you use them here.

"It would be much better for you to absorb the fragrance than simply let it go to waste.

"In addition, please do not disturb me during the process. As for the curses, according to the research of the Sect, once I begin the transformation process, they won't affect me.

"If you finish before me, you can wait for me outside. I'm not sure how long the process will take, so I hope you can stand guard over me until I finish." With a final look at Meng Hao, she closed her eyes.

The instant she did, a strong fragrance suddenly emanated out from her. It fused into the waters, causing a white mist to rise up. The mist, too, was quite strong, and in the blink of an eye, had covered the entire cistern, completely concealing both Meng Hao and Zhixiang.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he looked around. He quickly realized that while the pulsating coldness in the water had originally been somewhat weak, after the mist rose up, the coldness was increased by more than ten times.

From the look of it, that coldness was only continuing to increase. Meng Hao knew from his time immersing himself in the waters back in the Second Plane that the more intense the coldness, the better the results he would experience. He took a deep breath as he rotated his Cultivation base. A moment later, he realized something else. It seemed as if the mist in the area was adding nourishment to his fleshly body. As it poured into him, his fleshly body began to experience a shocking transformation, slowly becoming more powerful.

“Zhixiang wasn’t lying,” he thought, his eyes shining with a bright light. Both the mist and the cistern waters were extremely beneficial to his fleshly body. He hadn’t even employed any magical techniques, and yet was already receiving incredible gain.

Although it didn’t seem likely that he would be able to achieve a Seventh Anima fleshly body while only in the First Anima, it did seem possible to reach the Sixth Anima.

According to his speculations, reaching the level of the Seventh Anima would be simply too difficult....

“I wonder if Fleshly Sanctification... can be cultivated in this place. It can only be cultivated once, but when it is, it will cause a one-time increase in fleshly body power that is astonishing to the extreme.... Furthermore, the atmosphere in this place is extremely well-suited to fleshly body tempering. This truly seems the best time to use it!” His eyes flickered with a bright light. After all, when it came to Fleshly Sanctification, the stronger one’s body, the more power would result.

Furthermore, Meng Hao had the feeling that regardless of whether it was a Daoist magic or a secret technique, since it had been acquired in the Demon Immortal Sect, it needed to be cultivated here. Trying to do so in the outside world would be useless.

Considering that, there was no reason to hesitate. Now was the time to use it!

Beams of light were shooting out of Meng Hao’s eyes as he closed them. Within his mind, he unleashed the secret art of Fleshly Sanctification!

RUMBLE!

Meng Hao's mind thundered as the secret art spread out. His body instantly began to shake, and the mist around him churned. Instantly, an enormous vortex sprung up around Meng Hao, like clouds kicked into motion by the wind.

The cistern waters also surged into a vast whirlpool.

Zhixiang was immersed in her own body transformation, but she could still sense what was happening on the outside, and was shocked. Her mind filled with a similar roaring, and her entire body began to emit vast quantities of Demonic Qi. As the Demonic Qi was unleashed, it caused the mist to grow thicker. Zhixiang felt an indescribable sense of stimulation throughout her body because of the transformation she was about to experience.

Time passed. Meng Hao forgot about everything, as did Zhixiang. They sat cross-legged in the cistern waters, surrounded by mist. Nothing was clearly visible, not even their own bodies. They could only sense themselves growing more powerful.

Meng Hao's fleshly body continued to grow larger. When it reached a pinnacle, it would then rapidly shrink back down. This continued to happen back and forth, creating a cycle. When each revolution of the cycle was completed, his fleshly body would exude terrifying fluctuations.

His fleshly body continued to grow more and more powerful!

Innumerable illusory magical symbols began to wink in and out around him. There were many; all of them apparently born from the void, pulsating with an ancient aura as they circulated around him. The entire scene made Meng Hao look completely strange and bizarre.

In contrast to Meng Hao, Zhixiang's body radiated pulses of Demonic Qi. They were incredibly dense, and as they condensed together, seemed to take the shape of numerous living creatures.

These living creatures all had differing appearances, but each of them had existed for countless years. These Greater Demons of Heaven and

Earth had all fallen by now, but they were still remembered by the heavens of the Nine Mountains and Seas.

As they appeared, they shrank down in size, then sat cross-legged around Zhixiang, performing incantations gestures that caused indistinct beams of light to shoot out and fuse into Zhixiang's body.

As for Meng Hao, he was sitting quite close to Zhixiang. As a result, he was also located within the region of light cast by the Greater Demons of Heaven and Earth. Many of the indistinct beams also hit his body.

Even as he trembled, the magical symbols swirled around him rapidly, then shot toward him and fused into his body.

As the light and the magical symbols merged into him, Meng Hao's mind continued to shake. His aura grew stronger, and his fleshly body emanated terrifying fluctuations.

Sometimes, he would grow large and strong to a shocking degree, and sometimes, he would shrink down into something completely unremarkable. His clothes had long since been shredded into pieces during the growth stages. As of this moment, he wore no clothes whatsoever, and like Zhixiang, he sat there completely naked.

The first thing to be strengthened was his skeletal system. It was a special kind of change that made the skeletal system incredibly tough and resilient, to the point where it could be considered something similar to a magical item.

The constant nourishment pouring into his body made Meng Hao's bones increasingly terrifying. However... he was still very close to Zhixiang. The illusory Greater Demons sitting cross-legged around her continued to emanate the indistinct light that was actually in direct opposition to the magical symbols surrounding Meng Hao.

The light was not nourishing, but rather destructive. The essence of the Demon Immortal Body was to stimulate potential by means of destruction, and thus, mold out the most powerful fleshly body.

The secret art of Fleshly Sanctification was based on nourishment. The

stimulation of potential was accomplished by nourishing the body, making the strong stronger, until the ultimately powerful fleshly body was consolidated.

They were two completely different methods that, from ancient times until modern, had never been simultaneously cultivated. It is not that no one wanted to try, but rather, had no way to practice such cultivation.

At the moment, though, Meng Hao, by lucky coincidence, had achieved a strange balance. The light from the illusory Greater Demons continued to destroy his skeletal system, causing his bones to be slowly shattered.

However, that did not conform with Fleshly Sanctification. Therefore... the art that normally should only have required a few magical symbols, suddenly began to pour out more magical symbol seals. They shot into Meng Hao to repair and perfect his skeletal system.

This process of destruction and replenishment caused Meng Hao to feel indescribable pain. At the same time, the benefits he received were completely without precedent!

It was hard to say how much time passed. However, because of the constant cycle, Meng Hao's skeletal system became thoroughly stable and firm. Roaring filled his fleshly body as he broke through into the power of the Sixth Anima.

As of this moment, Meng Hao didn't even need a Cultivation base. His body itself was shockingly powerful. He was not tall and thin like before, but rather thick and bulky, and looked almost like a small mountain.

It was at this moment that the tempering of his fleshly body expanded out from his bones into his flesh and blood!

Bones, blood and flesh, veins and arteries. All three of these areas experienced tempering. By combining them together, it led to explosive strength of the Qi and blood!

Meng Hao's entire person shook. The light from the Greater Demons of Heaven and Earth caused his whole body to wither to the extreme, until he seemed like nothing more than a bag of bones. But in the next breath, the

incredible power from the magical symbols poured into him, causing his body to be completely restored.

As the cycle continued, the magical symbols around Meng Hao began to lessen. Soon there weren't very many left. However, at the same time, an enormous fissure suddenly appeared in the sky above the Seven Peaks of the Demon Immortal Sect.

As the fissure ripped open, an incredible booming sound could be heard that caused everything in the Demon Immortal Sect to shake. All of the Cultivators from the lands of South Heaven looked up, their expressions that of astonishment.

Each of them could clearly see that within the fissure up above was something enormous. As it neared... they could see a gigantic, indescribably large pagoda!

It was... the Demon Immortal Pagoda!!

All of them had seen the pagoda in the Second Plane, but this time, there was something different about it. The pagoda... was struggling to keep itself whole. There were some areas that were destroyed and collapsed. There were even some parts where the only thing holding it together was stretches of glowing light.

The entire pagoda was in ruins. Apparently, it had been almost completely destroyed during the ancient war.

However, the pagoda... still continued to exist. As it neared, it let out a boundless, invisible pressure that caused everyone beneath to be shaken inwardly and wonder what was happening.

As the Demon Immortal Pagoda neared, suddenly, a great beam of light appeared from inside that was made up of magical symbols!!

The countless magical symbol seals turned into a river of stars that swept throughout the air, like a shocking bolt of unfurling white silk. It flew toward the Seventh Peak and the Demon Immortal Cistern. It roared through the air, shooting toward the area which none of them could see, surrounding the Demon Immortal Cistern and then pouring into Meng

Hao's body!

Fleshly Sanctification was a secret art that came from the Demon Immortal Pagoda. The Demon Immortal Body was a physical body created by Lord Li. As for which of the two was more powerful, it would be difficult to say clearly.

At the moment, an unprecedented battle seemed to be taking place, with Meng Hao's body being the battlefield. The secret art versus the Demon Immortal body; the two fought back and forth.

Would destruction win out over nourishment, or was nourishment incapable of being destroyed? It was like a paradox!

Chapter 603: Eighth Nascent Soul!

Meng Hao's flesh and blood expanded, then withered. The cyclical process gave birth to an indescribable pain that caused Meng Hao to tremble and sweat profusely.

However, his eyes were filled with unprecedented staunchness. He clenched his jaw and persisted on. Refusing to lapse into unconsciousness, he immersed himself in the sensation. His fleshly body constantly withered and then expanded, giving rise to a terrifying power.

Boom!

The indistinct light from the Greater Demons of Heaven and Earth drained his body to the point of collapse and destruction. His hair fell out, and he looked like an oilless lamp, like a withered corpse.

Boom!

The secret art of Fleshly Sanctification and the magical symbols from the Demon Immortal Pagoda swirled into his body, causing it to expand and grow until he looked like a giant.

The paradoxical transformation was something that had never been seen from ancient times until modern times, an unprecedented molding of the fleshly body. As the cycle continued, Meng Hao continued to grow more and more powerful!!

Zhixiang's body was also trembling. She did not have any secret art of Fleshly Sanctification. She only had the pure transformation of the Demon Immortal Body. At the moment, her body was withered, but within the withering was shocking Demonic Qi.

The two of them each practiced their own type of cultivation, constantly growing more powerful. As for the waters of the Demon Immortal Cistern, they were slowly shrinking down.

After some period of time passed, a rumbling sound could be heard, echoing out in all directions. Meng Hao suddenly raised his head, although his eyes were closed. Right now, his body was no longer expanding

dramatically, nor was it withering to the point of death. Instead, he was tall and thin.

He currently looked almost like he didn't have any power at all in his body. However, deep inside was hidden a fearsome and indescribable strength that far exceeded the previous limits of his fleshly body.

He was now in possession of an extraordinary, enchanting power. Every single scrap of muscle was filled with shocking, explosive power. His bones were solid to an indescribable degree. As Meng Hao lifted his head, his entire body erupted with an intense aura.

The wind whipped about as the vortex screamed. Shockingly, Meng Hao's aura... had the fleshly body power of the Seventh Anima!!

However he had not entered the Seventh Anima, but rather remained within the First Anima.

The mist around him seethed, and the vortex rotated around and around. In the middle of it all, Meng Hao inhaled deeply and took a moment to sense the power within him. Although his Cultivation base was still the same as ever, his fleshly body power and his battle prowess were now completely different than before.

His eyes glittered as he entered the Second Anima.

Boom!

Third Anima, Fourth Anima.... As he sat there cross-legged, it was without hesitation that he went all the way to the most powerful state in which he could exist, the Seventh Anima!

His body shook as the same power as before surged through him, that of sixty-four great circle Nascent Souls. However... his fleshly body instantly reached an incredible, unprecedented state.

His fleshly body, his skeletal system, his physical frame, were now thick and strong in a way that did not conform to any rules. He was far taller than before, to the point where even sitting cross-legged as he was, he was still taller than previously.

The fearsomeness of his physical body made him seem to be, not a Cultivator, but something Demonic!

His facial features were vicious. Countless veins popped up all over his body, and his hair was even longer than before. When he looked up, his eyes radiated a ferocious will. It looked like a single punch... could shatter the earth.

Meng Hao wasn't sure exactly how to describe the current state of his fleshly body. He clenched his fists as the explosive, terrifying feeling of power exploded out from inside of him. He could tell that his current state of power far, far exceeded that from before.

"However..." he thought, "a fleshly body as powerful as this is still not Spirit Severing..." Although his fleshly body was terrifyingly powerful, he still had the feeling that for some reason, he had reached a bottleneck.

The appearance of the bottleneck did not cause him to be disheartened, but instead filled his eyes with excitement. He knew that the bottleneck could only be one thing...

The bottleneck of... acquiring a Spirit Severing fleshly body!

Once he broke through the bottleneck, he would have a complete Spirit Severing fleshly body, and would truly be able to fight back against First Severing Cultivators. He would truly be within the Spirit Severing stage!

Although his Cultivation base would be different, his fleshly body would definitely have that terrifying power.

"I should be able to break through!" he thought, his eyes glittering. After taking a deep breath, he closed his eyes. The Greater Demons of Heaven and Earth once again unleashed their indistinct light.

One beam of light after another passed into Meng Hao's body. This time, they did not stir his skeletal system, nor whither his flesh and blood. Instead, they wreaked fatal havoc onto his Qi and blood vessels.

Meng Hao wasn't Zhixiang, who possessed a special physique and constitution. She could turn the fatal transformations into something not fatal, and thus acquire something like a rebirth in the form of the Demon

Immortal Body.

However, Meng Hao had something even more special and shocking than Zhixiang when it came to his physique. He had a secret art that was completely incompatible with the Demon Immortal Body, and was even something like an enemy to it!

That secret art was something that Ke Yunhai had described as being extremely rare in Heaven and Earth, with an origin veiled in mystery.

Even as Meng Hao's blood and Qi passageways were being destroyed, the inexhaustible supply of magical symbols around him poured into his body. In the blink of an eye, his blood and Qi passageways were thoroughly restored.

The cyclical paradox once again exploded out inside of his body. Meng Hao had gotten used to the destruction of his skeletal system and the rending of his flesh and blood. Therefore, this feeling was something he could handle.

The only thing that happened was that he trembled a bit; his expression didn't change in the least.

Rumbling filled his entire body as his blood and Qi passageways were destroyed and then restored and strengthened. He became stronger, causing his fleshly body to experience yet another meteoric rise.

This rise grew stronger and more stable, transforming into an explosive power that could break through a bottleneck.

Boom!

His body trembled and blood oozed out of his mouth. The bottleneck was like an enormous battlement. As he bashed against it, cracks appeared, but it didn't collapse.

"One more time!" he said, his eyes glittering. He focused all the power he could muster, combining it together. The magical symbols in the area were few, and as Meng Hao gathered his power, the Demon Immortal Pagoda on the outside began to shake and erupt with even more magical symbols. The tower itself was beginning to grow dark and faded.

The magical symbols joined together to form a silver river that shot toward Meng Hao, pouring into his body, causing it to shake. The light from the Greater Demons destroyed his blood and Qi passageways; the secret art and the magical symbols poured into him to reforge them. He surged with more power, and then once again lashed out against the bottleneck.

BOOM!!

The bottleneck trembled violently, and the cracks spread out even thicker. Just when it seemed on the verge of collapsing, more light from the Greater Demons poured into Meng Hao, along with boundless magical symbols.

Roaring filled Meng Hao's body. He lifted his head up and let out a soundless howl. As of this moment, his body was no longer expanding dramatically, but rather, shrinking at high speed. He now seemed completely weak and thin.

At the same time, the blood and Qi vessels within him were completely restored.

The light from the Greater Demons was incapable of any further destruction, and the increasingly scant numbers of magical symbols could offer no further assistance.

His blood and Qi vessels having been completely restored, the bottleneck within him... directly shattered into pieces!

As the bottleneck vanished, Meng Hao's fleshly body experienced an incredible, shocking rise. He grew more and more powerful, to a world-shaking degree!

However, what caused Meng Hao to frown was that after breaking through the bottleneck, he didn't get any sensation that he was in a Spirit Severing state. That caused him to feel a bit confused.

However, even as he frowned, a completely unpredictable sensation suddenly rose up within him. Meng Hao suddenly noticed a transformation occurring that caused the sky to fade, the wind and clouds

to seethe, the surrounding mist to shoot up into the air, and the vortex surrounding him to suddenly stop in place.

The transformation was caused by the increase in the three aspects of his fleshly body; his skeletal system, his flesh and blood, and his veins and arteries. He had the special aspects of the Demon Immortal Body, but also Qi and blood of a fleshly body forged from Fleshly Sanctification.

This was a never-before-seen combination that was essentially a paradox. It created... a shocking transformation that had never been seen before Meng Hao, nor would ever be seen again.

This transformation was not one of his fleshly body. Instead, it occurred within his dantian region. Next to his seven Nascent Souls, shockingly... a thick coagulation of Qi and blood appeared, shaped like a person.

Because his fleshly body had reached such an incredible pinnacle of power, he had formed... a Qi and Blood Nascent Soul!!

When the Nascent Soul appeared, Meng Hao's Cultivation base immediately began to emanate ripples. His hair whipped about, and his Cultivation base exploded with power. In this instant, Meng Hao... could sense the fluctuations of an eighth Nascent Soul!!

"Spirit Severing is within... the Eighth Anima!" he thought, panting as he gained enlightenment.

Meanwhile....

An old man sped along beneath the Seventh Peak, nearing the forbidden area where Meng Hao and Zhixiang were.

The old man came to a stop and looked up, his eyes gleaming coldly.

This man was none other than Patriarch Huyan.

"I can sense that little bastard Meng Hao inside there," he thought. "He has my precious treasure.... However, it belongs to the Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, so even though he stole it away, he won't be able to use it.

"When I was in the Second Plane, I was able to acquire the information I sought regarding its secrets...." He smiled coldly as he took a few steps

back. Lifting his right hand, he quickly began to set up restrictive spells on the ground around him.

“Meng Hao, I’m going to bury you in this place. I’ll wait here for you to come out, and when you do, I’ll splatter your blood everywhere!” Smiling coldly, he finished setting up the spells, then took a deep breath and sat down cross-legged.

“Not even of Spirit Severing, yet you dare to fight with me!? In the Third Plane, the Demon Immortal Sect seals all personal items. Your mastiff won’t be able to appear, so you won’t be able to fuse with it to borrow the power of Spirit Severing.

“Well then, you shall die.” Intense killing intent appeared in Patriarch Huyan’s eyes.

“I’ll kill you, then I’ll go back and wipe out that Golden Crow Tribe of yours to join you in burial!”

Chapter 604: Like Splitting Bamboo

Meng Hao closed his eyes, then opened them again moments later. A strange glow could be seen within them as he looked over at Zhixiang, who sat there pale-faced and trembling.

It was clear that she had reached a critical juncture.

Meng Hao looked away and then stood up. He walked out of the pond, through the mists, and to the outside world.

As he left, the pressure bearing down on Zhixiang increased. Earlier, the shapeless light of the Greater Demons had been shared between her and Meng Hao, but now all of it was focusing on her.

Actually, she was incredibly lucky to have encountered Meng Hao. Without him there to share the burden, she might not have been able to handle it alone. Not only would she have failed to acquire the Demon Immortal Body, but she would have faced grave danger to her life.

That hadn't been part of her plan regarding Meng Hao; she could never have predicted that things would turn out the way they did. After all, she came from the Demon Immortal Sect which was started by people who escaped death all those years ago. Their understanding regarding the forbidden areas of the ancient Demon Immortal Sect wasn't absolutely complete. When you added in the passage of time, and all the changes that had occurred, it was impossible to know everything.

Meng Hao left the cistern waters and stood in the outside world. He was tall and slender, and his skin was no longer dark like it had been all those years ago. It was white and clear, causing him to look completely refined and cultured. His scholarly air was even more obvious and intense than ever.

He slapped his bag of holding to produce a long, green robe, which he quickly donned. Now, he looked absolutely different than before.

He was even more handsome, more naturally graceful, more youthful. However, deep within his eyes flickered a dim ancientness.

After a long moment, he closed his eyes and focused on his dantian region, and his eighth Nascent Soul.

Qi and Blood Nascent Soul!

After a moment, his eyes opened, and he slowly merged the eight Nascent Souls together. This was just a test, but even still, his mind shook as if lightning were smashing about inside. An indescribably powerful Cultivation base, and a terrifyingly strong fleshly body appeared.

Furthermore... his Divine Sense also increased, spreading out to cover the entire area.

“Eee?” said Meng Hao. The first thing he noticed was that deep within the forbidden zone was something emanated strange ripples. As soon as his Divine Sense touched the ripples, a backlash spread out that caused his Divine Sense to collapse.

As for everywhere else, they were all areas that had been destroyed during the war.

At the same time, Meng Hao’s Divine Sense noticed a person outside of the forbidden zone.... As soon as he caught sight of him, killing intent flickered in Meng Hao’s eyes.

Sitting there cross-legged and meditating was Patriarch Huyan, wearing a cold smile on his face!

“Laying in wait to ambush me, huh?” thought Meng Hao. His eyes glittered, and a smile appeared on his face. The smile was one of ridicule, and was filled with coldness and killing intent that was impossible to cover over.

The killing intent still flickering, Meng Hao turned to look back at Zhixiang. The area was safe, and Zhixiang was in the midst of transmogrification. No one would be coming around to disturb her. Meng Hao swept the area with his Divine Sense one more time, then turned to head toward Patriarch Huyan. It was time to resolve the Karma between the two of them. However, it was at this point that he suddenly paused in mid stride, and looked back into the depths of the forbidden zone.

He had swept the place twice with Divine Sense, and it was in exactly the same location both times that his Divine Sense had collapsed apart. It made it impossible to even get some clues about what existed in that particular area. The only thing he could see was blurriness, and what appeared to be a corpse.

His eyes flickered, and he temporarily did not continue on toward his battle with Patriarch Huyan. Instead, he turned and headed deeper into the forbidden area. After all, he had promised Zhixiang to stand guard over her; therefore, he needed to ensure that the area really was safe.

It didn't take too long before Meng Hao reached the place that had caused his Divine Sense to collapse. There was a boulder here, and beneath the boulder lay a corpse. Clearly, it was a woman.

In her hands, the woman held a wooden sword.

The sword emanated a faint glow, which was the source of the collapse of his Divine Sense. In fact, it might be less proper to say that it collapsed, but rather, was consumed.

As soon as Meng Hao laid eyes on the wooden sword, a tremor ran through him. It was not one of his Spring and Autumn tree Wooden Time Swords, but rather... one of those other swords, the ones he always found next to a corpse... an Immortal Murdering Sword!!

Currently, he had four Immortal Murdering, and was now looking at a fifth.

His eyes glittered, he stared at the corpse for a very long moment. However, it was decayed beyond recognition, making it impossible to tell who it belonged to.

Meng Hao silently made a grasping motion with his right hand, causing the wooden sword to fly out to hover in front of him. He waved his sleeve to collect it up, then stamped his foot onto the ground, causing a deep pit to appear.

After placing the woman's corpse inside and laying her to rest, Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed deeply toward the tomb. Then he turned,

sending his Divine Sense out once more. This time, he didn't notice anything out of the ordinary. His body flashed as he transformed into a beam of light that shot out of the forbidden zone.

"Patriarch Huyan, the time has come to settle matters between us!" he thought, his eyes flickering with killing intent as he shot forward at top speed. "I'm going to use him to prove whether or not my Eighth Anima can exterminate the Spirit Severing stage!"

He shot through the air like a lightning bolt. Even in the First Anima, his fleshly body was even more fearsome than it had been in the Seventh Anima. As he shot forward, the air collapsed, and roaring sounds filled with air.

The roaring grew stronger until it seemed powerful enough to shake Heaven and Earth. When it reached the region outside of the forbidden zone, Patriarch Huyan heard it, and his eyes went wide. It was at this point that he saw Meng Hao appear.

"Meng Hao!" he said, with a vicious smile. Without hesitation, he performed an incantation gesture and then pointed forward.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he proceeded forward. He pierced directly into Patriarch Huyan's spell formation, instantly causing multiple black-colored figures to rise up and pounce toward him.

Within each of these figures could be sensed a faint, shocking power. However, as they neared Meng Hao, his expression didn't change in the least bit. He continued forward, giving rise to an intense roaring. As soon as the figures touched him, the intense backlash from his fleshly body instantly destroyed them.

Exploding figures surrounded him as he proceeded forward.

The sight of it caused Patriarch Huyan's eyes to narrow slightly. He was shocked inwardly, but then recalled Meng Hao's identity in the Second Plane, and suddenly felt at ease. A cold smile appeared on his face.

"You're stuck in my net now," he said. "I don't even need to attack. I can just watch while you slowly march to your death."

“Oh really,” replied Meng Hao coolly. As he moved forward, the area around him rumbled as countless illusory blades appeared. Their sharp tips whistled through the air as they slashed directly toward Meng Hao.

Up in mid-air, countless bolts of lightning appeared. They looked like silver snakes as they lashed out toward him.

As the rumbling booms filled the air, Meng Hao continued on without even pausing. As he walked forward, all of the restrictive spells within the spell formation collapsed as soon as they touched him, completely incapable of impeding his progress.

This caused Patriarch Huyan’s face to flicker. However, before he could do anything in response, Meng Hao’s eyes flickered and his speed increased rapidly. He transformed into a beam of light that sped across the ground toward Patriarch Huyan.

Booming sounds rose up into the sky. The restrictive spells and the spell formation seemed to be howling in anguish, as though a blade were slicing through them. They then exploded into pieces, and Meng Hao was standing in front of Patriarch Huyan.

“I thought I was going to have to track you down,” said Meng Hao. “I never imagined that you would come to me of your own volition. This battle is going to last for eight finger attacks.” With that he lifted his hand and waved a finger.

An illusory mountain appeared on Meng Hao’s fingertip. Although this was only the power of a single finger, that power was like the might of a mountain.

BOOM!

Patriarch Huyan’s face fell. He waved his left hand to block, and when the attack slammed into him, he was sent flying backward, his face pale. Killing intent flickered in his eyes as he waved his right hand in front of him.

“Area!”

“Second Anima!”

Patriarch Huyan's Area seemed to cause everything in the area to be confined as if with shackles. An intense pressure weighed down, and everything slowed; it almost felt as if everything were underwater. However, it was in that same instant that Meng Hao erupted with the power of the Second Anima. The increase in his Cultivation base was secondary to the intense strength of his fleshly body, which was the most important part.

Meng Hao broke through the confinement of the Area. A crisp sound rang out like the shattering of a mirror as the Area was completely defeated.

This defeat was something Patriarch Huyan almost couldn't believe. He remembered that Meng Hao had been powerless to face up against his Area before, but now, it had simply shattered.

One breath of time later, Meng Hao was directly in front of Patriarch Huyan.

"Here's the second finger attack," he said. Backed by the power of the Second Anima, he waved his finger down. Patriarch Huyan's face flickered, and he performed an incantation with his right hand. Instantly, a black mist appeared on his body, which formed together into a black shield that he used to defend against Meng Hao's finger attack.

A popping sound rang out as the shield collapsed. Meng Hao's finger landed directly onto Patriarch Huyan's chest.

Patriarch Huyan's face filled with shock as he tumbled backward. His mind reeled, but deep down, he knew that this was not the time for contemplation. He began to perform another incantation, his hair whipping about. He lifted his head up and shouted:

"Seven Emotions and Six Pleasures. Thirteen Transmigrations Dao. Seven Emotions! Seven Daos!" Instantly, a prismatic beam of light shot out from his body up into mid-air. There, it split apart into seven different streams of light, like unfurling bolts of silk. They shot toward Meng Hao, radiating killing intent.

If you looked closely, you would be able to see that within each of the

seven beams of light could be seen, shockingly, an evil spirit that looked almost like a Nascent Soul. Each of these figures resembled each other, almost as if they were related in some way.

“Third Anima,” said Meng Hao coolly, shaking his head. Instantly, his Cultivation base exploded up. However, the power of his fleshly body exceeded that of his Cultivation base. It did not expand and grow like in the past; instead, it sent out terrifying ripples of incomparable power.

Meng Hao took another step forward. He watched the incoming seven beams of light, allowing them to slam into his body. In that instant, a roaring sound exploded up into the sky. The seven beams of light collapsed into pieces and the evil spirits inside let out miserable shrieks as they were sent tumbling backward. With another step, Meng Hao... once again appeared directly in front of Patriarch Huyan.

“Third finger attack,” he said, waving a finger.

Patriarch Huyan’s eyes went wide. He raised up both hands, causing a glowing shield to appear to resist Meng Hao. A boom could be heard as the shield exploded. Patriarch Huyan tumbled backward like a kite with its string cut, blood oozing out of his mouth. His face was filled with astonishment.

“What... what type of Cultivation base do you have?!?!”

“The type that can kill you,” responded Meng Hao calmly. He took another leisurely step forward.

Chapter 605: Momentum Like a Beam of Light

“Kill me? You overestimate yourself!” despite his words, Patriarch Huyan was actually inwardly shocked. His face was grimmer than ever as he retreated. Then his Cultivation base exploded with full power as he prepared to unleash a divine ability.

“Overestimate myself? Fine, I’ll show you what it’s like when I overestimate myself!” His voice calm, Meng Hao said, “Fourth Anima!”

A rumbling sound could be heard from his body as he entered the Fourth Anima. His Cultivation base was that of eight great circle Nascent Souls. As for his fleshly body, it had a terrifying power that exceeded that of his original Seventh Anima.

As Meng Hao charged in attack, ghost images sprang up around him. In the blink of an eye, he was in front of Patriarch Huyan. He waved his right index finger, causing it to stab onto Patriarch Huyan’s upraised right hand. His left hand reached out to push into Patriarch Huyan’s chest.

A boom could be heard. Patriarch Huyan fell backward head over heels, blood overflowing from his mouth. His expression was one of astonishment and complete disbelief. What he feared was not Meng Hao’s Cultivation base, but the power of his fleshly body.

Such a frightening fleshly body was something that vastly exceeded his imagination, and was something he had never even heard of before!

Even as the power of the finger attack caused Patriarch Huyan to tumble back, Meng Hao strode forward again.

“Fifth Anima!”

He now had a Cultivation base equivalent to sixteen great Nascent Souls, and an even more shockingly powerful fleshly body. He was surrounded by a rumbling roar, and although there were no physical changes to his appearance, distortions and ripples appeared in the air around him.

This was a fleshly body that could cause anyone to be completely shocked. Combined with his Cultivation base, it made it so that Meng Hao's steps could shatter the air. He appeared again in front of Patriarch Huyan, lifting his right hand up to make a fifth finger attack.

Patriarch Huyan raised his head up and howled as a sense of grave crisis swept over him. He bit violently down onto his tongue, causing blood to spray out of his mouth and then transform into magical symbols that spread out in all directions.

"Seven Emotions and Six Pleasures. Thirteen Transmigrations Dao turns into Thirteen Killing Forms. Consolidate into... Emotion Severing Extermination!" The blood magical symbols in front of Patriarch Huyan shockingly began to form together into the shape of a Heavenly saber. Instantly, it slashed down toward Meng Hao!

In the following moment, Meng Hao's finger slammed into the blood-colored Heavenly saber, and a huge boom rolled out. The blade shook for a moment and then exploded into countless pieces, completely destroyed. As for Meng Hao's finger, it continued to descend until it tapped onto Patriarch Huyan's chest.

Blood sprayed from Patriarch Huyan's mouth, and his chest turned into a bloody mass. Roaring filled his body as he shot backward at top speed. His face was pale white as he gave up all thoughts of fighting and focused completely on fleeing as fast as possible.

He was in absolute fear of Meng Hao's fleshly body. It turned into an intense dread as he realized that such a fleshly body was shocking to the extreme. His own divine abilities and magical techniques were incapable of even causing it to tremble.

In the same instant that Patriarch Huyan decided to flee, Meng Hao's voice once again drifted through the air.

"Sixth Anima!"

Boom!

The instant Meng Hao entered the Sixth Anima, his body trembled. He

lifted up his head and roared. To him, Patriarch Huyan could be killed any time he wanted. What he desired to do was to test out the Eighth Anima which he had created.

As he entered the Sixth Anima, the power of thirty-two great circle Nascent Souls counted for almost nothing. What was truly shocking was his fleshly body. In the Sixth Anima, his power was now truly exploding out, as of this moment, a Spirit Severing aura was gradually beginning to seep out of him.

The air around him filled with distortions, and the soil in the area was jumping up and down. A vortex began to form, like a mad tempest. The mad tempest could do nothing to cause even a single of Meng Hao's hair to rise up, though. Within the tempest, he was the only thing that wasn't moving!

As soon as Patriarch Huyan saw this, despite his Cultivation base, his age, and his powers of concentration, he couldn't help but shout out in alarm. "Fleshly body Spirit Severing!!! This is impossible!!!"

As far as he could remember, a Spirit Severing fleshly body was a legendary stage that only existed in ancient times. It was both Spirit Severing and, not Spirit Severing, because it did not have a Domain. And yet, even without a Domain, such a fleshly body could compare to the peak of anyone in the Spirit Severing stage.

Were he to also possess a Spirit Severing Cultivation base, then, any other Spirit Severing Cultivator would surely view him to be nothing less than... a nightmare!

"Body cultivation is not a focus in the current generation. Such a thing has long since become a thing of the past. Don't tell me that this guy... acquired some type of body tempering good fortune in the Demon Immortal Sect!?!?" Patriarch Huyan's scalp was numb, and he was scared out of his mind as he fled at top speed. He was already well aware that Meng Hao's magic had a Seventh Anima.

As of this moment, Meng Hao's Sixth Anima was already shocking enough. If he changed to the Seventh Anima....

Patriarch Huyan wasn't willing to risk his life and go all out here. He had more things to accomplish, so he ignored all matters of face and fled at top speed. However, no matter how fast he went, Meng Hao... was faster!

Boom!

In the blink of an eye, Meng Hao appeared ahead of Patriarch Huyan. In addition to blocking his path, he lifted up his right hand and waved his finger again.

"We're not finished here yet," he said. "What are you getting so anxious for?"

Patriarch Huyan's face fell. Without hesitation, he performed a double-handed incantation, connecting the forefinger of each hand with the thumb of the other, with his palms facing away from each other. He immediately stretched his hands out toward Meng Hao.

A four-sided collection of lines sprang into being, which was in accord with the Domain he cultivated. A power of expulsion rose up, with one side being Heaven and Earth, the other side being a person, to be expelled.

The four-sided lines flickered as they shot forward, shooting against the wind as they expanded out to surround Meng Hao.

At the same time, a shockingly intense power of expulsion seemed to fill the four-sided lines. This power of expulsion was intense enough to crush Meng Hao into pieces.

"BEGONNEEEE...."

The bizarre voice seemed to come from nowhere, and echoed out like thunder within Meng Hao's ears. The sound caused the shocking power of expulsion to seem to grow even stronger.

This was not Meng Hao's first time to encounter this magical technique of Patriarch Huyan's.

Currently, he was in the Sixth Anima, and had terrifying fleshly body power. His eyes suddenly glittered. He opened his mouth and let out a roar toward the incoming four-sided lines.

“Screw off!”

The sound created something like waves that instantly suppressed all of the lightning up above. It rolled out, causing fissures to appear in the air, and rumbling sounds to be heard in all directions. The incoming four-sided line shape directly exploded into fragments.

Its power of expulsion, having faced someone who it couldn't possibly shake, was now nothing more than a joke!

It was like a tiny stream that wanted to become as powerful as a mountain. How could it possibly succeed!?

As the four-sided line shape collapsed, Meng Hao's finger once again tapped onto Patriarch Huyan's chest. A boom could be heard. Blood sprayed from Patriarch Huyan's mouth, and his chest caved in bloodily. Even his back was a bloody mess as he staggered backward. He looked at Meng Hao, his face twisted with savagery.

“I feel like leaving,” he growled. “You won't let me? Seems you actually think I'm scared of you!” With that, Patriarch Huyan performed another incantation with his right hand. He pushed down onto his forehead, then opened his mouth to spit out a small, black-colored blade.

As soon as the blade appeared, everything dimmed. It began to spin faster and faster in his palm, then grow rapidly in size. Shockingly, it transformed into a huge greatsword, upon which was carved the severed head of a dragon!

Patriarch Huyan waved his right arm. His face was covered with a savage expression that seemed to say he was willing to go all out, even risk death, as he shot toward Meng Hao.

“DIE!!” The power of Patriarch Huyan's Cultivation base exploded out. In fact... the level of power he wielded now was multiple times greater than before. The area around him filled with ripples of ancientness that even seemed to contain natural law!!

Natural laws of the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane!

These natural laws contained a power of expulsion that had nothing to

do with the four-sided line shape. This was a true power of expulsion from the world of the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane.

The blade descended, shocking Heaven and Earth!

“You will fear me,” said Meng Hao coolly as he entered... the Seventh Anima!!

The power of sixty-four great circle Nascent Souls exploded out within him. His fleshly body unleashed even more Spirit Severing aura. Together, they caused the air around Meng Hao to begin to collapse. Roaring could be heard around him, almost as if this body of his was something that didn't belong in this broken Demon Immortal Sect.

It was as if there were invisible restrictions in this place, and any Cultivation base or battle prowess that exceeded those limitations were not permitted at all.

With the battle prowess he was now displaying, Meng Hao had already touched that world limitation.

“So, I don't actually need to enter the Eighth Anima,” thought Meng Hao. “I've already reached fleshly body Spirit Severing!” As he took a moment to experience the sensation, he came to the realization that he...

Was already in the Spirit Severing stage!

Although he had no Domain, he was still of Spirit Severing!! In fact, he was even stronger than when he had borrowed the power of the mastiff, put on the Blood Immortal mask, and used the power of the Blood Immortal.

He faced up against Patrairch Huyan's descending blade, lifting his right hand without hesitation and pushing out with his finger.

In this moment, everything suddenly seemed to freeze. The roaring sound that filled the air seemed to cease for a moment. And then, everything returned.

Crashing booms echoed out one after another into the silence. They filled the entire Demon Immortal Sect, to be heard by each and every one

of the Cultivators from South Heaven.

Patriarch Huyan coughed up blood and tumbled backward. The huge black-colored blade in his hand broke up into fragments. His face was pale, and, ignoring any possible ramification that might give rise to expulsion, he employed the full power of his Cultivation base... to destroy his opponent!

“You’re already at your limit with your Seventh Anima!” he said, his eyes filling with a streak of madness. “This is the strongest you can get!” He was panting now, the killing intent in his eyes strong. “Since that’s the case, let me escort you the rest of the way down your path!”

Patriarch Huyan lifted his right hand up and pushed it down onto his chest. When he lifted it up, a red glow appeared, seemingly pulled out from his body itself.

It was a red-colored whip, completely illusory and capable of lashing the soul. It looked exactly the same as the whip Meng Hao had stolen earlier from Patriarch Huyan, except that its color was different!

As soon as the whip appeared, Patriarch Huyan’s fleshly body began to wither rapidly, as if all of his life force were being collected together in the whip. By now, his killing intent had reached a peak.

Meng Hao stood motionlessly in the same place as before, the wind and dirt whipping around him, his hair flying about.

In the space of a few breaths, the sand and wind around him dissipated....

“DIE!!” howled Patriarch Huyan. His withered frame flickered, and a bizarre sound could be heard coming from the whip. It lashed down toward Meng Hao, filled with a bloodthirsty and terrifying aura.

Meng Hao looked up. Not a tiny bit of sentiment could be seen in his eyes, only calmness as he observed the incoming soul whip and Patriarch Huyan, who emanated terrifying ripples. Meng Hao had tested out his new magical techniques; what he needed to do now was see... exactly how powerful he was!

Closing his eyes, he coolly said, “Eighth Anima!”

Chapter 606: Eighth Anima!

As soon as Meng Hao spoke the words, a roaring filled his head. His body shook, and the air around him twisted and filled with fissures. Everything dimmed, and an invisible whirlpool instantly sprang up around him. As it rotated, it gave rise to an enormous hurricane.

As soon as the illusory whip snapped onto the hurricane vortex, it whipped backward. Down beneath the vortex, all of the sand and dirt floated up into the air and began to sweep around. As for Patriarch Huyan, his face thoroughly fell, and he staggered out of control several paces backward.

His eyes were filled with astonishment and shock, and his mind was reeling.

“Impossible! This magical technique has Seven Animas. How could... an Eighth Anima appear!?!?”

Even as Patriarch Huyan reeled with shocked, Meng Hao’s body was seemingly filled with distortions. Intense, pulsing pain overwhelmed him. He had never imagined that the Eighth Anima would be... so painful!

His body felt as if it were being ripped apart. Wave after wave of power surged through him at indescribable speed, rapidly increasing in intensity.

His eight Nascent Souls were fully superimposed, and now burst forth with a power that vastly exceeded the terrifying Cultivation base power of the Seventh Anima.

In the Seventh Anima just now, Meng Hao had unleashed the power of 64 great circle Nascent Souls. That had been the previous limit, something that couldn’t be exceeded. But now, even as the combination had just fused, that previous limitation was completely toppled.

65, 66.... In the blink of an eye, Meng Hao’s body possessed the power of 70 boundless great circle Nascent Soul Cultivation bases. That power continued to grow. The feeling of intense power, as well as a terrifying aura, spread out through Meng Hao. As his Cultivation base and fleshly

body continued to transform, the power exploded out.

Everything around him was twisted and distorted. The wind and clouds were in fluctuation, and the hurricane that surrounded Meng Hao seemed to stretch from the ground up into the sky. Endless booms echoed out, exploding with incredible intensity.

He trembled, and blood began to seep out of his eyes, nose, ears, and mouth. His visage was ferocious to the extreme, and his long hair whipped about madly. He could clearly sense his Cultivation base climbing upward. In the blink of an eye it had the power of 93 great circle Nascent Souls.

And it was still climbing!

Every level of power which was added caused booming sounds to fill him, and more pressure would weigh down on him. The energy which he could employ was even more shocking. At the same time, the wastage to his longevity increased rapidly.

However, none of that could do anything to supersede the wildly intense rise he was experiencing. It gave him an incredible confidence which caused him to lift his head up and roar.

ROARRR!!

The sound of it seemed to cause all of the pain that wracked him to be diffused out into the Demon Immortal Sect. As his body trembled, his Cultivation base rose up from the previous level of 93 great circle Nascent Souls to... 99.

The color of Meng Hao's hair began to change. It was no longer black, but now gray. His facial features were no longer that of a youth, but rather, ancient. His stature was tall and thin as before, but his aura was now completely different.

99, 100!

The full power of one hundred great circle Nascent Souls Cultivation bases exploded out within him. As Meng Hao roared, his hair grew longer and longer, soon reaching his lower back. The tempest around him grew in intensity, causing Meng Hao to slowly float up within the midst of the

hurricane.

Lightning and thunder fell down to circulate around him, causing the hurricane to turn into a lightning storm, shocking to Heaven and Earth.

The sight of it caused Patriarch Huyan to pant rapidly. His eyes went wide and filled with a look of disbelief. His mind filled with roaring.

“How could this be...? He... he....”

In the midst of Patriarch Huyan’s astonishment, more roaring exploded out from Meng Hao as his Cultivation base rose again!

101, 102, 103... all the way to 115!

Meng Hao’s hair now stretched to his knees as his shocking roar echoed about in all directions. The tempest around him continued to expand until it was three hundred meters wide. It was at this point that the Heavenly expulsion force suddenly appeared.

The air around Meng Hao was continuously shattered. The fearsome aura surrounding him continued to rise up, almost as if some primordial wild beast was awakening.

116, 117.... In the blink of an eye, the power of 128 great circle Nascent Soul Cultivation bases exploded up. His roar was now the roar of Spirit Severing.

His power was that of Spirit Severing!

The aura around him was now an aura of Spirit Severing!!

The tempest was now nearly a thousand meters wide. Lightning had transformed the area into a sea of electricity. His hair was longer and his frame taller. His gray hair floated about, and his visage was one of ancientness. His eyes suddenly focused, and within them seemed to circulate a power to exterminate life.

As soon as Patriarch Huyan saw those eyes, his mind trembled, almost as if he had just been subjected to a powerful attack. His body began to shake, and he fell back several paces, blood spewing from his mouth. Within the astonishment on his face could now be seen a trace of dread.

“You....” he said hoarsely, his body shaking.

“I’m not finished yet,” said Meng Hao, whose eyes were still closed as he experienced the shocking Cultivation base power of 128 great circle Nascent Souls. This power far exceeded the absolute pinnacle of the Nascent Soul stage. This was... the power of Spirit Severing!!

It was a situation in which quantity changed into quality. With enough Nascent Soul Cultivation base built up, he was able to leap into a realm that was previously only occupied by true Spirit Severing.

However, even as Meng Hao had said, his Eighth Anima wasn’t finished yet. Just now, his growth had been in Cultivation base only. His fleshly body was still growing, rapidly flying toward a true Spirit Severing fleshly body.

Fleshly body Spirit severing was a stage for ancient Cultivators. In modern times, there were few people who could temper their body to the stage of Spirit Severing. In fact, you could say that it was virtually impossible, the difficulty level being just too high.

For Meng Hao, it was only by a series of lucky coincidences that he could reach this legendary stage. As of this moment, his fleshly body appeared to be normal, but in actuality, every strand of muscle was being shredded. Every inch of bone was being crushed. Every vein and artery was collapsing.

However, no matter how they were shredded, crushed, or collapsed, it didn’t cause any problems for Meng Hao. In fact, all of that destruction caused his body to reform, making his Qi and blood reach astonishing levels!!

Within the space of time of a few breaths, the thumping of a heartbeat could be heard, like thunder rattling out in all directions. It caused Patriarch Huyan to stop and look at Meng Hao. As of this moment, it appeared as if there were a shocking Qi and blood fighting back against the natural law of Heaven and Earth!

Qi and blood exploded up shockingly!!

As of this moment, every beat of Meng Hao's heart caused the tempest around him to pause, caused the air to vibrate, caused the land in the area to quake.

Along with his Qi and blood, his body broke through some invisible barrier. As he truly entered the Spirit Severing stage, Meng Hao's Spirit Severing aura exploded into the sky!

He took a deep breath as he realized that his view of the world was now completely different.

He could see innumerable dust motes dancing about in the air. He could hear countless sounds around him in the world, like the whisperings of innumerable deceased souls. He could feel all of the indescribable sorrow that filled the Demon Immortal Sect.

Most importantly... he could hear the sound... of breathing.

It was the breathing of something asleep, coming from deep, deep within the ground. It was faint, as if there were some enormous creature far beneath the surface of the earth, sleeping. Every breath it took echoed about.

All of these things take quite a long time to describe. However, it was a very short period of time from the moment in which Meng Hao entered the Eighth Anima until he could sense everything.

128 great circle Nascent Souls pushed Meng Hao's Cultivation base into a state which could be considered the world of Spirit Severing!

Because of the endless good fortune that had tempered his fleshly body, now that he had entered the Eighth Anima, his body truly had reached the legendary... Fleshly Sanctification. Figuratively speaking, that sanctification was none other than the Spirit Severing of his body!

"I am not in the Spirit Severing stage," he murmured. "But I possess the power of Spirit Severing." His power now vastly exceeded that which he had experienced before, when he had merged with the mastiff.

"Now, the time has come to have a little test. Let's see... exactly how powerful I am!" With that, his eyes began to glow with a cold light. He

glanced at Patriarch Huyan, whose mind began to tremble. At that point, Meng Hao vanished.

Patriarch Huyan's scalp numbed, and he was scared witless. He retreated rapidly, waving his arm to cause the whip to flail about in all directions. However, it was at this point that a reflection appeared in his pupils as Meng Hao appeared directly in front of him.

Meng Hao's left hand lifted up, forming a claw that snatched ahold of the whip. The whip let out a whimpering sound, but could not extricate itself.

"You... are too weak," said Meng Hao, his voice cool. He lifted his right hand up and tapped down lightly on Patriarch Huyan's forehead.

Patriarch Huyan's body trembled as he was suddenly lifted up into the air and soared in the direction of the forbidden zone. Before he even began to fall to the ground, his head directly exploded. Blood and gore formed a haze that spread to his chest, and then his limbs, and finally his entire torso.

All of that was accomplished by a mere tap from Meng Hao in his Eighth Anima. Patriarch Huyan was ripped into shreds before he could even scream, and his fleshly body was completely destroyed.

His half-transparent Nascent Divinity fled out, a large hole visible on its forehead. Life force and aura trickled out of the hole, beyond its control. It was incredibly weak as it retreated backward. Its death was only a matter of time; within the space of ten breaths, it would certainly perish!

It was with astonishment and indescribable fear and despair that the Nascent Divinity let out a miserable scream. Although it knew fleeing was useless, it still attempted to run away.

However, it was in this moment that, from within the forbidden zone, what appeared to be a consummately beautiful jade-like hand suddenly reached out with incredible dexterity. The delicate hand stretched out through the air...

To grab ahold of Patriarch Huyan's Nascent Divinity.

“My Cultivation base suffered damage. With this Nascent Divinity, I can concoct some pills to help with that. Do you mind?” A woman walked out from within the forbidden zone. She had Zhixiang’s voice, but her appearance was nothing like the woman Meng Hao remembered from before.

She was as pretty as a flower, bewitchingly charming, matchlessly beautiful, unrivaled in elegance and demeanor. She... was the new Demoness Zhixiang!

Chapter 607: You're All Here, Huh?

To use the expression “indescribably beautiful and striking” to describe Zhixiang would only be enough to portray part of her. Meng Hao had no choice but to admit that in his entire life... he had never seen a more beautiful woman.

This was not a situation of her being “one of the most” beautiful women. Any other woman placed next to her would pale in comparison, and could do no more than play a supporting role.

She wore a light red gown, along with a wide smile. Her each and every move was dazzling, and her body let off a unique aura, resembling both the air of a Demon and a spirit.

The feeling Meng Hao got was that her body had become something like Heavenly materials or a Earthly treasures. It was something that completely stood out from the masses, and the aura she emitted seemed to fill the entire area.

Her current body did not belong to anyone except herself.... This was the true Zhixiang.

Because of her earlier fall in Cultivation base and the various plans to be carried out by her on behalf of the Demon Immortal Sect, her Immortal Realm Cultivation base had been degenerated back to the edge of Spirit Severing. In fact, most of the time, she only revealed the power of the Nascent Soul stage. Right now, though, it was obvious that she had succeeded with the Demon Immortal Body.

Because of her success, her Cultivation base had now begun to restore itself. In a very short period of time, she would once again have... the power of an Immortal!

When the time came, the others would return to the lands of South Heaven, but she... would leave by a different route. She would return to the Demon Immortal Sect of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

There was even a high likelihood that the Cultivators of the Demon

Immortal Sect were already gathering at some unknown location to prepare to receive her.

Upon hearing Zhixiang's request, Meng Hao's expression did not change at all. He nodded slowly.

She gently bit her lip and smiled, then took Patriarch Huyan's rapidly fading Nascent Divinity and crushed it. A popping sound could be heard. Patriarch Huyan, a Spirit Severing Patriarch in his generation, had his Nascent Divinity crushed into tiny pieces. They transformed into dots of shining light that Zhixiang then slowly absorbed in through her forehead.

Zhixiang's countenance became a bit more beautiful, enough to cause anyone who looked at her to be shocked and feel their heart palpitating with eagerness.

"Thank you," she said. She lifted her hand up to place a veil over her face, covering over the features that would cause anyone to be infatuated with her at first sight. Her eyes flickered with a bizarre light as she looked at Meng Hao.

"Allow me to introduce myself. I'm Zhou Zhixiang. The 'zhi' character is from the expression 'that which is noble and lofty.' The 'xiang' character is from the expression 'a woman of ethereal color and celestial fragrance.' I am Zhixiang, Holy Daughter of the Demon Immortal Sect. However, I prefer it when people call me Demoness." With a smile, she gave a curtsied bow to Meng Hao.

Her words were simple, as were the movements she made. However, an indescribable energy wafted off of her, forming together into an incredible pressure, which weighed down on the entire area.

"You owe me," said Meng Hao coolly. "And not just a simple favor."

"Don't worry, Fellow Daoist Meng. I acknowledge it, as does the New Demon Immortal Sect of the Ninth Mountain and Sea. We will absolutely never forget it." She cocked her beautiful head as she looked at him. Then her beautiful hand waved, causing a jade slip to fly out.

The jade slip was ancient and crude; on one side could be seen the

character 'Demon,' and on the other side the character 'Immortal.'

"This is the command medallion of a Demon Immortal Sect Elder. Whoever holds this medallion is a vassal Elder. Fellow Daoist Meng, if you need assistance in the future, you may come to the Demon Immortal Sect at any time."

Meng Hao accepted the command medallion, looked it over, and then put it into his bag of holding. He nodded toward Zhixiang, then, without another word, turned to leave.

"I would like to thank you in a more personal way, Fellow Daoist Meng," said Zhixiang with a smile. "Therefore, I'll give you a bit of information. The pit located between the Third and Fourth Peaks is critical to entering the Fourth Plane."

Meng Hao stopped in place and turned to look back at her.

"Most likely, the other Sects and Clans have this information already. In fact, the Fourth Plane will never close. Anyone in the Third Plane who has the requisite skill can enter it.

"Without the skill, one can only gaze at the figurative ocean and lament one's inadequacy." Zhixiang chuckled, once again bowing to Meng Hao. Then she turned and disappeared.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered. He could sense Zhixiang's power, and he knew that she was completely different than before. A thoughtful look appeared as he looked down at his bag of holding, and thought back to all his previous contact with Zhixiang.

In his heart, he was eighty percent certain that the small bit of assistance he had provided here would later result in receiving help from Zhixiang and the Demon Immortal Sect, although it was impossible to predict whether that help would be of great use or not.

A relaxed smile appeared on his face. He had long since come to realize that in the Cultivation world, one must rely on oneself. One could not expect too much help from outsiders. Therefore, whether the New Demon Immortal Sect provided him with a lot of help, or just a little, it didn't

really matter to him.

His greatest acquisition in this affair was not the promise of Zhixiang and the New Demon Immortal Sect. Instead, it was his Eighth Nascent Soul, and his incredibly powerful fleshly body.

He took a deep breath as he examined his body, as well as the fearsome damage done to his longevity while in the Eighth Anima 1. As for the power of worldly expulsion that he had felt, he wasn't sure when, but it had vanished. That caused his eyes to glitter brightly as he looked over at the Fourth Peak.

After a moment, he looked away, and his body flickered as he left the Eighth Anima state and returned to the First Anima.

Then he took a step forward. Before speeding off into the distance, he collected up the soul whip. From what Meng Hao could tell, it looked as if it was meant to be part of Patriarch Huyan's other whip.

At the moment, though, he would not allow them to fuse together. Instead, after he left this place, he would take some time to thoroughly study both of them.

Right now, he wanted to see if he could find any more of good fortune within the Third Plane. He whistled through the air as he passed the Seventh Peak and then the Sixth Peak.

As he neared the Fifth Peak, his eyes suddenly glittered, and the corners of his mouth turned up into a smile. He changed directions to speed directly toward the Fifth Peak. Not much time passed before, shockingly, the light of a restrictive spell appeared up ahead of him.

The restrictive spell had three layers. The outer layer was dim, the light of the mid layer was flowing smoothly, and the inner layer was completely solid.

The three-layer restrictive spell covered an area of about three hundred meters. Clearly visible underneath it was a house, leaning up against the wall of which was a corpse.

The corpse was different than most of the corpses on the outside. It was

not completely dried up, but rather, retained some life-like qualities.

It was an old man, who had been looking regretfully off into the distance when he died. As for what he was thinking, it was impossible to tell, but in his hand he held a bamboo flute. The flute was no magical item, but rather, completely ordinary. It even seemed to be a bit shriveled.

In front of the old man was another object, a drum about the size of a person's head. It was completely violet-colored, and emanated a faint glow. Just barely audible was a pulsating thrum from the drum that echoed about the entire area.

Outside of the restrictive spell were eight or so frowning Cultivators from the lands of South Heaven. A few of their number were currently trying to break through the restrictive spell.

Among their number were four members of the Ji Clan, including Ji Xiaoxiao. Also present was Liu Zichuan from the Imperial Bloodline Clan of the Northern Reaches, who Meng Hao had frightened earlier.

The others were from the Eastern Lands or Northern Reaches, and all were frowning as they looked at the violet drum inside of the restrictive spells. Their expressions were that of desire.

Meng Hao's arrival in a beam of multicolored light instantly disturbed the quiet in the area. The group of people immediately went on guard and began to look around. However, once they saw that it was Meng Hao, their faces filled with unsightly expressions.

The way Meng Hao had extorted them in the Second Plane had caused all of them to gnash their teeth. Liu Zichuan was the only one who immediately backed up a few steps, trembling.

"You're all here, huh?" said Meng Hao, laughing heartily as he approached. "I haven't seen you in quite a few days, but I missed you! I hope you've all acquired a lot of items here in the Third Plane!" Meng Hao's expression was sincere; in fact, he really did sincerely want for everyone to acquire a lot.

However, the more he expressed himself in such a way, the more

unsightly were the expressions on the faces of the others. They stared at Meng Hao, faces filled with displeasure. Some even seemed to be contemplating trying to attack and kill him, to solve all troubles in one fell swoop.

Meng Hao didn't seem to notice this. He was all smiles as he sighed and then said, "Eee? How come you're all ignoring me? Well, it doesn't matter. Fellow Daoists, I, Meng Hao, truly desire for all of you to make great acquisitions here. In that way, I will also benefit a bit more."

By now, killing intent was flickering in the eyes of the others, and a few people stepped forward, their tempers seemingly on the verge of exploding.

Meng Hao still didn't seem to notice this point. He had a bashful smile on his face, and even looked a bit emotional. However, from the point of view of the others, he was clearly showing off, and was in the need of a bit of punishment. His expression might even be one of courting death.

Only Liu Zichuan felt his heart pounding nervously, and was crying out inwardly:

"Contemptible! Far too brazen! This bastard... this bastard is somebody I absolutely cannot afford to provoke. He has obviously grown powerful to the point of Spirit Severing, and yet he only shows off this level of power....

"He's obviously... obviously provoking the others into attacking him!! How shameless!!" At this point, Liu Zichuan couldn't help but think back to his own grievous situation earlier. He could only imagine that if some of these people attacked Meng Hao right now, they would quickly find themselves in exactly such a miserable state.

As he looked at Meng Hao's smile, he only found it more and more horrifying. Yet, at the same time, he somehow was looking forward to seeing these other people meet a similar fate as he had....

"Brothers," continued Meng Hao, "I know that I displeased you in the Second Realm. Please, don't take it to heart. Now that we're in the Third Plane, I hope that we can all work together toward a common purpose. Brothers, whether or not I can find sufficient good fortune here, depends

all on you.”

After he finished speaking, Meng Hao, looking incredibly appreciative, and even clasped hands to bowed to them.

The bow caused everyone including Ji Xiaoxiao to clench their teeth. As for Liu Zichuan, his face merely twitched, but everyone else seemed to be on the verge of exploding into a rage.

“Oh, there’s also....” Meng Hao had straightened up and was about to smilingly continue when one of the Cultivators from the Northern Reaches couldn’t hold back any longer. His temper flared and, with a howl, he shot forward.

“Shut up, bastard! So, you admit that you displeased us in the Second Plane?”

As soon as the Northern Reaches Cultivator went on the attack, Liu Zichuan’s eyes went wide and filled with a look of anticipation.

“Take him out! Drop him dead!” he thought excitedly.

The Northern Reaches Cultivator closed in on Meng Hao, his face twisted viciously. His right hand lifted up to perform an incantation gesture and then pushed out toward Meng Hao.

At the same time, another of the Northern Reaches Cultivators shot forward, as well as a member of the Ji Clan. Eyes flashing, they fell upon Meng Hao.

Another bashful look appeared on Meng Hao’s face.

*

1. I’ve seen a lot of comments/questions/confusion about the issue of his longevity in the Animas. Although the explanation wasn’t extremely clear, it was implied that Meng Hao can restore any damage to his longevity using medicinal pills. As long as he doesn’t run out of longevity within the Eighth Anima, any damage is inconsequential. Think of his “longevity” as a health bar, the total capacity of which

slowly reduces over time, but can also be drained or re-filled by various means. The total capacity might be reduced while he's in the Eighth Anima, but once he leaves, it returns to normal, and any "missing" years of life can be made up for with medicinal pills. As for Meng Hao's current "normal" longevity, it doesn't really matter too much. He can freely duplicate longevity-increasing pills. That having been said, he still is confined by the limit of 1,000 years. It doesn't matter how many pills you take or what you do, you can't live past 1,000 without reaching Spirit Severing.

Chapter 608: You Hurt Me

Even as the bashful expression appeared on his face, his right palm flew up into the air. It moved with such incredible speed that the burly man from the Northern Reaches had no time to react before it slapped him across the face.

A boom could be heard, and the burly man felt as if an entire mountain had collided with the side of his head. His mind was reeling.

Originally, the blow should have sent him flying, but at the last moment, Meng Hao caused his hand to move back down. He grabbed the man's head and directly slammed it into the ground.

The burly man first shot up into the air and then struck the ground, causing a rumbling sound to echo out. The bashful expression still on his face, Meng Hao lifted his right foot up into the air and then began to trample on the burly man.

Even as the sound of the beating echoed out, the burly man began to struggle furiously. His Cultivation base exploded with power as he attempted to fight back. However, in the blink of an eye, the fearsome power of Meng Hao's fleshly body caused him to begin to scream miserably. He shrank back down, shrieking in shocking fashion.

Meng Hao grabbed the man's head and bashed it into the ground, causing blood to spray from the man's mouth.

"Ready to be reasonable!?" said Meng Hao angrily. He bashed the man's head into the ground again.

"I was congratulating the lot of you. Congratulating you! And in return, you want to kill me!?" Meng Hao slammed his head into the ground again. The burly man's shrieks were sad and shrill, and his body was trembling. An expression of shock covered his face, and his heart was in turmoil as he was beaten senseless.

"That's wrong!" said Meng Hao. "That's immoral!" He jumped up into the air and then began to stamp down onto the burly man, leaving

footprints with each stamp of his foot.

The burly man covered his head with both hands, screaming beneath Meng Hao's anger.

"You don't even know what's good for you! Is that the right way to act? I congratulate you and then you repay my kindness with enmity!?" The scene of Meng Hao viciously trampling the man caused Liu Zichuan's eyes to gleam with excitement. His heart was trembling, but with excitement. After all, it felt a lot better to be unlucky with a group of people than to be unlucky alone.

Most afraid out of everyone was the other Northern Reaches Cultivator who had also stepped forward just now, as well as the Ji Clan member. Although they had both charged in attack, watching the scene playing out in front of them caused their scalps to go numb.

They were just about to back up when Meng hao looked up at them, an expression of pain on his face.

"Do people really hate me that much?" he said. "I was clearly wishing you all well! If this guy was the only one to be ungrateful, it wouldn't matter. But it seems... you two also don't appreciate my kindness!" He appeared to be more and more torn by grief. The two Cultivators' scalps became even more numb as they backed up. However, it was in that moment that Meng Hao lifted up his right hand and made a grasping motion.

"You need to explain yourself clearly, otherwise, you're not going anywhere." The two were shocked to find that Meng Hao's grasping motion immediately caused their bodies to go out of control. They were pulled up to Meng Hao, where upon he slapped them with full strength. After they slammed down into the ground, he continued to rain blows down onto them.

"WHY?!?!" howled Meng Hao, sounding grieved. He grabbed the Ji Clan member and slammed him seven or eight times down into the ground. The Ji Clan Cultivator was furious, but it didn't matter how much Cultivation base power or how many magical items he tried to use, a few

slaps from Meng Hao would cause everything to collapse. The Ji Clan member was now panting from astonishment.

Even in the midst of his astonishment, Meng Hao grabbed his head and slammed his face into the ground again.

The other Northern Reaches Cultivator shrieked. He watched wide-eyed as the Ji Clan member and the other Northern Reaches Cultivator were like nothing more than baby chickens in Meng Hao's hands, completely powerless to strike back at all. The man was so scared that he began to beg for mercy.

However, he could not escape Meng Hao's punishment. Every time Meng Hao leaped up, the three men would let out miserable screams, and blood would spatter about the area....

"You hurt me and then just smiled it off!!" cried Meng Hao. "That's unforgivable! I was being sincere!!" The sight of Meng Hao punching and kicking caused those looking on to be thoroughly shaken. The other Ji Clan members, as well as the other two Northern Reaches Cultivators, were all panting. Expressions of extreme shock could be seen on their faces.

They were also rejoicing at their luck in having not made a move earlier. That was especially true of the ones who had almost stepped forward just now. They felt as if they had just evaded a huge disaster.

Their eyes were filled with unprecedented levels of fear as they looked at Meng Hao. It was a fear that made them feel even more grievous than they had in the Second Plane. That was because they had suddenly discovered that... they could be bullied here in the Third Plane too!

Ji Xiaoxiao's eyes were wide and she was panting with shock. As she stared at Meng Hao, she suddenly had the sensation that she was looking at a madman.

As the sensation appeared, it was coupled with fear. It was as if the Meng Hao that she remembered from the Second Plane had been perfectly extended down here into the Third Plane.

Liu Zichuan stood in the group, his expression one of excitement. Inwardly, he shouted, "Take him out! Drop him dead!"

His face filled with grief and indignation, Meng Hao continued to mop up the three. The two Ji Clan members other than Ji Xiaoxiao, hesitated. One of them was an older man who gritted his teeth and said, "Elder Brother Meng... they were definitely in the wrong, but... considering it was their first offense...."

"Yeah," said one of the other Northern Reaches Cultivators. "Elder Brother Meng, if you keep beating them, they're going to die...."

It was just as the man said. The three offenders lay next to Meng Hao, soaked in blood, gasping as more breath came out than went in. Despite being Cultivators, they had just been literally beaten to the verge of death.

"Do you also wish to repay kindness with enmity?" asked Meng Hao, looking up at the Ji Clan Cultivator who had spoken first.

That look caused the old Ji Clan member to begin to tremble. He quickly backed up a few steps, then angrily cried, "These people went way too far! What I hate most in life is people who repay kindness with enmity! Elder Brother Meng, feel free to continue, just ignore me."

As for the other Northern Reaches Cultivator, the one who had spoken up second, he was now even more nervous. He began to fill with panic as he watched Meng Hao slowly look over toward him. Immediately, the man yelled, "Elder Brother Meng! Get rid of the rascals and protect the good folk! I couldn't be more pleased. I truly wish I could be more like you, with such incredibly lofty sentiments!"

Off to the side, Liu Zichuan's heart filled with disdain. He still felt himself to be far more powerful than these other people.

The bashful look appeared on Meng Hao's face once more. His right foot was up in the air, just about to descend again. Down below, the Ji Clan member, who was covering his head with his hands, suddenly felt as if his moment of good fortune had arrived.

"Fellow Daoist Meng, listen, my... my acquisitions, you can have sixty

percent!”

As soon as Meng Hao heard this, his foot stopped moving. Apparently convinced by the man’s words, he bent over at the waist and shyly patted the man’s shoulder.

“Brother, oh, good Brother,” he said. “I really hate to say this but, you know, I have my principles. How about eighty percent? No? Well never mind....”

“Huh?” The Ji Clan member’s face was covered with both blood and a look of shock. He was just about to say something when one of the Northern Reaches Cultivators shouted out.

“Eighty percent! Elder Brother Meng, eighty percent of my acquisitions are yours!”

Hearing this, Meng Hao instantly shoved the Ji Clan member back to the ground and then helped the Northern Reaches Cultivator to his feet. His now looked even more bashful, and somewhat apologetic.

“I feel a bit guilty for such kindness, Brother,” said Meng Hao. “Very well, since you trust me so much, then I truly wish you well. Please acquire many many things here in the Third Plane....”

The Northern Desert Cultivator wanted to cry, but had no tears to shed. He looked at Meng Hao and nodded vigorously.

The Ji Clan member who had just been shoved back down suddenly yelled out: “Eighty percent! I’ll give eighty percent, too!”

The other of the three also gritted his teeth and yelled out similarly.

Meng Hao looked visibly moved as he helped them all to their feet.

“Fellow Daoists, I am truly indebted to your kindness,” he said with an emotional sigh. “I feel a bit guilty. However, since all of you insist, then, fine, fine, I accept.” From the look in his eye, it seemed Meng Hao felt that good people truly did exist everywhere under Heaven.

The three Cultivators stood there unsteadily, looking at Meng Hao. Although inwardly they might be cursing him to the pinnacle, they did not

dare to allow it to show on their faces. As of this moment, they were in complete dread of Meng Hao.

Everyone else had merely watched the proceedings, but these three had experienced it personally. Every blow from Meng Hao contained not the slightest ripple of a magical technique. All of it was completely from the power of his fleshly body.

He had used only the power of his fleshly body to put them in a position where they didn't even have a single chance to fight back. Even stranger, his fists and feet were actually capable of completely scattering their magical techniques.

Such a fearsome fleshly body was enough to cause anyone to feel hopelessness. The bashful look that they saw on Meng Hao's face right now would become the source of their most profound nightmares in the future.

The three had no choice but to clasp hands in respect to Meng Hao. Then, supported by the various members of their groups, hobbled their way back to their original position. Meng Hao glanced at Ji Xiaoxiao with a profound expression. A tremor ran through her, and she suddenly grew even more nervous. No one else would understand, but Ji Xiaoxiao was well aware that Meng Hao had just reminded her of her promise to take him to Ji Mingfeng's corpse.

Everything was silent. Everyone stood there quietly, having completely lost interest in the restrictive spell off to the side. All of them looked nervously at Meng Hao.

As for Meng Hao, he looked at the restrictive spell for a while. Then he examined the house, and the well preserved corpse. All of a sudden, he realized that the corpse looked familiar.

He was silent for a moment as he looked at it. Then he recognized who it was, and his face grew a bit melancholy. This old man existed in Meng Hao's memory as a youth. Back in the Second Plane, he was one of Meng Hao's silkpants friends, a Demon Immortal Sect disciple with two wings on his back.

Meng Hao remembered that his name was Yi Xuanzi.

After a moment of silent thought, Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed deeply toward the corpse. “Fellow Daoist Yi Xuanxi,” he said, “perhaps you don’t recognize me, but in my memories, we are friends.... If your spirit is in the underworld, please open the restrictive spell. I would like to bury you so that you can rest in peace.”

As of this moment, he wasn’t thinking about any magical items. He spoke the truth. He wanted to bury his friend from the Second Plane, so that he could rest peacefully.

After a long moment, Meng Hao rose to his feet. He didn’t check to see if the restrictive spell had changed in any way. Without a word, he turned to leave. However, it was in this moment that behind him, the restrictive spell suddenly began to glitter and shine. A riot of colors could be seen as a rift appeared, which opened up soundlessly!

It opened for Meng Hao!

A tremor ran through his body as he looked back.

Everyone watched on, eyes wide and minds filled with unprecedented shock and disbelief.

Chapter 609: Three-eyed Concubine

“The restrictive spell... is actually opening on its own!!”

“Could it be that Meng Hao was right about the spirit in the underworld?”

“If that’s what’s really happening, then wouldn’t it mean that we could use the personal relationships we forged in the Second Plane to open other restrictive spells!?”

Everyone was shocked and almost couldn’t believe what was happening.

This matter exceeded their imaginations, and in fact, their comprehension. The whole matter didn’t seem complicated, and yet, if you analyzed it deeply, there was clearly some incredibly complex cycle of Karma at work.

After all, the Second Plane... was illusory!

And yet, things that had occurred in the Second Plane, and people met there, had apparently created a resonance with reality. It was bizarre to the extreme!

Even as everyone stood there in their fear and shock, Meng Hao looked back at the rift in the restrictive spell. After a moment of thought, a look of decisiveness appeared in his eyes. As everyone watched, panting, he strode forward toward the restrictive spell. His body almost flickered as he... entered inside of it.

The instant he entered, the rift twisted and then rapidly closed up. As for Meng Hao, he now stood there inside of the restrictive spell.

He was now fully separated from the outside world, and the onlookers.

Completely ignoring how shocked everyone was, he looked at Yi Xuanzi’s corpse, then silently approached it. He stood there for a moment, then clasped hands and bowed deeply. Then he began to dig a hole next to the house.

He carefully placed Yi Xuanzi’s corpse into the deep hole. As for the

flute and the drum, he did not take them for himself, but instead, placed them in the pit next to the body.

“Yi Xuanzi, whether or not you recognize me, in my memories, we are friends.... I hope that you can rest in peace. If there is a reincarnation... I hope that we can meet again.” He looked at the corpse in the deep hole, and his eyes filled with a look of reminiscence. He thought back to the Second Plane, his silkpants friends from the other mountain peaks, and how they had all been whipped together.

After a long moment, he let out a soft sigh. Just as he was about to begin filling the hole up with dirt, the violet-colored drum suddenly let out a thump. The sound was like that of a heartbeat, clear and distinct as it echoed around.

Meng Hao's brows furrowed in concentration. He watched as the violet drum, which was emanating a slight violet-colored glow, slowly floated up out of the hole to hover in front of him.

The drum was about the size of a head. The drum head itself was black, and the sides were violet. Just barely visible were countless faint magical symbols rising up from the drum head. Also visible on the the drum head was a totem.

The totem was that of a black toad with a vicious appearance. Its long tongue was sticking out of its mouth to wrap around a black dragon!

The black dragon was struggling, but apparently it was powerless to fight back against the toad.

It was obviously a totem, but when he looked at it, Meng Hao felt almost as if it were moving. On the other side of the drum head was another totem.

This totem was an enormous crocodile with vicious looking scales. Its appearance was ferocious to the extreme, and its mouth was open to emit a soundless roar....

This drum was extremely extraordinary!

Meng Hao was silent for a long moment before reaching out his hand.

The violet drum flickered a few times, then slowly landed onto his palm.

As soon as it touched him, he heard a buzzing sound in his mind. It was like the call of a toad, the shriek of a black dragon, and the coldness of the crocodile.

A moment passed, and then everything went back to normal. However, as everything faded away, Meng Hao realized that the method of how to use the drum now existed in his mind.

When everyone on the outside saw what was happening, their eyes went wide with astonishment. Although they were completely envious and jealous, they didn't allow it to show on their faces.

The fearsomeness Meng Hao had just displayed was now indelibly branded onto their minds. The impression he had left was something that was deeply imprinted within them, and could never be wiped away.

Meng Hao quietly put away the violet-colored drum. Then he looked at the corpse, and once more clasped hands and bowed.

"Many thanks for your help, Fellow Daoist," he said. "I will not allow anything unworthy to occur to this object." As he spoke, a warm wind seemed to blow through the area. Meng Hao's hair lifted up, and it almost seemed like a murmuring voice could be heard within the wind.

Finally, he buried the corpse. He piled together a small grave mound, then waved his hand, causing a wooden plank to fly over. He used his finger to carve the wood, instantly transforming it into a grave marker which he pushed down deeply into the grave mound.

Here lies Yi Xuanzi.

"Fellow Daoist, I wish you a safe journey," he said quietly. Then he turned and began to walk toward the restrictive spell. He did not disturb anything else in the area, nor did he search it. He had entered this place because of Yi Xuanzi, and because of the memories. He had no other purpose than to bury his friend.

As Meng Hao neared, the restrictive spell flickered and the rift appeared again. After he walked out, the rift disappeared again. Everyone looked at

Meng Hao with odd expressions.

Deep in their hearts, they couldn't help but feel that Meng Hao was truly enigmatic.

Ignoring everyone else, Meng Hao continued to walk along. Suddenly, he stopped and looked back at Ji Xiaoxiao.

As soon as he looked at her, her heart trembled. Silently, she gritted her beautiful teeth, then turned to speak to the other Ji Clan members in hushed tones. Then, to the shock of all them, her body flashed as she moved to join Meng Hao.

Meng Hao laughed as he flew up into the air. Ji Xiaoxiao followed, and in the blink of an eye, the two of them disappeared off in the distance. Everyone left behind exchanged speechless glances. The intense impression left upon them by Meng Hao was deep and profound.

Meng Hao flew in the lead position and Ji Xiaoxiao followed. After disappearing off into the distance, where no one would be watching them, Meng Hao looked back and gave Ji Xiaoxiao an enigmatic smile.

He still remembered the scene from the river of stars, before coming to the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane, when he had been stuck up against her body.

Seeing his smile caused Ji Xiaoxiao to feel goosebumps. She quickly began to explain. "Ji Mingfeng's host body was a Conclave disciple from the First Peak. However, his body is not located at the First Peak, but rather, beneath the Third Peak."

"Lead the way," replied Meng Hao coolly. Actually, he didn't really care at all about Ji Mingfeng's corpse. He was merely using this method to thoroughly bind Ji Xiaoxiao to him.

In this way, he was essentially inserting a mole into the Ji Clan. If any mishaps occurred, Ji Xiaoxiao would not be able to escape unharmed. Because she was an actual member of the Clan, if she betrayed the Clan, the results would be even more miserable.

As for Ji Xiaoxiao, how could she not understand this? However, she had

little room to maneuver. Originally, she took her actions in the Second Plane to be a temporary stopgap that she could adjust in the Third Plane. But when she discovered how fearsomely powerful Meng Hao's Cultivation base was, she truly understood that... she had no way to fight back against him.

Therefore, since she couldn't fight back, there was no need to struggle.

They sped along together, Ji Xiaoxiao compliant, Meng Hao using his Divine Sense to avoid anyone else. Soon, they neared the Third Peak.

Although Ji Xiaoxiao didn't detect what Meng Hao was doing, she did notice that they didn't run into anybody whatsoever. As such, she could only assume it had something to do with Meng Hao, which of course filled her with even more dread.

As for Meng Hao, his brow was furrowed. As they moved along, he had actually sensed a total of six or seven others. All were alone, and all of them seemed to be moving in the same direction; they were headed toward a place somewhere between the Third and Fourth Peaks.

Meng Hao thought back to what Zhixiang had told him, about true spirit Night, and the pit between the Third and Fourth Peaks. That pit led to the entrance of the Fourth Plane.

His eyes glittered, and a cold smile appeared on his face.

"Considering that they aren't looking for any more good fortune in the Third Realm," he thought, "but are instead hurrying toward the Fourth Realm, it shows that they must have acquired quite a bit already.

"In that case, it's just about time for me to go make them live up to their agreement."

Up ahead, Ji Xiaoxiao stopped. "We're here," she said, looking back at Meng Hao. "This is the place. There are restrictive spells in place, so follow me."

Meng Hao suddenly lifted his right hand and flicked his finger. A red medicinal pill flew out at top speed to appear in front of Ji Xiaoxiao. Her face flickered.

There was still time for her to dodge out of the way, but when she saw the cold streak in Meng Hao's eyes, her heart seized. She did nothing to evade, instead allowing the medicinal pill to enter her mouth. As it dissolved, an acrid liquid spread out through her body.

"Let's go," said Meng Hao with a smile and a nod. He looked around at the ruins and the countless flickering restrictive spells.

Ji Xiaoxiao's face was extremely unsightly. She said nothing, but merely turned and proceeded forward. As she did, the curves of her body made a scene of soul-stirring beauty.

She proceeded on through a specific route for about the time it takes an incense stick to burn. Soon, a well appeared up ahead of Meng Hao. Shockingly, two corpses could be seen together at the bottom of the well.

One was Ji Mingfeng, the other was the host body.

A three-eyed crow was perched atop Ji Mingfeng's body. In almost the same instant in which Meng Hao looked down at the crow, the crow turned to look at him.

Ji Mingfeng also had two bags of holding. One was white, the other was black. Even as Meng Hao looked at the black bag of holding, Ji Xiaoxiao spoke up.

"The black bag of holding has Ji Mingfeng's collection of Demon beasts. As for that three-eyed crow, it long since gained sentience. When Ji Mingfeng was only three years old, it flew in from the outside, and accompanied him ever since.

"You got lucky in killing Ji Mingfeng. If we were in the outside world, even if you were of the Spirit Severing stage, it would still be very difficult. He... is actually the Nascent Soul stage Dao Child of the Ji Clan.

"He even had a Patriarch's brand on him, although sadly, it's faded since he died."

Meng Hao's eyes glittered. Suddenly, the crow flew up into the air, transforming into a black beam of light that shot toward Meng Hao.

Before Meng Hao could react, an excited voice could be heard coming from the copper mirror inside his bag of holding.

“Bitches! Lord Fifth is awake, little bitches! Hey, I see a lovely three-eyed concubine here!”

Chapter 610: Injured Lord Fifth

Apparently, the three-eyed crow knew the parrot....

Otherwise, it wouldn't have flown out in such an overbearing fashion, only to, upon hearing the voice of the parrot, begin shaking, the feathers on its body standing on end. Apparently something had gotten it quite worked up. It let out a miserable shriek, then suddenly turned around in mid-air and then fled in the opposite direction.

At the same time, the parrot flew out from inside of Meng Hao's bag of holding. It seemed to be in high spirits, as arrogant as ever to once again be on the scene.

Its eyes glittered with an excited glow as it raised its head up and squawked a few times. Then it shot forward toward the three-eyed crow.

"Long time no see! What are you running away for? If you keep running, Lord Fifth is going to screw you!!

"Beloved concubine, don't run away!" it continued excitedly, "Husband and wife for a day means mutual benefactors for endless days to come! Although we couldn't remain as husband and wife for a long time back then, that doesn't mean you need to flee! Every time I think of you, I can't help but wallow in my memories!"

The parrot seemed to be on the verge of overtaking the crow. Suddenly, though, tears appeared in the crow's eyes. It seemed ready to die rather than be violated. In this instant, it used some unknown magical technique to cause all of its black feathers to suddenly fall off of its body....

In the blink of an eye, there was no longer a black crow in front of Lord Fifth and Meng Hao. Instead, it was a... flesh-colored, completely bald bird.

The sight of the completely featherless bird was appalling and almost too horrible to look at.

However, the miserable shriek which rang through the air next did not come from the three-eyed crow, but rather the parrot. The bloodcurdling scream seemed to emanate from a deep, deep pain. The parrot stopped in

mid air, staring at the feathers that were fluttering down to the ground, and then let out another miserable cry.

“Wh-wh-wh... why did you do that!?!?” The parrot didn’t seem to be able to accept it. One breath of time before, the crow had been its true love, completely in line with his sense of beauty. The next breath, everything was turned completely around in a completely upsetting fashion.

Its entire body was shaking, even its nerves. What had happened just now was something too intensely upsetting.

Taking advantage of the parrot’s sudden loss of spirit, the three-eyed crow used some other method to disappear into mid-air. It vanished without a trace.

The parrot seemed on the verge of going insane. It raised its head up to the sky and let out a roar.

“DAMNATION! Lord Fifth will not let you off the hook!”

Meng Hao suddenly felt a bit of sympathy for the parrot, especially considering how it had just changed its use of bad words. Clearly, the parrot was not just a little bit upset at the moment.

A face suddenly appeared on the bell attached to the parrot’s foot. The meat jelly’s voice could be heard, filled with a bit of a wicked tone.

“Happy? According to Lord Third, that crow is actually quite honest and sincere. For example, what if it had used that move just now when you were in the middle of screwing it? What would you do then?”

Upon hearing this, Meng Hao could only stare blankly. The parrot trembled a few more times before a look of intense alarm appeared on its face.

Meng Hao had long since gotten used to the antics of the meat jelly and parrot. He had also put some thought into the matter of why the two of them hadn’t made an appearance in the First or Second Planes. He had assumed that there was something special about the Demon Immortal Sect that made it impossible for them to reveal themselves.

Based on the voice of the parrot just now, it seemed to Meng Hao that it

had just woken up. However, even after trying, he couldn't cause the mastiff to appear. Then he thought back to what Patriarch Huyan had said before, and realized that the origin of the meat jelly and the parrot really was unfathomable.

As for Ji Xiaoxiao, this was her first time seeing the parrot. Her eyes were wide, especially after she heard what the meat jelly said. Although she had always been a brazen person, she was still a young woman, and couldn't help but flush a bit and make a reprimanding "pei" sound.

Yet, she continued to look down on Lord Fifth....

The instant she made the "pei" sound, the parrot turned its head to stare at Ji Xiaoxiao. A deadly gleam appeared in its eyes, as if it desired to vent its frustration and pain on her.

Panting, it looked her over.

"No fur or feathers! Dammit! Absolutely no fur or feathers! Dear Heavens, why do you punish me this way!!" The parrot howled and then clenched its jaw. Even the mere thought of the crow shedding its feathers caused it to feel profound pain.

Although Ji Xiaoxiao didn't have the fur or feathers that the parrot liked, as far as she was concerned, the damnable things gaze was far too penetrating.

Meng Hao ignored the parrot. His right hand made a grasping motion, causing Ji Mingfeng's two bags of holding to fly up out from within the well and into his hands. He glanced them over, opting not to open them at the moment. Instead, he put them away.

Then, eyes glittering, he snatched the wailing parrot and ignoring whether it wanted to or not, shoved it back into his bag of holding. Then he looked at Ji Xiaoxiao.

"It's time for me to go collect some treasures," he said. "If you have nothing else to do, you can come with me. My destination just so happens to be the entrance to the Fourth Plane."

Ji Xiaoxiao hesitated for a moment, then nodded. She didn't seem to be

surprised at all to hear about the Fourth Plane, as if she had known about it all along.

As he gazed at her, Meng Hao thought about the resources of her Clan, and how information about the Fourth Plane wouldn't be hard to come by. The two of them left, Meng Hao taking the lead as they shot toward the pit, which lay between the Third and Fourth Peaks. It wasn't very far away. About two hours later, they arrived.

There were quite a few people already gathered together. There were a handful from the Ji Clan, one of whom was Ji Mingkong, who looked at Meng Hao with a strange glow in his eyes. Li Shiqi and Han Bei sat cross-legged not too far off, as did Wang Lihai. As soon as Meng Hao neared, their expressions flickered.

Meng Hao was all smiles as he waved to everyone in greeting.

"Hahaha! What a small world, huh! We meet again, Fellow Daoists. So, tell me, how did things go for you in the Third Plane? What did you acquire?" Behind him, Ji Xiaoxiao's cheek twitched a little as she realized that Meng Hao... was about to con some more people.

"Meng Hao offers his most sincere well wishes to all of you Fellow Daoists," he continued. "I hope that you can really profit well in the Third Plane. That way, I can also bask a bit in your glory, right? Thank you, Fellow Daoists. You are all truly good people." Meng Hao seemed a bit emotional and even somewhat embarrassed. A bashful expression appeared as he looked over the increasingly grim-faced crowd, then clasped hands and bowed.

As for the group from the Southern Domain, their eyes flickered. That was especially true of Han Bei. When she saw Meng Hao's smile, a tremor ran through her body and she quickly lowered her head.

She knew all too well what Meng Hao's smile meant. It must be stated that it was quite well known in the Southern Domain that Meng Hao had conned many people with that bashful grin....

Although Wang Lihai had never seen Meng Hao's bashful side, he had heard of his conman's personality. When he saw the smile, and Han Bei's

reaction, he instantly went on guard.

Li Shiqi put on a forced smile. She looked at Meng Hao but didn't say anything.

Song Jia was also there. She looked at Meng Hao with a complex expression. It didn't matter how Meng Hao smiled, to her, it was all the same.

As for the Dao Child from the Li Clan, Li Tiandao, he was the only Southern Domain Cultivator who didn't notice anything special about Meng Hao's smile. He frowned, and killing intent suddenly sprang up in his eyes.

In contrast, the members of the Ji Clan seemed to have received news about what happened earlier. Although all of them wore completely ordinary expressions, deep in their eyes, vigilance could be seen.

Meng Hao looked around at everyone, then suddenly seemed a bit discouraged. He was just thinking that it seemed his extortion attempt had failed when he noticed the look in the eye of the Li Clan Dao Child, Li Tiandao. Suddenly, he seemed a bit livened.

"Fellow Daoist," he said, "I don't think I recognize you." He quickly walked toward Li Tiandao, a smile on his face. "Tell me, did you acquire much in the Third Plane? Come, come, open your bag of holding so that Brother can select his share."

"Screw off!" said Li Tiandao coldly.

A moment ago, Meng Hao had worn a sincere smile and a bashful expression. A moment later, his face completely changed. The instant Li Tiandao spoke, a ruthless expression appeared on Meng Hao's face. His right palm instantly shot out toward Li Tiandao.

A cold light of derision flickered in Li Tiandao's eyes. His Cultivation base was extraordinary. If you looked at the Southern Domain as a whole, it didn't matter if you were talking about members of his current generation, or even Li Daoyi who had already passed away, Li Tiandao's Cultivation base was extraordinary. He gave a cold snort and then made a

grasping motion with his right hand. Instantly, a blade of white light appeared in his hand.

However, before he could even unleash the power of the blade, Meng Hao's palm, moving with indescribable speed, slapped onto his face, letting out a huge bang.

One slap sent Li Tiandao completely senseless. He was furious, and wanted to struggle back. However, his fate was the same as the Cultivator earlier from the Northern Reaches. Meng Hao directly slammed him down onto the ground.

Punches and kicks rained down onto him, the sound of which echoed out in every direction. Li Tiandao let out miserable shrieks. He tried to fight back, and even tried to wield his blade against Meng Hao. However, all it took was a slap from Meng Hao to cause the Heavenly blade to shatter into pieces.

The sudden violence caused the eyes of all the spectators to grow wide.

"You actually dare to cuss at me!" cried Meng Hao, emphasizing his words with kicks. "I was sincerely wishing you well, and you respond with curses!? Ridiculous!" His expression grew more vicious and intense, causing all the onlookers to grow increasingly shaky with fear.

Li Tiandao was livid, but gradually, that lividity was replaced by terror. Soon, it turned into despair. Blood spouted from his mouth as the shadow of death loomed over him.

Finally, Han Bei blinked, cleared her throat and offered up a quick reminder. That finally provoked a reaction from Li Tiandao who, despite feeling wronged to the extreme, shouted out that he would pay a higher price.

After the matter was resolved, Meng Hao once again smiled sincerely and then took two of the total of three magical items that Li Tiandao had acquired.

Furthermore... those two items were the very best of all of them. Even as Li Tiandao felt pain in his heart, Meng Hao clasped his shoulder, then

sighed and bashfully expressed his deep thanks.

After that, Meng Hao looked around at everyone else. Considering what had just happened to Li Tiandao, everyone else had no choice but to suppress their curses inwardly, open their bags of holding and produce the items that they had acquired. With their oaths in place, there was no way to go back on their words, and no way to hide things in violation of the agreement.

Despite their pain, they could only watch on in fear as Meng Hao carefully selected one incredible magic item after another.

“Wow, this looks amazing!

“Eee? It’s actually a scale shield! Excellent, excellent!

“This flower vase is incredible! With one glance you can tell it’s a precious treasure!

“Ooh, look at this clay figure! It’s missing an arm and a head, but I’ll just have to suck it up and take it. Yep.”

Meng Hao circled around, making acquisitions that would cause anyone to be shocked. Every person from whom he took treasures had faces filled with unsightly looks. If it weren’t for the fact that none of them felt capable of taking him on, they would surely attempt to attack him. The hatred they felt rose up to the Heavens, and their hearts dripped with blood.

To them, Meng Hao wasn’t just taking away magical items, but their most prized possessions....

Eventually he came to stand in front of Song Jia. He looked at the jade pendant she held out, as well as the complicated, cold look in her eyes. He stood there thoughtfully for a moment, then took out one of the magical items he had acquired and put it in her hand.

Song Jia frowned, and was about to say something when, all of a sudden, three prismatic beams of light whistled through the air toward them from off in the distance. The person in the lead position was none other than Fang Yu. Behind her were the two other men from the Fang Clan.

The two men wore excited expressions; clearly, whatever objects they had just acquired left them very happy.

Chapter 611: Fellow Daoists, Allow Me to Say Something

Meng Hao's eyes gleamed and he turned. With a smile, he clasped hands and bowed to the three incoming members of the Fang Clan. "Well, if it isn't the three Fellow Daoists from the Fang Clan. It seems these two Brothers can't quite cover up the joy in their faces. They definitely must have acquired quite a bit in the Third Plane...."

Fang Yu's face was a bit unsightly as she stared angrily at Meng Hao. The way he looked right now caused her fury to flare up.

"No, we didn't!" she said, glaring at him.

"Oh, that's not good," replied Meng Hao with a wink.

"It doesn't even count as not good!" said Fang Yu, clenching her teeth, an uncompromising expression appearing on her face. "Look at you, you acquired all kinds of things, but big sis put everything on the line and only got two items! You still want to take advantage of me?"

"Okay, how about this...." said Meng Hao, looking a bit embarrassed. However, before he could finish speaking, one of the two men from the Fang Clan who stood behind Fang Yu suddenly let out a cold laugh.

"We try to give you face, but you insist on acting shamelessly, huh? You think this is still the Second Plane? Screw off posthaste, you little bastard! Otherwise, you won't be leaving the Third Plane alive!"

The other Fang Clan member stepped forward, an expression of scorn and disdain on his face as he said, "You really don't know your own limitations. Don't you know that even the Ji Clan would think twice before trying to steal away the things acquired here by the Fang Clan? As for you... well, take out half of everything on your person and hand it over. Otherwise...."

As the two men spoke, Meng Hao's gaze came to be fixed upon them.

However, before he could even get angry, Fang Yu's face filled with fury.

She spun to face the two fellow Clan members.

“You want him to screw off?” she said. Clenching her teeth, she vanished, to reappear directly next to one of the Fang Clan members. Suddenly, her fist descended.

Before the Fang Clan member could even say anything, a boom could be heard, and he tumbled backward, blood spraying from his mouth as he looked at Fang Yu in astonishment.

“Fang Yu, what are you doing!?!?”

“Shameless you say!?” she cried, fires of rage burning in her eyes. As of this moment, she truly looked like an explosive dragon. Her body flickered as she neared the man again. He was shaking, and was about to fight back when another boom echoed out and he was sent flying.

“You dare to threaten him!? You say he won’t leave the Third Plane alive?! Well then... I’ll make sure YOU don’t leave the Third Plane alive!” Killing intent flickered in Fang Yu’s eyes. Before the Fang Clan member even landed on the ground, she once again vanished to reappear directly next to him. Her fist smashed out again. This was no perfunctory blow, but rather, contained all of her explosive power.

A boom could be heard that rattled Heaven and Earth. Everyone watched on in shock as the blood sprayed from the mouth of the Fang Clan member, and then his entire body exploded into bloody pieces. His Nascent Soul emerged, fleeing and screaming at the same time.

“Fang Yu, you dare to slaughter a fellow Clan member!? You’re dead! You actually dare to kill me over an outsider!?!?”

“So what if I kill you?” said Fang Yu with a cold snort. She performed an incantation gesture, then waved her right hand. Instantly, an enormous square cauldron magically appeared. It instantly shot toward the fleeing Nascent Soul of the Fang Clan Cultivator. When they slammed together, a miserable shriek could be heard, and the Nascent Soul shattered.

At the same time, the man’s bag of holding flew out to be snatched by Fang Yu. She quickly erased the brand mark on it, and then tossed it over

to Meng Hao.

The scene which had just played out in front of everyone left them completely shaken. That was especially true of the Ji Clan, whose eyes were wide and filled with disbelief. Killing a fellow Clan member was a high crime in any Clan!

They truly couldn't understand why Fang Yu would respond so viciously to the handful of words that had just been spoken.

Fang Yu turned and looked at the other Fang Clan member.

The man trembled and took a few steps back. His heart pounded with nervousness and vigilance as he quickly said, "Elder Sister Fang Yu, this was all just a misunderstanding. I...."

"You said he doesn't know his own limitations?" she said, her eyes flickering with killing intent. The Fang Clan Cultivator's scalp was numb as he fell back nervously. Before he could get more than a few steps, Fang Yu was upon him, and her fist descended.

A boom could be heard; blood sprayed from the man's mouth as he fell back.

"Elder Sister Fang Yu, I was in the wrong. Really, it was my mistake!!"

"Didn't you tell him to take out half of his belongings and hand them over?" she said coldly. She performed an incantation with her right hand, causing the illusory square cauldron to fly toward the man. Under the incredible pressure, the Fang Clan Cultivator's face fell. Even as he shot backward, he pulled out his bag of holding and threw it to Meng Hao.

"Elder Brother Meng, allow me to atone for my crime. Junior Brother admits his mistake!!"

Meng Hao grabbed the bag of holding with a frown. It was impossible to tell exactly what he was thinking.

"You're clever," said Fang Yu. "Therefore, you can avoid the death penalty. But that doesn't mean you're... exempt from punishment!" She glared at the Fang Clan Cultivator as the square cauldron descended. A

boom could be heard as blood poured from the man's mouth. He staggered backward, his face pale. Although he didn't fear for his life now, he was still scared witless. He immediately clasped hands and bowed to Fang Yu.

Meng Hao gathered up the two bags of holding, then looked over at Fang Yu. She looked back at him.

"What was that for?" he asked.

"None of your concern," replied Fang Yu. With a frown, she gritted her teeth and continued, "In any case, my things are mine, and I'm not going to give them to you. There's no use in even thinking about it. It's not gonna happen!"

Meng Hao looked at her deeply for a moment, but didn't speak again about the matter. Everyone around were lost in various thoughts, and didn't speak.

It was in this moment that the deep pit they stood next to suddenly emitted a shocking rumbling sound. It almost sounded as if something deep inside was roaring. The ground shook, and the countless vine-like objects that surrounded the area began to twitch and writhe in bizarre fashion.

The vines grew thicker and longer as they surrounded the area, looking almost like snakes. The Demonic Qi from the surrounding area surged in toward the pit, transforming into an enormous pillar of light that towered up into the sky.

As of this moment, the enormous pillar of light was visible from any position within the First Heaven of the Demon Immortal Sect. It was like a summons that echoed out in the hearts and minds of all the South Heaven Cultivators.

A message resounded out to everyone. It clearly told them... that the way to the Fourth Plane was now open!

The possibility now existed to enter the Fourth Plane!

Meng Hao's mind trembled, and the Cultivators around him began to

pant. Their eyes flickered, and yet, no one wanted to be the first one to make an attempt. Everyone stood watching, not willing to act rashly.

Time passed, and more people began to arrive, attracted by the column of light. Of course, not a one could evade Meng Hao's extortion. Eventually Xu Qing arrived, which meant that the area was now filled with the majority of the Cultivators who were here in the Third Plane.

Their gazes flickered as they looked thoughtfully around at each other.

The first person to make a move was an unimposing, emaciated old man from the Southern Domain. He flew out to stand on one of the vines. After grasping ahold of it, he looked back at the crowd of onlookers and then smiled. Then he produced a magical item, a fan, which he pushed up against the surface of the vine.

Instantly, a green glow surrounded the fan, and it began to disintegrate. It transformed into dots of scintillating light, which then were absorbed into the vine. At the same time, the vine began to grow longer. It extended down into the pit, taking the old man with it.

Fang Yu looked over at Meng Hao and then spoke, her words directed not just at him, but at everyone around. "According to the Fang Clan's understanding, one needs magical items to be able to enter the Fourth Plane. Magical items from the outside world aren't quite as effective as items acquired in the Demon Immortal Sect. Offer them as sacrifices to the Demon vines, and, depending on their value, the vines will extend down.

"If you leave the vine and try to descend on your own, you will die without a doubt!"

With that, Fang Yu's body flashed, and she neared a vine. In much the same way as the old man moments before, she produced a magical item which she pushed up against the vine. The vine began to grow, extending down into the pit.

One by one, more people began to fly forward. The Ji Clan members, the Northern Reaches Cultivators, the group from the Southern Domain. One after another, they stepped onto the vines, produced treasures, and then

sank down into the pit. As all of this happened, Meng Hao cleared his throat. Looking embarrassed and a bit bashful, he began to speak.

“Fellow Daoists, allow me to say something. Considering that you need to offer continual sacrifices to the vines, I must say that I actually have quite a few magical items. However, if I loan them out, if you take one, you’ll have to repay me with two. I’m honest with all customers. It’s a reasonable price.

“Now, who’s to say what incredible acquisitions you will make in the Fourth Plane?” he continued. “Therefore, before going in, you should really think about this. Buy one, repay with two is definitely reasonable!” As soon as the others heard him, grim expressions could be seen on their faces.

“Buy one, repay with two is reasonable?”

“I’ve never seen extortion of this level!!”

“What a joke! Even if I have to give up half-way to the Fourth Plane, I swear I will never again get entangled with this black-hearted Meng!”

Glaring hatefully at Meng Hao, they completely ignored his offer and quickly grabbed onto the vines and then sank down into the pit.

Xu Qing stood next to Meng Hao, covering her smile with a hand. She remembered all of the things Meng Hao had done back in the Reliance Sect, and as she looked at him now, her smile only grew sweeter.

“They’re going to be sorry,” said Meng Hao, clearing his throat a few times. “I really did have good intentions just now.” He looked blinking at Xu Qing, and her smile grew wider. Shaking her head, she flew over to grab a vine, then sank down into the pit.

Meng Hao wasn’t the last person on the outside. Some of the people chose not to attempt to enter the Fourth Plane. Some decided to just give up where they were.

Seeing that no one else was going to enter the pit, Meng Hao walked around the edge of it, eventually decided on a position somewhat in the center. He reached out to grab a vine, then produced a magical item which he slowly pushed onto its surface. As it absorbed the item, the vine began

to grow, taking him down at high speed into the pitch black of the pit.

As soon as he entered the pit, Meng Hao could sense coldness coming from all around him. At the same time, he saw that it was not completely pitch black. Glittering dots of glowing light could be seen in the walls, making everything in the area visible.

Around Meng Hao could be seen dozens of vines sinking downward, upon each one was a South Heaven Cultivator.

Far down below was completely pitch black, and it was impossible to see. Occasionally, a roaring sound could be heard, shooting up from down below like a wild wind. When that happened, everyone held tightly to their vines to stabilize their shaking bodies.

Chapter 612: The Gentleman Loves Money

A wind blew, as cold as the underworld. As it passed by, everyone's hearts grew as cold as if they were stuck in the middle of winter. Even more shocking was that the frigid wind made the Cultivators almost like mortals. Everyone began to tremble as they clung to their vines.

Their breath turned into ice, which then cracked and shattered, causing everyone to feel extremely astonished.

Were it not for the vines, and the warmth which pulsed out from within them into the bodies of everyone present, then they wouldn't be able to proceed downward for very long, not even if they had higher Cultivation bases.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he clutched the vine. He had long since come to the conclusion that these vines were a critical element in being able to reach the Fourth Plane. Many others had come to the same conclusion.

Although not everyone had chosen to attempt to enter the Fourth Plane, everyone who had come to the Primordial Demon Immortal Plane were outstanding figures from the lands of South Heaven. As for those who did chose to enter the Fourth Plane, they definitely wouldn't just give up halfway.

As they produced more and more treasures to sacrifice to the vines, the vines twisted and writhed, extending downward at high speed.

Time passed by slowly. Meng Hao was the last in line. As he descended he glanced around to inspect the area. As far as he could tell, the pit seemed bottomless. It was impossible to tell how far they had gone down, and yet they still couldn't see any end in sight. The frigid wind grew more intense, seemingly increasing the number of treasures required by the vines.

Not too far off from Meng Hao was Li Tiandao. His face was gradually filling with apprehension. Although he had come prepared with a good supply of magical items, he was finding it difficult to keep up with how

much needed to be sacrificed. By this point, it didn't seem to matter the quality of the magical items being sacrificed. Almost anything would do.

Even still, the miscellaneous collection of magical items in Li Tiandao's bag of holding were not very plentiful. If things kept going with no bottom in sight, then he would soon have to begin sacrificing important magical items.

To him, it was something impossible to accept. He frowned and gritted his teeth, a look of determination gleaming in his eyes. He suddenly stopped, apparently preparing himself to start climbing back up. It seemed he planned to give up on his attempt to enter the Fourth Plane.

However, almost as soon as he began to climb up, before he had even gone more than a meter or so, his face flickered. The frigid wind around him suddenly grew ten times as powerful. His hair and his eyebrows became snow-white in the blink of an eye. Ice crystals even formed on his skin; clearly he was on the verge of being transformed into an ice statue.

The intense sense of grave crisis he felt caused Li Tiandao to immediately pull out one of his important magical treasures. It was a glowing blue sword that somewhat resembled a saber. A single glance was enough to tell that this was anything but an ordinary treasure.

Forcing down the pain he felt, Li Tiandao placed the sword onto the vine, whereupon it sank down inside. The coldness around Li Tiandao vanished and his body slowly returned to normal. However, his expression was one of astonishment.

"We're only allowed to go down, not up?" he grumbled inwardly. "Or is it that going back up requires an even higher price?" Everyone around was aware of the strange event which had just occurred, and were shocked. They all began to think various thoughts.

It was at this point that Li Tiandao saw that his own vine was no longer moving down but retracting back upward.

This provoked a reaction from the others.

"That can't be right. It's not that you can't go up. Once you enter this

place, even if you want to quit, you still have to sacrifice treasures!”

“That must be the situation. It seems getting into the Fourth Plane isn’t so easy after all....”

Meng Hao had the best view of the situation. His eyes flickered thoughtfully, and he rubbed his bag of holding. Suddenly, a bashful smile appeared on his face. He said nothing, but simply allowed his vine to slowly continue on downward.

Li Tiandao hesitated thoughtfully for a moment. Right now, he had two options to pick from. Go up, or go down. Either way, he would have to spend all of his magical items.

After a moment of hesitation, Li Tiandao clenched his jaw.

“Since I have to waste the magical items, I might as well risk it all,” he thought. “If I don’t, then everything I already spent will have been a complete waste. However, if I succeed, I can make up for everything with gains in the Fourth Plane!”

Many of the other Cultivators were thinking the same thing as Li Tiandao. They clenched their jaws, eyes shining with determination. To them it was a gamble; however, if they gave up now, then they would definitely end up with nothing. By holding on for a bit longer, they would at least have a chance... to make up for what they had already spent.

Since that was the case, there was no reason not to gamble!

Time passed. A day later, the group was deep into the pit. However, they still couldn’t see the bottom. It really seemed as if there was no end at all. By this point, quite a few of their number had already used up their supply of random magical items. If they wanted to continue, then they would either have to use up the magical items they had discovered in the Demon Immortal Sect, or draw on their own store of important personal magical items.

The dilemma they faced caused the faces of quite a few of the Cultivators to look extremely unsightly. Before stepping foot into this place, all of them had believed themselves to be extremely well equipped

with magical items. Now, though, they realized that they simply didn't have enough.

Compared to them, Meng Hao really did have it very easy. He had vast amounts of magical items in his bag of holding. He casually produced treasures to sacrifice to the vines. Not only did they continue to move downward, Meng Hao actually caused his vine to change course occasionally to hand over magical items to Xu Qing.

This caused the eyes of everyone else present to burn with anger and extreme jealousy.

"Ai, I just have too many treasures," said Meng Hao with a sigh. The sound of his voice echoed around, causing everyone's gums to itch with hatred.

"Fellow Daoists," he then announced, "if any of you are running low on treasures, all you have to do is speak up. We're all in this together, through thick and thin. No matter what happens, I won't ignore your plight while I am in a good position.

"If you need to borrow some magical items, I'll lend them to you without hesitation!

"Don't worry, my prices are reasonable, and I'm honest with all customers. Buy one, pay back three!" His voice echoed about loudly within in the pit. Everyone could hear, even the old man in the lead position. Their faces immediately twisted.

Fang Yu looked back with glaring eyes, and yet a smile could be seen on her face.

As for the Ji Clan members, their faces were unsightly. If they had such reactions, then there was no need to mention everyone else. When the crowds heard Meng Hao, their hearts filled with both hatred and helplessness.

"You crafty, shameless villain!" someone said. "Even if our magical items run even lower than now, there's no way we'll ask for your help!"

"That's right!" said someone else. "Outside, it was buy one pay back two,

now it's buy one pay back three?! Raising prices like that is despicable to the extreme!"

"I'll die before asking for your help!"

Meng Hao heard the furious reactions, and simply sighed. "You're all wrong," he said. "Each and every one of these magical items represents an important memory to me. I'm offering to lend you, not my magical items, but rather, the true love of my life." He let out another emotional sigh.

"In all honesty," he continued, "my intentions truly are good. Look at these magical items of mine! Their glow is so resplendent and entrancing! These are high quality products!

"Think about it, all of you. With some of my magical items, you can get into the Fourth Plane without a hitch! Once you're there, you can acquire things so valuable that you can pay back what you owe me in the blink of an eye.

"It's completely worth it!

"Brothers and Sisters, you have to look at things objectively. The price you will be paying now is nothing. The most important thing is to look at what you have to gain! Without paying a price, how can you gain anything, am I right?" Meng Hao was using all his skills to try to persuade everyone. These, of course, were the same skills he had used in his shop back in the Reliance Sect. However, those who heard only continued to get more angry.

Xu Qing was off to the side, covering her smile with a hand. The gaze with which she looked at Meng Hao continued to grow warmer and warmer.

"Fellow Daoists, how can this tiny price possibly compare to the chance to step into the Fourth Plane?" Meng Hao's final sentence was full of meaning. His words echoed about, filled with an air of good faith. Many of the various Cultivators were actually moved inwardly, and they suddenly felt conflicted.

Li Tiandao gritted his teeth. He currently only had four magical items

left, and to sacrifice any of them would cause him incredible pain. His expression filled with determination and he said, "I'll take three!!"

Hearing this, Meng Hao's expression shook visibly. He immediately pulled out a magical item and placed onto the surface of his own vine, causing it to change directions and head toward Li Tiandao.

"Elder Brother Li, you are truly experienced and knowledgeable, talented and bold. Alright, listen. This is my first transaction of the day, so I'll give you a bit of a discount. I'll give you these three magical items, and you only need to pay me back with eight.

"These three magical items have a value of 30,000 Spirit Stones. In that case, you need to pay me back 80,000 Spirit Stones." With that, he produced three ordinary-looking random magical items, as well as a written pledge. Then he used the same method he had used in the Second Plane, the Dao oath.

Li Tiandao gritted his teeth. After completing the formalities, he took the three treasures and then pressed one onto the surface of the vine. Instantly, it descended downward at rapid speed, alleviating his anxiety for the moment.

"Did you see that, everyone?" said Meng Hao, setting his head nobly. "Meng Hao is a gentleman. The gentleman loves money, and earns it righteously. I'm not forcing anybody, and am even willing to sell things on credit! That's right! You don't need to pay me back now. A simple written pledge can solve all your problems.

"You can simply pay me back after we leave this place. What a great deal!"

Everyone around couldn't help but think that Meng Hao truly had reached the pinnacle of shamelessness. More time passed, over half a day. There was still no bottom in sight. By this time, Li Tiandao owed Meng Hao more than 400,000. It was at that point that... Wang Lihai couldn't hold back from calling out.

"Give me ten!"

"I'll take ten too!" said Li Shiqi, gritting her beautiful teeth.

"Ten for me too!" said Han Bei with a sigh.

Meng Hao immediately looked quite enlivened. He adroitly produced the magical items and written pledges, watched as the three swore their Dao oath, then smilingly handed over the magical items.

"When you purchase from me, you can rest your heart at ease. The quality of all products is guaranteed, and I deliver everything directly to you!"

The three collected up the magical items they had purchased and then completely ignored Meng Hao. They began to feed the items into the vines and descend down further.

Another day passed. Soon more people began to run out of treasures. Either that, or they weren't willing to sacrifice the treasures they still possessed. No matter how much they hated Meng Hao, they had no choice but to call out to him.

"Buy one, pay back five! Fellow Daoists, I'm starting to run low on magical items, so I have no choice but to raise the price.... Furthermore, I have to announce that when I am down to only ten magical items, then I will have no other choice than to begin an unprecedented, never before seen in history, never again to be repeated... auction!" Although Meng Hao sighed, his eyes actually shone with a brilliant light.

As soon as the words left his mouth, it gave rise to furious complaints. Despite the anger, people gritted their teeth and spent the price of one to five to acquire large amounts of magical items.

"What a profit!" thought Meng Hao. "Hahaha! I never thought that the ancient Demon Immortal Sect would turn out to be my Blessed Land!" He hung onto his vine, clutching a thick stack of written pledges. When he looked at the numbers written on them, his eyes glowed brightly. His addiction to making money existed deep in his bones, and had not been reduced in the slightest, regardless of his advances in Cultivation base.

"I'm rich!"

Chapter 613: Fourth Plane!

“Hopefully this pit goes even deeper,” thought Meng Hao, his eyes shining. “The best would be if we keep going for about nine or ten days.” His bag of holding didn’t have much else in it other than the vast, random assortment of magical items.

Many of them were things completely useless as far as Meng Hao was concerned. There were even treasures he had acquired when he was in the Qi Condensation stage, but hadn’t discarded even down to this day. He had kept them because... he just couldn’t bear to part with them.

Back in those days, when he was young, he had been completely impoverished, unwilling to even part with a single Spirit Stone. These magical items were each worth dozens of Spirit Stones, so how could he possibly have simply discarded them?

He had always been searching for a way to dispose of them. However, the Black Lands and the Western Desert were both poor and barren places. Therefore, such items had accumulated there within his bag of holding.

If an outsider could glimpse the inside of his bag of holding, they would be completely shocked. The inside was completely chaotic, filled with anything and everything. After all... these were all of Meng Hao’s belongings. Every time he ran out of Spirit Stones, he could still look inside the bag of holding and feel a little bit of contentment.

The opportunity he had now was something completely rare, and had him thoroughly excited. One Cultivator after another gritted their teeth and then called out to purchase magical items, and Meng Hao rushed to peddle them.

Meng Hao wasn’t worried that they would refuse to acknowledge their written pledges. These people were all Dao Children and Chosen of great Clans and Sects. They didn’t lack Spirit Stones, plus, there was a Dao oath in place. They wouldn’t dare to not pay him back.

Next to Meng Hao was one of the Northern Reaches Cultivators. His

eyes were bright red as he glared at Meng Hao, clutching a small, glittering sword in his hand. His voice filled with madness, he cried, “Dammit! Meng Hao!! This is a Qi Condensation magical item! You, you, you... you actually charged me 10,000 Spirit Stones for this! I wouldn’t pay ten Spirit Stones for this thing! You’re such a swindler!”

“Yeah, look at this! This is a magical item for a Foundation Establishment Cultivator. You charged me 20,000 Spirit Stones, and I have to pay back 100,000!”

“Look at this fan! What the hell! It’s broken! It might be a Core Formation magical item, but... you charged me 50,000 for this piece of crap!? Why don’t you just outright rob me!”

In response to the ire of the crowd, Meng Hao blinked.

“These things might be trash to you people,” he said coldly, “but I worked hard to collect them! I often went without food and water just to collect together these possessions!

“If you don’t want them, then you can return them. Then, you’ll go onto my list of unwelcome customers!”

The others were fuming with anger, but they could only gnash their teeth and eventually let out long sighs. Then they angrily shoved the magical items onto the surface of the vines, causing them to sink down further.

Eventually, even the Ji Clan members began to call out to Meng Hao. Soon, there were few within the crowd that didn’t owe Meng Hao huge amounts of Spirit Stones. As everyone proceeded on, they looked at Meng Hao with eyes that desired to cry but contained no tears.

They proceeded on impatiently for another day. Eventually, far down below, they caught sight of a glow of light. Finally, they glimpsed the bottom of the pit.

In that instant, those who owed Meng Hao vast quantities of Spirit Stones began to weep with excitement. Meng Hao was the only one who let out sighs of regret.

“How can this pit be so shallow?” he mused with a frown. “If only it were a bit deeper. I never got to start my auction.” He watched as everyone around him excitedly followed along with the vines as they continued on toward the bottom. It didn’t take very long for them to reach the end of the pit.

The bottom of the pit was actually far larger than anyone could have imagined. It seemed that the pit was actually a tunnel, beyond which was an enormous world!

The world seemed to have no end. Even Divine Sense was incapable of finding any borders to it. After everyone reached the bottom and stood there, their minds trembled.

Meng Hao’s pupils constricted, and he began to pant. Next to him, Xu Qing arrived, and her mind reeled.

Nobody spoke. Complete silence reigned. Everyone was completely and thoroughly astonished by what they saw.

A continent stretched out in all directions, sleek and smooth. Its surface was like that of a mirror, which was the source of the light that everyone had seen earlier.

If the continent could be described as a mirror, then the group from South Heaven could be described as standing outside of that mirror. Furthermore, when they looked at the mirror, what they saw was not their own reflection, but rather... an ancient battlefield!

Shockingly, an ancient world existed inside of the mirror. It was impossible to say whether or not it was an ancient world that existed before the time period of the Second Plane, or after. In any case, the group was now staring at boundless, majestic battlefield.

Countless Cultivators could be seen on the battlefield, all engaged in mutual slaughter. Heaven and Earth were filled with riotous colors, and booming echoed out through the sky. Cracks spread out through the land, and the fearsome glow of magical shields covered everything.

In the sky were innumerable war chariots flying about, as well as

armored Cultivators who fought each other feverishly. Off in the distance, several gigantic dragons could be seen, as well as countless Demon beasts, hunkered into various positions throughout the land.

Many things could be seen.

A person could be seen waving a hand. A huge chunk of the earth collapsed, and then an enormous land mass flew out. It turned into a shooting star which smashed out into the air.

A person could be seen punching. Stars collapsed, and countless flames burned the world.

A person could be seen surrounded by millions of magical items. They formed a tempest that caused blood to splash about wherever it went. The tempest itself was the color of blood!

A person could be seen flashing an incantation gesture. A finger was pointed up into the sky, and countless characters appeared, glowing with a golden light. They formed together to into various ancient characters that radiated a shocking aura which led to endless slaughter.

A person could be seen holding tight to an evil spirit. The spirit's body was three thousand meters long, and had countless faces that appeared and disappeared, howling and glancing around with disdain.

This was... a great battle between two different parties!

One side was made up of Cultivators. Countless, innumerable Cultivators, each one capable of employing destructive divine abilities, of summoning Dharmic incarnations, and endless magical items that could shake the Heavens.

The other side was made of up of Demons. These were bizarre Greater Demons of Heaven and Earth, surrounded by sundered winds that rose up into the sky, creating a storm of blackness wherever they went....

Further off in the distance was, shockingly... an enormous coffin. The coffin appeared to have fallen down from the Heavens. Brilliant, multi-colored light swirled around it, within which was something astonishing. Nine butterflies could be seen floating about!

Countless figures could be seen in the area around the coffin. Incredible slaughter was being carried out, as if neither side was willing to allow the other to step even half a pace closer to the coffin!

The coffin was the main cause of the combat on the battlefield. All of the fighting and mad slaughter was because... that coffin needed to be seized!!

All of the South Heaven Cultivators, including Meng Hao, were floating up in mid-air, looking down blankly at the lands within the mirror. They looked down at the shocking battle, and the figures who could topple mountains and invert seas with the wave of a hand, who could crush stars and grab moons with their divine abilities. The hearts of the South Heaven Cultivators filled with shock.

There were three people on the battlefield who, no matter how grand the scale of the battle was, no matter how intense the slaughter, could not be eclipsed. The gaze of anyone who looked down at the battle would instantly be drawn to these three figures.

It was as if... they were the most powerful sovereigns of the battle. They were like venerated suns that everyone had to look up to!

One of them was a Cultivator wearing a Daoist robe, with a full head of white hair. His features were ancient, and when he lifted up his hands two rotating pearls could be seen, one of which was black, the other of which was white!

Behind the man was an illusory starry sky that he had apparently magically summoned. He stood in the middle of the sky, alone, capable of striking fear into the hearts of any within the Demon Tribes.

The second figure was within the Demon Tribes. It was a Greater Demon who looked like a winged bat. Its eyes were bright red, and seven globes of flame rotated around it. Each of the globes of flame was a different color, and, shockingly... a wooden sword could be seen inside of each one!

The Demon was surrounded by an astonishing aura. As it stood there, it seemed capable of making the Earth, the Heavens, and all life therein,

prostrate in worship!

Meng Hao was unsure of the level of Cultivation base of these two, but his breathing was unprecedentedly ragged. He wasn't sure if he was perceiving things incorrectly or not, but when he saw the old Cultivator and the black and white pearls in his hands, he suddenly thought of something.

In his mind, he saw an image from back in the State of Zhao. He saw... the pearl in the hand of Little Tiger! 1

Little Tiger's pearl, and the white pearl in the old man's hand, looked... completely the same! The sensation that Meng Hao got when he looked at the pearl held by the old man... led him to believe that they were definitely one and the same!

Furthermore, the man-shaped bat looked very similar to the Demon that he had fought so long ago. Even more relevant were the wooden swords inside the seven globes of flame that surrounded it. When Meng Hao saw them, his mind shook. Those swords were clearly... the same as his Immortal Murdering Swords!

Right now he had five such swords, four originals and one copy!

What gave Meng Hao even more cause to pant was the third figure within the world of the mirror. That person caused his mind to reel and fill with a roaring sound.

That person... was a homely-looking middle-aged man. He wore a white robe, and his long hair was half black and half white. He did not emit any aura of a Cultivation base, but rather floated there in mid-air, looking almost like he was sealed. The air around him was completely calm and still.

When the Demon Tribes saw him, they trembled, and their Demonic Qi was thrown into chaos, as if it was completely out of control.

When the Cultivators saw him, their eyes filled with reverence. It was almost as if as soon as they looked at him, an intense pressure bore down on them, causing their Cultivation bases to decline!

He was not a member of either side in this battle. He floated there in mid-air, making it seem as if the battlefield were split into three parts, with him being one third!

Within the man's hand was a long, silver spear that appeared to be covered with overlapping scales. The spear was not completely silver; occasionally the scales would turn black.

As soon as Meng Hao caught sight of the spear, a voice immediately echoed out in his mind.

“Demon Weapon... Lonelytomb!!” 2

Although Lonelytomb's Devil Construct was on the verge of dissipating completely, Meng Hao still had it. It emanated a buzzing sound, like an intense summoning.

In that instant, Meng Hao suddenly realized who that middle-aged man was floating there in mid-air. Staring fixedly at him, Meng Hao thought, “Third Generation... Demon Sealer!!”

*

1. “Little Tiger” Dong Hu was one of the group of four who joined the Reliance Sect at the same time. Meng Hao encountered him again in chapter 71, where he had the pearl. During Meng Hao's fight with Shangguan Xiu in chapter 75, Little Tiger loaned him the pearl, which allowed Meng Hao to temporarily break into the tenth level of Qi Condensation. Meng Hao returned the pearl to him in chapter 76. You might also be able to deduce that the pearl was even alluded to vaguely in chapter 19.
2. Demon Weapon Lonelytomb was introduced in chapter 497.

Chapter 614: Seal

It was in this moment that Meng Hao suddenly realized that the copper mirror in his bag of holding—the same copper mirror that had been with him since the Reliance Sect, that precious treasure which had provided him with such incredible help over the years—had begun vibrating.

The vibrating was not like what had happened in the presence of furred or feathered creatures. This vibration was intense, and seemed to encompass the entire mirror, starting from within.

Meng Hao was shocked, but his expression didn't change. His gaze flashed as he looked at Demon Weapon Lonelytomb.

The first time he encountered Demon Weapon Lonelytomb, he had received the Devil Construct, incarnated into the Devil Spear. He had also learned how the real Demon Weapon Lonelytomb was sealed within an ancient battlefield.

Meng Hao also knew that the ancient battlefield had something to do with the Demon Immortal Sect. Once inside the Demon Immortal Sect, he should have been able to use the reaction of the Devil Construct to locate Lonelytomb!

However, throughout all his experiences in the First, Second and Third Plane, he hadn't been able to find even the slightest trail to follow. And yet here... in the lands of the Fourth Plane... he finally had a trail!

The white-robed man with the black and white hair was none other than... the Third Generation Demon Sealer! And the spear in his hand was none other than... Demon Weapon Lonelytomb!

One man, one spear, hovering in mid-air, splitting everything under Heaven into three parts!

His energy shook the Demon Tribes and leveled immense pressure onto the Cultivators. It was as if in Heaven and Earth, although he might not be the ultimate supremacy, he was still esteemed and respected to the utmost degree.

Meng Hao's mind trembled as he looked at the Third Generation Demon Sealer, and he began to breathe heavily. This truly was... a Demon Sealer!

When he saw the Third Generation Demon Sealer's energy, Meng Hao suddenly felt intense anticipation regarding his own path as the Ninth Generation Demon Sealer. He suddenly wished to one day be able to hover in mid-air and split everything under Heaven!

Everything that was happening inside the mirror continent filled Meng Hao with shock, and also astonished all of the Cultivators from South Heaven, who were all breathing heavily. It was at this point that the eyes of the emaciated old man flickered. This was none other than the old man who had been first to enter the passageway from the Third Plane. He performed a minor teleportation as he headed toward the mirror below.

The movement immediately attracted the attention of the others. Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he watched him.

The emaciated old man moved with incredible speed. In the blink of an eye, he was standing on the surface of the mirror that made up this huge continent. Then he began to move forward. It almost looked as if he were about to enter the ancient battlefield. However, he actually was only moving across the surface of the mirror.

He abruptly came to a stop after a few breaths of time. He pushed his hand down onto the surface of the mirror, which seemed to stimulate it, causing distortions to appear. Suddenly, a middle-aged man appeared across from the old man, except within the ancient world. He wore a suit of battle armor, and when he lifted up his hand, a fireball appeared, within which could be seen a crimson bird.

Originally, everything visible existed only within the mirror. However, due to the stimulation provided by the old man, and some other unknown reasons, the crimson bird suddenly flew out from inside the mirror.

It seemed to have broken through some sort of seal to fly out from inside the mirror and then appear on the outside!

It was currently shrinking in size, and its flames were growing dim. It looked quite different than it had inside the mirror. And yet, as soon as it

appeared on the outside, it emanated a powerful aura!

It wasn't just the flame bird that appeared. Shockingly, a moment later, four beams of light shot out through the distortions. Within these beams of light could be seen two swords, a fan, and a loom shuttle.

The four items flew out explosively just behind the flame bird. As for the old man, he laughed and flew into the air, waving his sleeve toward the flame bird to capture it.

Everyone was shocked at what was happening, and yet, they didn't hesitate. In the blink of an eye, dozens of people flew up into the air toward the four beams of light and the magical items within.

Meng Hao moved the quickest. Even as the old man was subduing the flame bird, Meng Hao passed everyone to lay hands on the green-colored loom shuttle.

It was shaped like an awl, and glittered with blinding light. The coldness which emanated off it was oppressive. As soon as Meng Hao touched it, he felt as if his body was filled with winter. Eyes glittering, he entered the Second Anima and held tightly to the loom shuttle.

His body flickered and he stretched out his left hand. A gale force wind screamed out, causing the Ji Clan members and Northern Desert Cultivators who were pursuing the fan to be sent tumbling backward. Even as they came to a stop, Meng Hao closed in and swept his arm to snatch the fan.

The moment he touched it, an indescribable heat exploded out within him. Meng Hao gave a cold snort and, without hesitation, entered the Fifth Anima!

His powerful fleshly body and shocking Cultivation base instantly suppressed the loom shuttle and the fan. They struggled, but couldn't fly out of Meng Hao's hand. He quickly put them into his bag of holding.

At the same time, the two flying swords were snatched up by others. Fang Yu managed to get one, Ji Mingkong the other. Everyone else could only watch on with unsightly expressions at the others who had acquired

treasures. Then they looked over at the emaciated old man.

The old man finally put away the flame bird. His acquisition was clearly the best of all, which anyone could see. The flame bird was a precious treasure. As for the other items, although they were extraordinary, they couldn't compare.

The old man laughed hoarsely, then glanced over the group from South Heaven. His gaze stopped for a moment on Meng Hao, whereupon it seemed to fill with dread. Finally, he looked back at the others.

"Fellow Daoists, there is quite a bit of good fortune to be had in this place. There's no need to stare at me collecting things, don't you think?" He chuckled, then backed up a few paces. He lifted up his right hand, and although the move seemed casual, pulsating rings of light could be seen within.

Ji Mingkong's position amongst the Ji Clan members had been second only to the now deceased Ji Mingfeng. He looked at the old man and growled, "There may be more good fortune, but you seem to know a lot more about it than we do."

His words caused the eyes of everyone present to begin to glitter brightly. Clearly, everyone was extremely interested in how the old man had extracted items from within the mirror.

The old man laughed, then slowly began to speak: "Well, it's actually easy to explain. Any of you can do exactly as I did. This is the Fourth Plane, and not many people ever make it here. Therefore, few people in the outside world know much about what it's like.

"The mirror-like continent beneath us is actually a seal. Sealed inside is a battlefield, or perhaps, an entire world.

"Within the seal, time is eternal. If you can stimulate it from the outside, and open a breach, then you can create a storm within the eternal time inside.

"It's like causing a reverse black hole. The objects inside will be sucked out to scatter into the outside world. Of course, that process will cause

said objects to be weakened.

“As for exactly how to do it, I don’t think you need me to go into a detailed explanation. The battlefield beneath us is enormous, and the potential acquisitions all depend on your own luck.” Having finished his explanation, the old man gave a final glance to the crowd of people, then flashed off into the distance at top speed.

Everyone else looked down at the mirror with flashing eyes. They all had their own judgements regarding what the old man had said. However, regardless of anything, it seemed that of what the man had told them, eighty to ninety percent was probably true.

In that case, this place... was a once-in-a-lifetime source of good fortune for all of them!

Everyone exchanged glances. Then the Ji Clan members scattered, flying in opposite directions. The Cultivators from the Northern Reaches, Southern Domain, and Western Desert also sped off in different directions. Meng Hao looked at Xu Qing.

“I’m fine by myself,” she said with a slight smile. She turned and flew off into the distance, looking for good fortune of her own.

Meng Hao took a deep breath. He looked down at the world within the mirror for a moment. Then his eyes flickered. He picked a direction and shot off at high speed.

He only had one objective, and that was the Third Generation Demon Sealer!

As for everything else, although it was interesting to him, when compared to the League of Demon Sealers, it was all secondary.

He proceeded onward for the time it takes half an incense stick to burn. His brow was furrowed as he considered how strange this place was, especially the three most powerful experts that he had seen. They hovered in mid-air in the world inside the mirror, clearly visible, but unapproachable!

Down below, the mirror continent seemed to be endless and without

borders. However, it was possible to sense that far off in the distance, there was in fact an end to it all. However, once on the actual surface of the mirror continent, it truly seemed limitless. Even after moving forward for a long time, the Third Demon Sealer still seemed far, far away.

Meng Hao was muttering to himself about this when suddenly his eyes flashed. Not too far away he had caught sight of a magical battle taking place within the world of the mirror.

There were two Cultivators fighting with a mass of black fog. Magical techniques spread about in all directions and magical items slammed out in attack. When he caught sight of the magical items, Meng Hao's eyes began to glitter.

One of the items was a golden leaf that he wouldn't originally have paid much attention to. However, Meng Hao happened to have noticed that upon the surface of the golden leaf was a pattern that looked like a lotus.

It was a made up of ten swords, shaped together to look like a lotus!

It looked exactly like Meng Hao's own Lotus Sword Formation. He couldn't help but make an "eee?" sound as soon as he saw it. He looked at it closely for a moment, then lifted up his right hand and punched down. The punch caused the surface of the mirror to tremble. Distortions appeared, transforming into something that looked like a vortex. However, they quickly dissipated.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he entered the Fifth Anima. A boom could be heard from his fleshly body as he punched down again. The vortex instantly formed again, along with a black hole. An enormous gravitational force appeared inside of the mirror world, causing three magical items to suddenly be sucked in.

Next, those very three magical items flew out beneath Meng Hao's feet. One of the items was cracked in the process and instantly exploded. The other two shot off in two different directions at top speed, apparently possessed of sentience.

Meng Hao performed a minor teleportation, then transformed into a green smoke and a black moon. He reappeared in mid-air, and snatched

his hand out to grab the golden leaf. It emanated a buzzing sound as well as a blinding light, and apparently intended to cut Meng Hao's hand in half.

Meng Hao let out a cold snort, then flicked his sleeve to collect up the golden leaf. He pushed two fingers down hard onto its surface, preventing it from struggling and flying away.

A look of happiness appeared in his eyes as he collected it up. But then he looked back down at the world in the mirror, and his mind trembled.

It was at this point that he noticed that the golden leaf he had just acquired, as well as the item which had exploded and the other item which had escaped, were... still inside the world of the mirror.

"Are they simply ghosts?" he thought. "Or are the items which flew out perhaps not real?" He frowned as he thought back to how the copper mirror had begun to vibrate earlier.

After some more thought, Meng Hao suddenly trembled and looked back down at the lands inside the mirror world.

Chapter 615: Speculation and Cooperation

“This continent is like a mirror, and within the mirror is a battlefield,” murmured Meng Hao. “The objects on the battlefield can emerge into the outside. However... those same objects still remain on the battlefield inside the mirror....

“This... this....” Meng Hao’s mind was filled with intense rumbling. He was starting to feel that he knew what was happening, but the explanation caused him to begin to pant, and his face to flicker.

“Strange, it’s so similar to the copper mirror and its duplication powers!” That was what caused him to be so agitated.

He was the only person who could make such a connection. No one else had his copper mirror, nor did they know of the mirror’s Heaven-defying qualities. Therefore, it would naturally be impossible for anyone to reach the same conclusion.

After all, everyone’s thinking is limited by the scope of what they know. Thinking outside of one’s own scope is something extremely difficult.

Meng Hao’s breathing grew heavier the more he thought about it. The situation just seemed to become more and more bizarre. His eyes flickered, and he suddenly leaped up into the air. He did not proceed along in the same direction he had been traveling, but rather, went straight up into the air.

As he rose up, his heart began to pound faster, and he grew more nervous. He had possessed the copper mirror for many years now, and in the past, he had often wondered where it came from. However, the meat jelly and parrot were always very enigmatic when it came to the subject. Every time he brought it up, they acted like it was some type of taboo. The parrot would even begin to fume with rage.

Meng Hao had tried to get information about it on numerous occasions, all to no avail. Eventually, he put the matter to rest inwardly. Now, however, he had the feeling that he suddenly had an opportunity to understand more about the copper mirror!

It was in such a mental state that he flew higher and higher. Moments later, he had reached the highest area possible. Down below, the continent stretched out in all directions. He took a deep breath as he lowered his head to look down.

As before, the continent looked completely endless. The surface was sleek and glossy, and it was impossible to see what the continent actually was shaped like.

“I could keep going and look for the border. Maybe I can find some answers there.

“Or, I could take out the copper mirror and shine it down. Perhaps... that would reveal some clues!” He thoughtfully rubbed his bag of holding, a profound look gleaming in his eyes.

He had the feeling that if he produced the copper mirror, but nothing happened, then it wouldn't really matter. However, if any types of transformations did occur, then... they would certainly be enough to shake Heaven and Earth. In fact, considering how many people were here, it would be impossible to keep the matter of the copper mirror hidden unless he killed everyone.

“The copper mirror is the most mysterious object I possess. I can't let anyone know that I possess it, otherwise it will lead to terrible calamity.

“The innocent man will be lead to disaster by possessing a treasured object!” Meng Hao's eyes glittered. He had been intelligent even as a child, and had experienced the law of the jungle in the Cultivation world. The truth of what would happen should he reveal the copper mirror was something he knew all too well.

After some thought, Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and he turned to look off into the distance, a cold smile tugging at his lips.

Even as he smiled, distortions appeared in the air in the direction in which he was looking. An old man emerged. It was none other than the emaciated Cultivator from before. He had been approaching in secret, but as soon as he neared, had been detected by Meng Hao. Without waiting for Meng Hao to say anything, he revealed himself.

“Fellow Daoist Meng, your Cultivation base is extraordinary. It seems I’ve incurred your ridicule.” The old man laughed and then clasped hands and bowed.

Seeing that Meng Hao wasn’t going to say anything, the old man smiled and continued, “My name is Han Danzi 1, a rogue Cultivator from the Southern Domain. Your fame has resounded like thunder in my ears for many years, Fellow Daoist Meng. Grandmaster Pill Cauldron is an example for all Cultivators like myself. I can’t tell you how happy I am to be able to meet you here in the ancient Demon Immortal Sect.”

“Did you really secretly follow me just to say some fawning words?” said Meng Hao, a cold glint in his eyes. “State your purpose.”

“Fellow Daoist Meng, you don’t beat around the bush!” He laughed, apparently ignoring Meng Hao’s tone of voice. “I could see you hesitating about what to do earlier. I’m not sure exactly what you were thinking about, but I was curious, so I followed you.

“However, now that you mention it, I actually do have something interesting to share with you.

“The greatest treasures hidden in this place are not the magical items of the Cultivators and the Demon Tribes, but rather... the objects held in the hands of those three Paragons. Whether it be the spear, the seven globes of fire and wood, or those two pearls, each and every one are shocking precious treasures.

“Any one of them would enable a Cultivator to murder an Immortal!” As Han Danzi spoke, he observed Meng Hao to see how he might react. However, Meng Hao’s expression did not reveal even the slightest bit of a change in his mood.

“This guy is smart and has a rock-hard will,” thought Han Danzi with an imperceptible frown. “I won’t be able to fool him easily....”

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever as he looked coldly at the old man. For some reason, the old man caused a feeling of vigilance rose up within him. He appeared to be at the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage, not very far from Spirit Severing.

However, what he had accomplished earlier with the flame bird was not something that a great circle Nascent Soul Cultivator should be able to do. This man clearly was hiding something mysterious. Perhaps others might not be able to sense it, but as the Ninth Generation Demon Sealer, Meng Hao could tell that the man actually had two auras.

The first contained the ripples of a Cultivator's Cultivation base. The other... was deeply hidden, and had... Demonic Qi!

This Demonic Qi was borderline vile!

Han Danzi looked at Meng Hao and said, "I can't get the treasured items of those three Paragons by myself. That is why I hope to form a cooperation with you, Elder Brother Meng. After we acquire the treasures, we can split them evenly."

"Which one do you want to acquire?" asked Meng Hao, his eyes glittering.

"The seven globes of fire belonging to the Demon Tribes Paragon, of course," said Han Danzi with a smile. "At the very least, we can extract one for each of us. That way we won't waste any energy."

Meng Hao also smiled. He did not refuse, but instead, nodded in agreement.

Seeing Meng Hao agree so easily caused vigilance to rise up within Han Danzi. Previously, of all the people who came from South Heaven, he had paid closest attention to Patriarch Huyan.

However, he had recently been shocked to sense that Patriarch Huyan had been killed. Later, when laid eyes on Meng Hao, he understood that Patriarch Huyan was most likely killed by him.

When he thought about his own techniques and trump cards, Han Danzi felt at ease. With a hearty laugh, he and Meng Hao turned into colorful beams of light that shot off into the distance.

Meng Hao didn't speak at all. He temporarily suppressed any notions of producing the copper mirror. Now was not the time. He needed to wait until the right critical juncture had arrived, then he would pull out the

copper mirror to see if it provoked any transformations.

It seemed that Han Danzi was bringing him to just such a critical juncture.

Of course, Han Danzi was wrapped up in his own thoughts as the two of them proceeded onward. Before long, they reached what was actually the very center of the whole continent.

“The locations of the three Paragons are actually where the seal is strongest over this ancient battlefield,” said Han Danzi with a smile. “There are some special restrictive spells which prevent anyone from even getting close.

“However, I happen to know of a special technique. I tested it out earlier, and it seems possible to bypass the restrictive spells. However, it requires a certain level of Cultivation base. Elder Brother Meng, considering how extraordinary your Cultivation base is, I don’t think you will have any problems.” With that, he shot down toward the continent below. He quickly performed an incantation with his right hand, then pushed down onto the surface of the continent.

Instantly, the land shook, and Meng Hao could see a vortex forming inside the mirror. There was no black hole within it, though, and it maintained its shape. At the same time, Han Danzi took a deep breath and lifted his hand back up. Then he stood; the vortex remained within the mirror.

Han Danzi turned to look at Meng Hao.

“Elder Brother Meng, presumably, you know what to do. I’ll wait for you up ahead.” With that, his body flickered and he moved forward. As he moved, the vortex beneath his feet followed him.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered as he watched Han Danzi proceed onward for what appeared to be several hundred meters. However, he had actually not traveled for several hundred meters, but several hundred kilometers!

“Interesting,” murmured Meng Hao. He moved down toward the surface of the land, then landed on its surface. After that he lifted his foot up and

slammed it down onto the ground. A boom could be heard, and then, shockingly, a vortex appeared beneath his feet inside the world of the mirror.

It maintained its vortex state, not forming into a black hole, but rather, connecting to Meng Hao's Cultivation base. Then Meng Hao proceeded forward. For every meter he moved... he actually moved half a kilometer!

"What a technique!" he thought, his eyes flickering. He couldn't help but think that if this technique could be used in the outside world, it would definitely be considering an incredibly powerful divine ability.

Using this technique, Meng Hao and Han Danzi moved what appeared to be several hundred meters, but was in fact hundreds of kilometers. They sped along at top speed within the center region of the mirror continent.

At the same time, the other Cultivators from South Heaven were in other locations, attempting to acquire their own bits of good fortune. They continued to stimulate the surface of the land, attempting to cause it to spit out magical items. However, most of the magical items ended up being destroyed in the process of emerging.

Few of the Cultivators were actually able to acquire anything.

Even still, the mirror-like land was like a huge treasure trove for everyone. All of the Cultivators who had come to this place were profoundly wise and intelligent, and soon, their glittering eyes came to be drawn to the center region of the land. That was clearly the location of the three most powerful experts who split everything under the Heavens.

In fact, there were more than a few people who were trying to make their way in that very direction.

Two hours passed. Shockingly, Meng Hao and Han Danzi had just appeared in the area near the Greater Demon with the seven rotating globes of fire.

A strange light appeared in Han Danzi's eyes. He took a deep breath as he exchanged a glance with Meng Hao. At the same time, he began to rotate his Cultivation base. Meng Hao directly entered the Fifth Anima;

his fleshly body was shocking, and his Cultivation base boundless. Han Danzi's eyes flickered as he too unleashed his full power. The twisted Demonic Qi within him also began to circulate.

The two attacked the surface of the land together, causing an enormous rumbling to fill the air. The two vortexes beneath them in the world of the mirror suddenly touched each other. They merged, then suddenly ripped open an enormous black hole.

The gravitational force that suddenly surged out was impossible to describe. However... it was incapable of causing the seven globules of fire to even tremble in the slightest. In contrast, quite a few other magical items in the area were sucked into the vortex.

Ten magical items were sucked in, but only five flew out. They shot up into the air in beams of prismatic light. Han Danzi's eyes flickered, but he did nothing to attempt to take them. Meng Hao's eyes also flashed, yet he did not chase after the items either.

Both of the men were wrapped up in their own thoughts as they watched the five beams of light shoot like beautiful pearls up into the sky.

At the same time, the other Cultivators from South Heaven watched on in shock. They looked at the five beams of light, and could sense the intense ripples emanating out from within.

"Incredible treasure!!" That was the thought that ran through all of their minds. Their eyes shone brightly as they flew up into the air. In the blink of an eye, nearly all of the South Heaven Cultivators flew from all directions toward the five beams of light.

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1. Han Danzi's name in Chinese is 韩丹子 hán dān zǐ. Han is a common family name, and yes, it is the same character as Han Bei. That doesn't mean they are related, although the possibility couldn't be precluded based on the name alone. Dan means "red" or "pellet." Zi means "child" or "son".

Chapter 616: Demonic Qi Explodes to the Sky!

Rumbling echoed out in all directions. As the South Heaven Cultivators flew toward the five beams of light, fighting broke out. The sounds of magical techniques and divine abilities resounded through the air, mixed with growls and cold snorts. In the time it takes for a spark to fly off of a piece of flint, the five incredible treasures were divided up.

Han Danzi looked up into the air and then said, "Fellow Daoists, those five incredible treasures were released by the combined effort of Fellow Daoist Meng and myself. For you to act in such a way is somewhat improper...."

By now, the South Heaven Cultivators up above had taken notice of Meng Hao and Han Danzi down below.

"If you are interested, Fellow Daoists, we can all work together to open up the greatest treasures hidden in this place. We can release them together. What do you think, Fellow Daoists?" Han Danzi wore a smile on his face, but within his eyes was a strange, imperceptible glow. Out of the corner of his eyes, he watched Meng Hao carefully.

That was because he hadn't consulted with Meng Hao before speaking, and his offer just now did not fall in line with his previous explanation. Clearly, what he needed was not just the help of Meng Hao alone, but rather, the combined assistance of almost all of the South Heaven Cultivators.

At the moment, Han Danzi was simply incapable of reading Meng Hao's expression. From the very beginning until this moment, it hadn't changed at all. The more Meng Hao acted in such a way, the more Han Danzi felt unsure of himself.

The main reason he had sought out Meng Hao was because of his Cultivation base. It wasn't just him who looked at Meng Hao in such a way. Although no one would admit it, most of them had already taken

Meng Hao to have the most powerful Cultivation base of the entire group.

Therefore, having Meng Hao at his side made Han Danzi's words even more persuasive. After all, when an expert planned some sort of scheme, it would by no means be a small plan.

Up in mid-air, the eyes of the other Cultivators flickered, but no one spoke. Although these people had all been conned by Meng Hao earlier, that was because of the circumstances. It was impossible for them to not get excited right now. Of course, in the outside world, any one of the group could be considered extraordinarily intelligent. As such, they only believed about one third of what Han Danzi told them.

Fang Yu suddenly spoke up, "If some precious treasure appears, how do we split it up?"

"I will swear a Dao oath, I will vow on my heart of cultivation. It doesn't matter how many precious treasures appear, I only want one fire globe!" Han Danzi spoke with decisiveness that could chop nails and slice iron.

"Besides," he continued solemnly, his words ringing out like the peals of a golden bell, "if I violated my oath, if I went back on my word, not only would it sever my path of cultivation, but I would never be able to find safe haven in any of your various Sects and Clans back in the lands of South Heaven."

The South Heaven Cultivators up in mid-air looked on thoughtfully. It was actually exactly as Han Danzi said. Although their Cultivation bases might not be incredibly high, they were all backed by Sects and Clans that could be considered major powers. Therefore, in some ways, they weren't worried at all about Han Danzi reneging on his promise.

Everyone exchanged glances. All were thinking different things, but of course, they wouldn't casually allow others to see that based on their facial expression. Gradually, all eyes came to fall on Meng Hao.

"I too simply require a pledge in the form of a Dao oath," he said coolly.

At first everything was quiet, but after a moment, the Ji Clan members flew down toward the surface of the ground. After that was Fang Yu, and

then the other Cultivators from the Southern Domain and the Northern Reaches. Their eyes flickered as they neared.

However, it wasn't each and every South Heaven Cultivator that came. Xu Qing as well as some of the others weren't present.

Han Danzi smiled and then began to explain to everyone how to approach the center district. As they waited for everyone to arrive, Han Danzi clasped hands and bowed apologetically to Meng Hao.

"Fellow Daoist Meng," he said in a sincere tone, "it's not that I changed my mind. As you can clearly see, by relying only on our power, it would be difficult to cause the precious treasures to appear. Only by combining power with the others will we be able to succeed.

"I hope you can forgive me." He bowed deeply once more. Then he lifted up his right hand, within which could be seen a jade pendant shaped like a dragon.

"I acquired this pendant earlier which can be considered an excellent treasure. It can summon an enormous dragon which spits out a sea. Fellow Daoist Meng, please accept it as a token of my apology." With that, he sent the pendant floating out toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's face was expressionless as he first looked over the pendant and then scanned it with Divine Sense. There didn't seem to be anything suspicious about it, so he casually waved his sleeve to collect it up.

"Thank you, Fellow Daoist Han Danzi," he said coolly.

Han Danzi watched calmly as Meng Hao accepted the pendant. Inwardly, he was a bit suspicious. Meng Hao's completely expressionless demeanor made it difficult for him to keep his thoughts straight.

"Hmph," he thought to himself. "He's just some kid from the younger generation. Although he might be a profound schemer, he has his limits. Besides, I already made it clear to everyone that all I want is one globe of fire. I simply don't believe that this Meng Hao will be able to create problems for me out of nothing." He was laughing coldly on the inside, but on the outside, he was smiling from ear to ear.

The two of them sat down cross-legged to meditate. Two hours passed, after which the other South Heaven Cultivators arrived one after another. No one spoke. They focused their power together to stab into one particular spot on the surface of the ground. Intense rumbling resulted, and a gigantic whirlpool appeared inside the world of the mirror.

The vortex spun rapidly, and then transformed into a black hole. Immediately, an assortment of magical items were sucked in. Many were shattered in the process, but more than ten beams of light appeared in the outside to shoot up into the sky.

The light from the treasures was blinding, and instantly attracted the attention of the crowd. However, just as quickly, everyone, including Meng Hao, looked back at the world of the mirror. Inside, the vortex was still there, as was the gravitational force of the black hole. Unfortunately, it didn't seem to be powerful enough to suck away the seven globes of fire surrounding the Greater Demon.

And yet... it was obvious that the two globes of fire nearest the black hole were beginning to ripple and distort. From the look of it, if the power of the black hole was increased, they might actually move.

"One more time!" snapped Han Danzi, staring fixedly at the globes of fire. The full power of his Cultivation base exploded out. As the power built up, the eyes of the others flickered, and they too began to unleash the power of their Cultivation bases.

Meng Hao closed his eyes for a moment. When he opened them, he was in the Sixth Anima.

BOOM!!

Everyone attacked again. This time, the intensity of the vibrations seemed enough to cause earthquakes and shatter mountains. A vortex appeared inside the world of the mirror that was even larger than before. The black hole that magically appeared afterward caused the two globes of fire nearest the black hole to begin to distort violently. Finally, they began to move.

As the globes moved, everything dimmed, and the majestic aura of a

precious treasure poured into the black hole and was then released in the outside. A thunderous roar filled the air, and as they sensed the aura, everyone was completely shocked. The intensity of this aura was such that it seemed it could extinguish Immortals!

Meng Hao's pupils constricted. The aura he was sensing from the wooden swords in the seven globes of light far, far exceeded that of the wooden swords in his bag of holding. However, it was also clear that they were... one and the same!

There was no need for Han Danzi to say anything else. A gleam of longing appeared in the eyes of the South Heaven Cultivators as they once again unleashed the explosive power of their Cultivation bases, along with their most powerful divine abilities and magical techniques.

As for Han Danzi, he took a deep breath. The borderline evil Demonic Qi on him that only Meng Hao could sense suddenly superseded the fluctuations of a Cultivator that existed within him. It was as if he had just become a Demon!

Meng Hao entered the Seventh Anima, which meant that he had a Spirit Severing fleshly body. Along with the others, he continued to levy attacks against the surface of the ground.

The entire area was covered with cracks. Although they sealed back up almost immediately, a huge vortex nearly thirty meters wide exploded out inside the world of the mirror.

The edges of the vortex seemed to be just on the verge of actually touching the wooden swords within the globes of flame.

Everyone was panting, and their eyes were focused on the spinning vortex as it transformed into a shocking black hole!

When the black hole appeared, shockingly, three of the seven globes of fire that contained wooden swords, began to ripple and vibrate. Suddenly... they started moving!

The scene caused the gazes of the South Heaven Cultivators to grow as sharp as knives. Their Cultivation bases were in full rotation as they

waited for the precious treasures to emerge, whereupon the fighting would begin.

Time passed. It was only the space of about ten breaths, but in the minds of everyone present, it seemed like an eternity. They watched the three globes of fire moving gradually closer to the black hole. They seemed to be struggling, but the power of the black hole caused them to slowly get closer and closer.

The power source of the black hole's gravitational force was not the South Heaven Cultivators, but rather, the interaction between the world outside of the mirror, and the world within. The function of the Cultivators was merely to release that power.

The gravitational force exerted by the black hole was so strong that it wasn't just the three globes of fire that were affected. Also affected was the extremely lifelike Greater Demon around whom the fire globes rotated.

Nearer.... Nearer....

In the blink of an eye, one of the wooden swords within the fire globule vanished into of the black hole. Everyone stopped breathing momentarily. In that instant, shockingly, a wooden sword shot out from beneath their feet. It burst up toward the sky in a beam of light that resembled an unrolling bolt of silk.

The Ji Clan members instantly shot up into the air to pursue the beam of light.

Next, two more swords shot out, their Sword Qi shining like a rainbow. Coldness radiated out, causing everyone to feel as if they were freezing. However, the burning within their hearts could not be frozen over. Fang Yu, the group from the Northern Reaches, and all the other Cultivators, instantly shot up into the air to pursue the treasured wooden swords.

In the instant in which they flew up in pursuit, the three wooden swords began to emanate an even more shocking energy. Boundless ripples shot out into the sky, which caused anything within fluctuations to suddenly move exponentially slower. It was as if the swords created their own area

of time and space.

Meng Hao immediately shot up after the three wooden swords, and Han Danzi followed.

It appeared that the two would begin to fight over the wooden swords. However, it turned out that Han Danzi only appeared to have been moving up. He almost immediately sank back down. As everyone else shot after the precious treasures, he prostrated himself on the ground, biting his tongue to spit out a mouthful of blood. The blood instantly turned into a thin stream which extended out toward the black hole in the world of the mirror. It emerged from the black hole in the mirror world, and then neared the body of the Greater Demon which had been sucked toward the black hole.

“Ancestor Spirit, your posterity of the younger generation have not forgotten you! I have come today to welcome your power back into the world!!” As his words rang out, the eyes of the Greater Demon flickered with intelligence. It allowed the stream of blood to circle around its body, then tighten around it and begin to drag it toward the black hole.

Everything shook violently, and booming sounds filled the air. Suddenly, an enormous vortex appeared in front of Han Danzi, thousands of meters wide. A strange, demonic sound emerged from within the vortex; it sounded like people both weeping and laughing.

Suddenly, an enormous head, fully three hundred meters large... began to rise up from within the water-like surface of the world beneath!

Demonic Qi...

Exploded up into the sky!!!

Chapter 617: Land of the Three Saints

Scattered patches of hair could be seen on the enormous, three hundred meter large head, as well as three, pitch-black horns. It was as gray as death, and wrinkles covered its skin. The facial features somewhat resembled a man, but even more-so, a lion.

It emanated a fearsome, archaic aura that, as soon as it appeared, swept across the entire Fourth Plane, which began to shake violently.

An enormous vortex, tens of thousands of meters wide, circulated around the entire area. Amidst the rumbling, a wild wind swept through the entire area, shaking everything.

Han Danzi prostrated himself beneath the head, his expression one of excitement. His appearance was now changing, and he no longer looked human. Three black horns had sprouted from his head, and he looked very similar to the enormous head up above him.

“Your posterity of the younger generation welcomes the return of the power of the ancestry!!” cried Han Danzi excitedly. As his voice rang out, he seemed to form a connection with the enormous head. A shocking power began to fuse into his body!

His hair whipped about, his clothes flapped. He should have been tossed about like a leaf within the maelstrom, but instead, from his aura, it seemed that he was accepting some type of legacy.

The head appeared to be three hundred meters large, but in the blink of an eye it was suddenly far larger. It was now three thousand meters large. A breath of time later, it was back to three hundred meters. They were like ghost images, distorting the world. Rumbling rose up into the sky. All of the crowds up in mid-air who were chasing after the wooden swords didn't even have a chance to begin fighting over the precious treasures before the scene unfolding caused them to be thoroughly astonished.

The wild wind raged, sweeping across everything. Everyone up above was sent spinning out of control, causing their faces to fill with unprecedented expressions of astonishment.

“What... what is that thing!?”

“Dammit! He’s actually trying to release a Greater Demon from inside the mirror!!”

“Isn’t that Demon one of three major powers inside the mirror world? Who is this guy!?!?”

Shocked, everyone began to fall back. The rest of the Cultivators in the land, the ones not participating in the events in the central region, including Xu Qing, were all incredibly shocked. They, too, were incapable of preventing themselves from being swept up. They transformed into beams of light that shot through the air.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered as he hovered in mid-air in the Seventh Anima, with a Spirit Severing fleshly body and a Cultivation base of sixty-four great circle Nascent Souls. Such power made it that, although he hovered unstably, he was still able to remain in place and balanced within the vortex and the tempest.

As he looked down at the surface of the land, and his eyes narrowed. He knew that Han Danzi had been plotting something, but he had never imagined that the plan would be so astonishing!

As of this moment, a deafening roar filled the enormous vortex, the source being none other than the enormous head emerging from within the world of the mirror. The sound echoed back and forth like thunder.

It caused everyone, even the Cultivators off in the distance, to cough up blood. Han Danzi was unaffected, and Meng Hao’s face was only a bit pale. Other than the two them, everyone else felt their mind spinning, as if they were stuck in some interminable illusion.

By now, the head of the Greater Demon was more than seventy percent emerged. Its nose was visible, and its facial features were clearer. There was an enormous, ferocious-looking wound ripped into its face.

Anyone who even glanced at the Greater Demon would immediately feel as if their mind was being absorbed. Before they even realized it, pulses of terror would be racing through them.

Demonic Qi exploded up, filling the area, intrinsically potent. In the blink of an eye, all other power of Heaven and Earth was expelled from the world by this powerful Demonic Qi.

All of a sudden, the entire world became... a Demon world!

Han Danzi trembled, his face burning with passion. The physical changes to him continued at high speed. His aura exploded up, and his connection to the head grew even more complete.

At the same time, all of the power of Heaven and Earth that was not Demonic Qi rushed up to the top of the world, which was none other than deep tunnel everyone had traveled through to get to this place.

A rumbling sound could be heard as the energy successfully entered the tunnel. The countless vines inside withered in the blink of an eye. They vanished without a trace as the expelled power of Heaven and Earth shot out into the outside world.

If you could stand outside of that deep pit, what you would see would be an exploding pillar of Qi that shot up into the sky. Successive layers of ripples then emanated out in all directions, sweeping over everything.

Although the process had just begun inside the Fourth Plane... it is easy to imagine how quickly everything was changing because of the emergence of the Greater Demon from within the world of the mirror.

When the changes were complete... everyone else inside would either be dead, or would be transformed by the Demonic Qi. Their souls would be transformed, and their Cultivation bases would change on a fundamental level. They would no longer be Cultivators, but Demons!

Meng Hao's face flickered as he looked up into the sky at all the people from South Heaven. The vortex was spinning faster, and as it did, everyone was lapsing into a stupor. Fang Yu, the Ji Clan, the Cultivators from the Northern Reaches and Southern Domain, Wang Lihai, Han Bei, Li Tiandao, Li Shiqi, and also Xu Qing...

Everyone seemed to be lapsing into an illusion. Their faces were twisted, and their teeth were clenched. Occasionally they let out cold laughs, other

times their expressions were blank. It was bizarre to the extreme.

Demonic Qi was coalescing around their bodies, clearly beginning to make some illusory changes.

Han Danzi continued to prostrate himself on the ground. “Land of the Three Saints. The power of the ancestor returns, a legacy for me, Han Danzi. Everyone here are my sacrificial objects. Their bodies will be changed, their spirits will be assimilated. If they don’t die in the process, then they will no longer be Cultivators, but Demons!

“They will become my Demon horde, and will follow by my side as I use the power of the ancestor to battle with the Heavens!” He trembled as his words echoed out through the vortex.

At the same time, the vortex which spun around the head of the Greater Demon was no longer tens of thousands of meters wide. It expanded again until it was nearly three hundred thousand meters wide, shocking to the extreme. By this point, the top lip of the Great Demon was now visible.

It was now possible to see that the head did not just have one wound on it, but rather, three. One of the wounds appeared to be on its lips, making it so that the creature did not have two lips, but four!

Also visible... were sharp, black fangs! This Greater Demon’s physical appearance was savage to the extreme!

More Demonic Qi roiled about, and the rumbling sounds grew more intense.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. “This is the ancient Demon Immortal Sect. Ke Jiusi isn’t dead. He couldn’t possibly ignore what is happening here, could he? And what about Zhixiang? Her attitude is difficult to discern.

“So... why hasn’t Ke Jiusi made an appearance?

“It doesn’t matter. I can’t place all my hope in him....” Although he could afford not to care too much about the others, Xu Qing was here. Also, the others owed a lot of Spirit Stones. If a few died, he could handle it. However, if they all died... well, that was something Meng Hao just couldn’t agree to let happen.

His eyes filled with a bright glow and he took a deep breath. He closed his eyes for a moment, then reopened them.

The moment he opened his eyes, Meng Hao entered... the Eighth Anima!
BOOM!

In the Eighth Anima, his fleshly body grew even more powerful. In the Seventh Anima, it was of the Spirit Severing stage, but in the Eighth Anima, it reached an even more terrifying level. His Cultivation base exploded out, not with the power of sixty-four great circle Nascent Souls, but rather, one hundred twenty-eight!

Such incredible power caused profound changes. Meng Hao suddenly appeared in mid-air in the wild vortex, buffeted by the spinning winds. Roaring surrounded him as what appeared to be countless shapeless bolts of lightning exploded out.

His right hand formed into a fist that punched directly toward the passageway high up in the sky. The punch contained not just the full power of his Cultivation base, but also, the Mountain Consuming Incantation!

An enormous mountain peak appeared, which was none other than... the Fourth Peak! The image was somewhat indistinct, but as soon as it appeared, roaring sounds echoed out. It shot toward the passageway. As it flew through the air, parts of it disintegrated and fell apart, but by the time it reached its destination it was still half intact.

The mountain shot at top speed toward the passageway, and as it neared, Meng Hao uttered a single word:

“Collapse!”

As soon as the word left his mouth, the illusory mountain stopped in mid-air and exploded, sending out a sound like endless thunder. The volume exceeded the rumbling of the vortex, transforming into shocking sound waves that swept across the world.

Because of the sound, all of the others, including Xu Qing, were mentally shaken. The illusion which gripped them temporarily vanished, and their

eyes grew clear. Then their faces filled with astonishment.

Meng Hao looked up at them and roared, "Why haven't you left yet!?" He performed a double-handed incantation, and immediately tempest winds exploded out from him to fight back against the vortex. Instantly, the vortex was weakened.

Fang Yu gasped and looked down at Meng Hao. She looked anxious, but at the same time determined. Her body flickered as she neared Xu Qing. Even as Xu Qing was gazing at Meng Hao, Fang Yu grabbed her.

"Let's go," she said. "He won't stop worrying until you're out of here!"

Xu Qing hesitated, but didn't struggle. She looked back at Meng Hao one more time, and an indescribable feeling welled up in her heart. She thought back to that year outside the Rebirth Cave. It was a scene just like this one, in which she... was no help at all to Meng Hao.

The South Heaven Cultivators were panting in astonishment at the terrifying scene playing out. One by one, they began to fly up toward the passageway over head. As they shot through the air and then entered into the passageway, they heard Meng Hao's voice.

"I saved your lives, which means you owe me. If you dare to not pay me back, things won't be finished between us!"

As everyone disappeared into the passageway, the expulsion power shoved them up, causing them shoot upward. It was in that same instant that the head of the Greater Demon completely emerged from within the mirror!

Off to the side, Han Danzi looked up at Meng Hao, and at everyone leaving through the passageway.

Chapter 618: Mountain and Sea Mirror!

“They can’t escape from within the Land of the Three Saints,” said Han Danzi. “Although this is only a Divine Clone of the ancestor, if I can unseal it, it will still be beneficial for the Demon Immortal Sect. The spirits of the Demon Immortal Sect won’t offer help, but won’t resist either. Not even true spirit Night will wake up because of this. Sleeping Night is intelligent, but awakened Night has no mind. It will not awaken, because it does not wish to awaken!

“This is the body of true spirit Night, where its brain exists. They won’t be able to escape, nor flee the Demon Immortal Sect. When the ancestor’s Divine Clone is fully fused with me, they will become my Demon horde!

“As for you, Meng Hao... you will be beneath the sacred ancestor and myself to act as Dharmic protector!”

“Oh yeah?” replied Meng Hao, looking coldly at Han Danzi. He performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, then pointed down at the land. At the same time, the Demonic Qi in the area began to swirl around Meng Hao.

Whistling sounds could be heard intermittently. Meng Hao suddenly began to perform an incantation gesture which seemed to cause everything in the area to tremble.

In that instant, all of the Demonic Qi in the entire world began to rotate, as if it were being pulled. Every region began to distort, making the entire world seem as if it were being twisted.

The sight of it caused Han Danzi’s face to fill with a look of shock.

“You... you can actually affect Demonic Qi!!” he said hoarsely. “How can that be? You’re a Cultivator, you cultivate the power of Heaven and Earth. That’s different than Demonic Qi. They can’t be mixed! How can you manipulate Demonic Qi!?!?” He was thoroughly shaken, as this was his first time ever seeing Demonic Qi being manipulated by a Cultivator.

As far as he was concerned, it was inconceivable and unbelievable. Most

importantly, it was clear that Meng Hao's manipulation of the Demonic Qi was real, and not an illusion. It was in complete contrast to himself. Whereas his apparent manipulation of Demonic Qi was actually trickery, Meng Hao really was stirring all of the Demonic Qi in the entire world.

Even as Han Danzi was feeling shaken, Meng Hao took a deep breath. He could sense a resonance between himself and this world. In the outside world, he was incapable of absorbing the power of Heaven and Earth. However, in this place, it was as if a hole had been opened up, and all the Demonic Qi was rushing into it without the slightest impediment.

And yet, it didn't cause any transformations within him whatsoever. Inside of him, it turned into pure power. It was not Demonic Qi, nor was it spiritual energy. It was a unique power that belonged only to Meng Hao.

That power circulated about within him, filling him with an indescribably pleasurable sensation. A bizarre light shone in his eyes as he looked down at Han Danzi and the giant head floating there in mid-air.

"Demon Sealing, Eighth Hex!" said Meng Hao slowly. It almost sounded as if he were issuing orders. The words echoed about like the peals of thunder.

Four words exploded like thunder. Four words... spoken by Meng Hao!

As the words sounded out like thunder, all of the Demonic Qi around Meng Hao began to coalesce together. In the blink of an eye, the enormous character for 'seal' appeared directly in front of him.

The character was fully three hundred meters tall, and it absorbed more and more Demonic Qi as it shot down toward the ground.

In this moment, within the Eighth Anima, Meng Hao was... the Ninth Generation Demon Sealer!

The speed with which the character moved was indescribable. Han Danzi's face filled with disbelief as he felt an unprecedented pressure weighing down on him, along with a sense of deadly crisis. All of a sudden, he realized that Meng Hao was his archenemy.

Or perhaps it could be said that he was the archenemy of all Greater

Demons!

Han Danzi began to pant, and suddenly, he recalled a legend.

“According to legend, within the Nine Mountains and Seas, there are a people who can cultivate the Dao and can also fuse with Demons. No type of expulsion is effective on them. They call themselves... Demon Sealers!

“The character ‘seal’ has two meanings. One is to restrict, the other is to aid!” 1 Han Danzi’s mind trembled as the ‘seal’ character formed of Demonic Qi descended. All of the Demonic Qi seemed to be affected, making it so that Han Danzi was incapable of dodging or evading. He could only try to fight back directly.

A huge boom lifted up into the sky. Blood sprayed from Han Danzi’s mouth as, in the blink of an eye, he was surrounded by glowing hex light. From a distance, the hex light looked liked strands of silk, binding up Han Danzi.

It sealed his life force, sealed his Cultivation base, sealed all of him. It sealed him, and it sealed the enormous head.

Shockingly, the light of the Eighth Hex also thoroughly enveloped the enormous head. From a distance, it looked as if there were some enormous net covering over it.

The giant net was fused with the ground in the area, and pulled down viciously. Blood oozed out of Han Danzi’s mouth, and he trembled. Unable to control his body, he kneeled down onto the ground, his expression vicious. It sounded like he wanted to roar with rage, but was incapable of making a single sound come out of his throat.

Beneath the power of the Eighth Hex’s giant net, the head slowly stopped emerging out. In fact, it began to show signs of sinking back. Meng Hao hovered in mid-air, trembling slightly, his finger still pointing down at the ground. From the time he became a Demon Sealer until now, this was his first time... truly sealing a Demon.

The Demonic Qi in the area continued to rush toward him. He alone had shaken the world and used its power to push down a Demon.

Han Danzi was pushed down closer toward the ground, his face pale, his eyes filled with frenzy and an unyielding look. The giant head sank back, and soon, half of its mouth was back in the other world.

However it was then that... the Greater Demon in the world of the mirror suddenly looked up. Its gaze seemed to pierce out from the mirror into the outside world.

A strange look appeared in its eyes, and its mouth twisted into a smile.

“TAI!” it said. As the bizarre word echoed out, a change occurred to the giant head emerging from within the mirror world. The aura of death which had previously swirled around it, suddenly seemed to fill with the power of life. Although it did not open its eyes, it did open its mouth.

The voice which emerged was the exact same voice which had been heard moments ago.

“TAI!”

The sound turned into an attack which spread out in all directions, sweeping over everything. Heaven and Earth filled with roaring, and countless fissures spread out everywhere. The net of the Eighth Hex that covered the head began to shatter into small pieces. In the blink of an eye, it was destroyed and dissipated.

The Eight Hex which suppressed Han Danzi was also swept away, completely destroyed!

The Demonic Qi in the world began to roar like exploding thunder. Up in mid-air, Meng Hao coughed up a mouthful of blood and his face went white. He staggered back several paces.

“So, you’re a Demon Sealer!!” said Han Danzi. A strange light appeared in his eyes, and he lifted his head back to laugh, then shot up into the air.

“Who cares about Demon Sealers!? I’ll kill you, take your blood, absorb your soul, and make a Demon Sealing precious treasure!

“It’s just the will of Heaven!” Han Danzi seemed overjoyed as he shot up into the air. Demonic Qi surged toward Meng Hao, and at the same time,

the head began to emerge again. All of a sudden, a neck and two shoulders could be seen!

“The will of Heaven, huh?” said Meng Hao, stabilizing himself. He looked coldly at approaching Han Danzi, and the gigantic Greater Demon that he apparently couldn’t prevent from emerging. “There was no enmity between us. Neither you absorbing the power of that Demon, nor the prospect of bringing it back to life, have anything to do with me.

“What I want isn’t you or that Demon, but rather... this entire place!” A bizarre light shone in Meng Hao’s eyes. The current situation now fit in perfectly with his requirements. There was nobody left, so he felt confident enough to... take out the copper mirror!

Even as Han Danzi closed in, Meng Hao slapped his bag of holding with his right hand. Instantly, the copper mirror appeared, the same mysterious copper mirror that he had acquired back in the Reliance Sect all those years ago, which had accompanied him all this time!

It didn’t look like anything special at all, and was even a bit rusted in places. It looked like a completely ordinary item.

“A crappy mirror?” laughed Han Danzi. “Don’t tell me that’s supposed to be some kind of precious treasure or something?!” He stopped in place, looking as if he didn’t care at all about Meng Hao and his mirror. However, inwardly, the fact that Meng Hao had retrieved this magical item in a critical moment left him worried in a way that was quite the opposite to the way he made it look.

As soon as the copper mirror appeared, the mirror continent below suddenly trembled. Ripples spread out, looking almost like waves on the surface of the mirror-like continent.

Within the world of the mirror, everything that was alive suddenly stopped moving.

Even the head which was emerging from inside stopped in place. However... it was in this moment that the eyes began to twitch, as if they were struggling to open and awake.

“What is that!?” gasped Han Danzi. He was just going to attempt to stop Meng Hao when Meng Hao pointed the mirror directly down toward the mirror continent.

The two mirrors shone on each other, and anyone who could see them would be able to spot an majestic black hole inside each one. Each black hole seemed endless, as if it contained truths inside that no one would ever be able to understand.

The great mirror land below began to rumble and shake. The ripples continued to spread out, thicker and more numerous. At the same time, the mirror Meng Hao held began to grow warm, as if it were thirsting for something, as if it... wanted to consume the entire mirror continent below

It was then that the mirror continent, which Meng Hao could not even see the ends of, suddenly began to shrink. It grew smaller rapidly, accompanied by a roaring sound that lifted up into the sky.

It shrank and shrank, and if you were able to stand in a position far far above, you would see that the lands below... shockingly, were actually shaped like a mirror! And as of this moment, the mirror... was shrinking down at a rapid rate.

As the mirror continent shrank, it was possible to see that the shape of the mirror was... absolutely identical to the copper mirror that Meng Hao held.

Han Danzi’s face fell. Even as he was about to charge at Meng Hao, his body began to be pulled back by the great mirror continent. His body was out of his own control, and he was incapable of nearing Meng Hao. Instead, a gravitational force pulled him down toward the lands below.

At the same time, the eyes of the Greater Demon head that was emerging from the mirror land suddenly... cracked open. An indistinct, growling voice echoed out, filled with ancientness.

“You... actually have... the Mountain and Sea Mirror....”

1. In Chinese, the character 封 can mean to 'seal' in the sense of sealing an envelope. It can also mean to 'cover' or 'bestow.' In Meng Hao's Art of Righteous Bestowal, the 'bestow' word is this same character.

Chapter 619: Night Awakens!

The sound seemed to echo out from ancient times. In fact, as Meng Hao looked over, what he really saw was not a head with eyes opened, but rather, a virtually dead Greater Demon.

It was almost as if everything from before had been an illusion!

However, the ground was still shaking and rapidly shrinking. That was no illusion. Meng Hao could see, and even detect with Divine Sense, that the mirror, which was the continent, had shrunk down to only several tens of thousands of meters wide.

From his vantage point, it was now possible to see that the land was rapidly... turning into an actual mirror!

It included all of the lives and magical items on the battlefield. All of them shrank down to become exponentially smaller along with the mirror.

The head of the Greater Demon could no longer emerge, but rather, sank back down, taking Han Danzi with it. His face was filled with terror and astonishment as he tried every method possible to break free. All were useless. He screamed miserably, hopelessly as he looked down at himself. It was at this point that he realized that... he was also... sinking into the mirror!

When his feet touched the land, they sank directly into the water-like surface until he was as far down as his ankles.

“No!” he cried out in alarm. “How can this be!? This is impossible!!” He howled and struggled, but it did absolutely no good.

Meng Hao trembled. The mirror was now incredibly hot, to the point where white steam was now pulsing off of his hand. He had no choice but to grip it with both hands.

By now, Meng Hao could sense the indescribable gravitational force being exerted by the mirror. It wasn't targeting Han Danzi, but rather, the entire mirror land.

“It... Don't tell me it wants to suck in the entire mirror land of the

Fourth Plane of the Demon Immortal Sect?” Having reached this conclusion, Meng Hao began to pant, and his mouth was parched and dry.

If that was really what was happening, then it would mean that he had gained a colossal amount of good fortune in the ancient Demon Immortal Sect! Such good fortune would be simply unimaginable to anyone else, completely beyond anticipation or expectation.

Meng Hao palpitated with eagerness as he clutched the copper mirror tightly in his hands and watched the mirror continent below shrinking. An unprecedentedly loud rumbling could be heard filling the entire world. Han Danzi let out a bloodcurdling shriek. He was already sunk halfway down into the surface of the mirror. Next to him, the head of the Greater Demon had sunk back down to the point where its nose was covered.

“How could this be happening! This is impossible! IMPOSSIBLE!!” Han Danzi had gone mad; his expression was one of terror. He shouted out toward Meng Hao, begging for mercy and help.

However, because of the intense rumbling, his voice was virtually undetectable; Meng Hao didn’t even notice it.

The Demonic Qi in the area churned. The shrinking of the land was like the lifting of a veil, revealing something beneath.... When Meng Hao looked down, he saw something that caused his mind to reel!!

There below... was a gigantic brain!

The brain seemed limitlessly huge, sleek and white, with black spots visible in various locations. There were also some areas where brightly colored lights flashed back and forth.

Every flash of light seemed to contain countless images, almost like memories!

The sight was completely shocking to Meng Hao. His breath came in ragged pants, and he glanced once again at the shrinking land. Suddenly, he recalled something Han Danzi had said.

“This mirror continent is placed on top of the brain of true spirit Night!” Meng Hao took a deep breath and looked down again at the boundless,

colossally huge brain.

“Is this place really the head of true spirit Night? If so, what exactly is that passageway?” His scalp was numb and his body trembled as he looked around. The mirror-land seemed to be in the final process of shrinking.

It was now only about 30,000 meters wide, and looked almost exactly like the copper mirror he held, except much larger!

Han Danzi was almost completely sunk into the surface of the mirror. His face was pale, and he was no longer howling. Instead, he stared at Meng Hao with a venomous, insane look.

As for the head of the Greater Demon, it had sunk down past the eyes. Only the top of its head remained, along with the three black horns, which emanated a bizarre glow.

The entire world was shaking.

30,000 meters. 25,000 meter! 20,000 meters!!

By this point, sweat was pouring down Meng Hao's forehead. His entire body shook as he clutched at the copper mirror. Were it not for his incredible fleshly body, it might not have been possible to prevent the mirror from slipping out of his hands.

And yet, even in the Eighth Anima, Meng Hao was incapable of holding on for very much longer.

It was at this point that suddenly, out of nowhere, a sound could be heard. It was like a baby crying, and it seemed to be coming from the outside world, and yet, at the same time, seemed to be coming from inside, all around him. It started out somewhat weak, and then grew stronger and stronger.

At the same time, Meng Hao's mind filled with a roaring. Simultaneously, the dancing flashes of electric light on the surface of the brain of true spirit Night suddenly increased by tenfold, as did the speed with which they moved!

An aura of awakening suddenly covered over everything. Meng Hao's face twitched.

"Hahaha! You're dead!" cried Han Danzi. "You shook the seals of the three Holy lands, and thus have awoken true spirit Night! When it awakens, it brings calamity!" He began to laugh maniacally.

Meanwhile, outside of the the Fourth Plane, in the Demon Immortal Sect, the ground was quaking and the mountains were shaking. Rumbling could be heard in all directions as huge cracks and fissures suddenly appeared to spread out across the surface of the land.

The huge cracks and fissures, the massive rumbling, all of it made it seem as if the Demon Immortal Sect was experiencing doomsday. Ruins toppled and dust flew up in all directions, covering everything and making it hazy.

Off in the distance, the South Heaven Cultivators fled in shock toward the Demon Immortal Sect's exit gate past the First Peak. They had no idea what was happening, but they could guess. Obviously, something incredible was happening in the Fourth Plane that was connected somehow to the goings on.

Everything grew dark and the sound of rumbling rose to the Heavens. As the land was shattered, a boundless aura seeped out to flood the entire area. Rifts even began to appear in the air, one after another!

A middle-aged man stood atop the Fourth Peak, wearing a long white robe. He looked around at everything that was happening, his expression complex. Occasionally, killing intent would fill him, sometimes gentleness could be seen. This was Ke Jiusi.

"If it was anyone else who awoke Night and caused the legacy of Lord Li to appear, I would be forced to kill him. Outsiders cannot acquire the legacy of Lord Li. But him...." Ke Jiusi thought back to what he had experienced in ancient times, when he had superimposed with Meng Hao.

In the end, his father had recognized Meng Hao, acknowledged that they were father and son in that life. The killing intent in Ke Jiusi's eyes slowly dissipated, to be replaced by gentle warmth.

“If he was my father’s son in that life, then that means he... is my little brother. Maybe I can’t acquire the legacy of Lord Li, but if he can, it’s the will of Heaven.” Ke Jiusi sighed.

As everything shook, and even more rifts appeared up in the sky above the Demon Immortal Sect. Gradually, the shocking sight of the peaks of three inverted mountains became visible!

As they appeared to descend, an incredible pressure could be felt. The entire Demon Immortal Sect shook violently. The South Heaven Cultivators were arriving at the exit gate past the First Peak. In their shock, there were already quite a few who had chosen to use their Demon Spirit to leave.

However, that would take time. As the world shook more and more violently, the sound of a wailing infant suddenly filled the air. It sounded as if there was a baby sleeping deep, deep under the ground, its eyes closed. But then, as it began to awaken, it started to cry.

Once the sound could be heard, the destruction grew even more intense.

By now, the three inverted mountains were visible by more than half.

Meanwhile, back in the Fourth Plane, the great mirror continent had now shrunk down to only about 10,000 meters wide. Han Danzi was now completely submerged inside, gone.

As for the head of the Greater Demon, only a tiny bit was left visible; the rest had sunk back down into the mirror.

Meng Hao’s face was pale, and his body was slowly moving forward. He was not moving of his own volition, but rather, was being pulled by the copper mirror!

Closer and closer!

The mirror continent continued to shrink. 10,000 meters. 5,000 meters. 2,500 meters.... 1,500 meters.... 1,000 meters.... 300 meters!

The head of the Greater Demon had completely sunk back into the mirror. Back in the calm lands inside the mirror, that Greater Demon who

split the Heaven into its third, continued to look up coldly at Meng Hao.

Its gaze seemed eternal, and as Meng Hao looked at it, his mind trembled. However, there was no time to think deeply about the matter right now. As of now, he was only about 100 meters away from the 300-meter-wide mirror.

As he got closer, it continued to shrink. 150 meters. 100 meters.... 30 meters!!

25 meters. 15 meters. 5 meters.... 3 meters!

When the mirror land reached a size of three meters, suddenly, it began to distort. Meng Hao watched as it twisted into what looked like strands of silk that then shot toward his own copper mirror.

The copper mirror seemed to consume them, bit by bit, until they were all sucked in. Within the space of only a few breaths, the entire continental mirror was sucked in by Meng Hao's copper mirror!

It acted almost like a tonic for the mirror. After the consumption occurred, the copper mirror experienced an unprecedented transformation; all of the bits of rust on its surface completely disappeared!

The ancient decorative patterns on its surface grew deeper and more profound. Pulses of light could be seen circulating within, and murmuring sounds could be heard like the singing of Immortals.

Meng Hao's mind trembled. As he looked closer at the mirror, he saw multiple cracks on its surface. They intersected with each other to form nine areas!

Right now, in the upper left part of the mirror, there was an area that looked completely different from the others. It... actually looked like the surface of a mirror. It glowed with the light of magical items, and within, a vortex could be seen, slowly rotating. That vortex seemed to contain the secret of the origin of the world!

Within the vortex, shockingly... was... the ancient battlefield!

At the same time, the Fourth Plane now had no land left in it at all. Instead, the brain was fully revealed. The electric light danced about on its surface a thousandfold more than before. A shocking sound could be heard that far exceeded the wailing of before.

Night, had been provoked... into awakening!

Chapter 620: Night's Head!

By now, ten thousand times as many arcs of electric light were dancing back and forth on the brain of true spirit Night.

At the same time, the brain began to twitch. Bursting howls could be heard echoing in from outside, howls that shook the mind.

Meng Hao's face flickered as an intense sensation of grave crisis appeared inside of him. He could sense terrifying fluctuations, and an aura that seemed capable of destroying him in a single explosive burst.

Numbness washed over his scalp as, without hesitation, he put the copper mirror away and then flew at the highest speed possible toward the exit passage.

The passage had once seemed to be a deep pit, but because of the aura of awakening Night, it had changed dramatically. It was moving, wriggling, as if the passageway was actually some part of the body of true spirit Night!

Meng Hao's face fell, and he pushed himself to go even faster. He was now at the pinnacle of the Eighth Anima, and he moved even faster than lightning as he shot into the passageway. In the blink of an eye, he was speeding along inside.

ROAR!!!

A shocking roar echoed out from both below and above. Everything in the Demon Immortal Sect shook violently and began to fall into pieces.

The destruction was clearly visible to Meng Hao. He could see it with his own eyes, because the walls that surrounded him seemed to be covered with a partially transparent filament. Through that, Meng Hao could see the lands cracking and shattering by layers, then falling downward.

As he looked back through pit-like passageway, Meng Hao suddenly realized that it looked more like a tube!

It was a tube that ran to the brain of true spirit Night, and he was right in the middle of that tube, moving with unprecedented, maddening speed.

As he sped along, he began to pant. That was because he was astonished to find that the tube he was traveling through was actually lifting up into the air.

“It’s not just this passageway that’s lifting up into the air. Actually... this passageway... is part of the body of true spirit Night! When it moves, it will appear from within the land!” Meng Hao’s mind trembled as he looked through the semi-transparent walls of the passageway to see the land collapsed everywhere. He could also feel the sensation of the passageway moving upward.

After more than ten breaths of time passed, a blinding white light filled Meng Hao’s vision. A huge roar filled the passageway he was in as it was completely lifted up from the ground until it was in mid-air above the Demon Immortal Sect!

By this point, Meng Hao had traversed roughly seventy percent of the passageway, placing him thirty percent of the distance away from the exit. The passageway was now trembling violently, and Meng Hao’s face was pale white. Through the semi-transparent walls, he could see that outside...

Fissures covered all of the lands of the Demon Immortal Sect. Most of the various areas of the Sect were completely collapsed. In fact, most of the lands seemed to be caving in, as if some enormous creature were rising up.

Rocks tumbled down the sides of the seven mountain peaks, as if even they would not be able to survive this incredible catastrophe.

The first to collapse was the Third Peak!

As the lands around it collapsed and caved in, the mountain peak began to slant to the side and sink.... However, as he looked at it, Meng Hao got the strange feeling that... the Third Peak was not actually collapsing. Actually, there appeared to be some incredible force causing it to tilt to the side.

He couldn’t quite be sure, but the sensation was intense.

Then, even as the semi-transparent passageway vibrated rapidly, Meng Hao suddenly saw something... that he would never be able to forget.

He saw an incredibly large head. It was so large that it was impossible to estimate exactly how large it was. And only half of it was visible!

It looked like a human head, except it had no hair, and was instead completely covered with pitch-black scales. Shockingly, this head... seemed to encompass all of the lands of the Demon Immortal Sect!

Meng Hao's scalp went numb and his mouth was completely dry. He was thoroughly incapable of determining how large this head was!

He also saw that the semi-transparent passageway he was in, was actually an enormous antenna attached to the top of the head! It was an tube-like antenna, apparently used for breathing!

What caused Meng Hao's mind to tremble with even more disbelief was that the previously tilting and toppling Third Peak... actually... had stopped after reaching a certain angle, and was no longer falling.

That was because... the Third Peak was not actually part of the land at all. It was connected to the head. More accurately, the Third Peak was actually an enormous horn growing out from the top of the Head!!

"This... this is... true spirit Night?" thought Meng Hao, staring with wide eyes.

He wasn't the only one seeing this. The other South Heaven Cultivators who were congregated outside of the First Peak watched on with pale faces. At the same time, the location where they stood began to collapse. A huge hole appeared, a passageway out to the starry sky that everyone unhesitatingly entered.

As they flew into the passageway, their bodies began to emit a white light. The light seemed to be separating them from the ancient Demon Immortal Sect. Their bodies began to grow transparent; apparently, it wouldn't be long before they completely disappeared.

At the same time, bands of starlight descended from all directions, transforming into a river of stars. The appearance of the river of stars

indicated that the return to South Heaven had begun. It was time to leave the good fortune of the Demon Immortal Sect.

“Meng Hao!!” cried Xu Qing inwardly. She bit down her lip as the soft light began to envelop her. Gradually she grew transparent, but her anxious eyes were focused in the direction of Meng Hao back in the Demon Immortal Sect.

Similarly anxious was Fang Yu. Her hands were clenched into fists as she watched the Demon Immortal Sect collapsing. “Hurry up, Meng Hao. Get out of there!”

As for the other South Heaven Cultivators, all of them were filled with complex emotions. They were overwhelmed with astonishment at the sudden drastic turn of events in the ancient Demon Immortal Sect. At the same time, they were also filled with unspeakable, conflicting thoughts regarding Meng Hao.

They wanted Meng Hao dead, so that their debts would be absolved. However, were it not for Meng Hao’s actions just now, all of them would be dead. That was a kindness on his part.

Various thoughts filled them as they watched on silently.

Meng Hao was scared out of his mind. As far as he could tell, he had really set something epic into motion....

“All I did was pull out a crappy mirror, right...?” he thought, clenching his jaw. He continued to speed along as fast as possible toward the exit of the semi-transparent passageway.

However, it was at this point that, surrounded by the collapsing lands, the head of true spirit Night slowly began to lift up. A reverberating wail even more shocking than before echoed out in all directions.

The Second Peak, the Fourth Peak, the First Peak, the Fifth Peak....

All shook violently and rose up into the air. Countless stones and boulders fell down, as four, shocking horns were revealed!

The antenna undulated, and at the same time, the exit appeared just up

ahead of Meng Hao. Even as he was about to break free... Night, whose head was now half emerged from the collapsing lands, suddenly inhaled.

The breath caused an enormous sucking force to rush through the semi-transparent passageway. Meng Hao was completely incapable of controlling his body. His eyes went wide as he felt himself himself being sucked in.

Filled with shock, he unleashed the full power of his Cultivation base. His right hand reached out the side and grabbed hold of a vine....

How could Meng Hao not see that these vines were actually like hairs that existed within true spirit Night's antenna...?

As soon as he grabbed ahold of it, he stopped moving. However, only a moment later, the vine snapped. Meng Hao's eyes went wide as he was once again sucked back. All of these things happened in only the space of ten or so breaths. To Meng Hao, though, it seemed like an eternity.

"If this is the breathing of true spirit Night..." he thought. "Breathing involves inhaling and exhaling. If this is the inhaling, then it must be followed by exhaling! Time to gamble!" With that, his eyes filled with determination. There was little else he could do now except gamble.

He continued to grab onto vines, and continued to employ the full power of his Cultivation base to try to slow his movement. Ten breaths of time passed. Beneath him, Meng Hao could see the end of the passageway, and once again, the brain of true spirit Night. However, it was at this point that the inhaling ended. It was then followed by an intense, explosive force in the opposite direction.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered. Roaring filled his body and blood sprayed from his mouth. Underneath the power of the force, he shot upward. His eyes filled with madness and his Cultivation base exploded, adding even more speed.

The entire process didn't even take ten breaths of time. Meng Hao's body rumbled as he suddenly... shot directly out from within the antenna.

By the time he flew out, the lands of the Demon Immortal Sect were

completely collapsed and destroyed. The Sixth Peak and the Seventh Peak shook violently. Beneath them was revealed... a head that was as large as more than half the lands of the Demon Immortal Sect.

It had human features, but was covered with pitch-black scales. It had seven enormous horns, and a long antenna, the end of which glowed with a green light.

Its eyes were half open, and inside could be seen the blankness of awakening. There was also a shocking, indescribable energy pulsating off of its body.

This was... true spirit Night!

It had seven horns that could form mountains, and even though the head was only half emerged, its shocking aura was such that anyone who looked at it couldn't help but feel their mind tremble.

Meng Hao shot back at top speed. He himself was nothing in comparison to true spirit Night. He couldn't help but think back to the only thing which could possibly compare in size to true spirit Night, and that was Patriarch Reliance, with the State of Zhao on his back.

"All I did was take out a crappy mirror! Could that really stimulate this thing into awakening?!?!" Sweat poured down Meng Hao's forehead as he shot toward the location of the other South Heaven Cultivators, all of whom were staring in astonishment at true spirit Night.

Their minds were filled with roaring, and they were incapable of even speaking half a sentence. At the same time, they were on the verge of becoming completely transparent, making them appear like shadows.

Meng Hao flew as fast as he could, using all of the power of his Cultivation base, the green smoke, the black moon. However, almost the same moment in which he reached the exit, behind him, true spirit Night uttered the first sound that was not a wail.

"NIGHT!!"

Chapter 621: He's My Little Brother

In the same moment in which the voice of true spirit Night echoed out, the Cultivators from South Heaven were being surrounded by starlight. Within the starlight were countless motes and fragments, which mixed with the starlight to cover everything and transform it all into a river of stars.

The river of stars was like a beam filled with countless motes of light that gathered momentum as it unfurled, sweeping up all of the Cultivators in preparation to return to South Heaven. After all, they had been swept up and carried to this place by the river of stars, it was only natural that they would be taken away in the same method.

Upon seeing the river of stars, everyone felt a little bit more relaxed, although they wished it would finish forming up faster. Considering how quickly things were going out of control, they wanted to leave as soon as possible to get out of danger.

As of now, this was not the Fourth Plane of the ancient Demon Immortal Sect. This was... the hitherto unknown Fifth Plane!

The Fifth Plane, the awakening of true spirit Night!

As true spirit Night's voice echoed out, the land and sky in all directions twisted, and ghost images seemed to appear. The entire world seemed to revert to ancient times. Countless figures flew about, and everything flourished. But then sometimes, everything would become ruins, filled with corpses. And then it would simply be Night, head raised, the Seven Peaks turned into horns!

Ghost images flickered over the entire world. True spirit Night... had now thoroughly lifted up its head from within the land.

When true spirit Night slept, the world was a dream. When true spirit Night awoke, calamity came to Heaven and Earth!

Meng Hao panted, and the South Heaven Cultivators watched on in alarm. Although the bodies of the crowd were half transparent, they

couldn't help but back up nervously and wish fervently that they could teleport away as soon as possible.

After letting out an incredible roar, the colossal head of true spirit Night suddenly... spoke, its voice indistinct: "Give my precious mirror... back to me!"

The voice echoed back and forth, causing Meng Hao's mind to tremble as he coughed up a mouthful of blood. The South Heaven Cultivators' minds felt as if they were being exploded by lightning; the sound of the voice was deafening.

A moment later, the South Heaven Cultivators all looked over at Meng Hao. One by one they began to express their astonishment.

"What treasure did Meng Hao take?!?!"

"Don't tell me he stole a precious treasure from that Demon beast, causing it to awaken?!?!"

"Precious mirror... could it be... could it be that it's talking about the continental mirror we saw in the Fourth Plane?"

As their voices rang out, their eyes began to fill with shock and amazement, as well as intense jealousy.

"Take out the continental mirror... and return it to me!" said true spirit Night. This time, its voice was clearer. As it spoke, massive amounts of lightning began to rise up around the seven mountain peaks.

Before Meng Hao could open his mouth to speak, the group from South Heaven began to pant as they understood the meaning of Night's words.

The continental mirror of the Fourth Plane, which contained innumerable precious treasures, had actually... been taken away by Meng Hao!!

The eyes of virtually all of the South Heaven Cultivators instantly went red. Even Fang Yu was breathing heavily and looking at Meng Hao with an expression of disbelief.

Wang Lihai, Han Bei, Li Shiqi, and the others all appeared to be in

complete disbelief, their minds shaken to the extreme.

They couldn't even begin to imagine how Meng Hao had managed to take away the continental mirror.

The Ji Clan members' eyes were wide. The Cultivators from the Northern Reaches and the Southern Domain were panting. Everyone was completely flabbergasted by this new information.

Xu Qing's face was also filled with disbelief. She looked at Meng Hao, and then a smile broke out on her face.

Meng Hao frowned. Without saying a single word, he employed as much speed as he could to shoot out into the outside world. Most of his body was already starting to grow transparent, and he could clearly sense the power of teleportation.

At the same time, the river of stars was now almost completely materialized, seemingly endless and filled with innumerable motes of light. It began to sweep through the void, picking up the crowds of South Heaven Cultivators, including Meng Hao. It then spun and began to shoot off into the distance.

In the same moment in which Meng Hao and the others were swept up by the river of stars, the eyes of true spirit Night suddenly opened completely. Any sense of blankness within those eyes was completely wiped away, to be replaced with awareness. True spirit Night... was now fully awake!

The instant the complete awakening occurred, true spirit Night let out a roar that caused the entire world and even the void to instantly cease moving. Even the river of stars trembled and then stopped in place.

Meng Hao's face fell, and the expressions of the South Heaven Cultivators were that of complete astonishment.

Suddenly, the land down below began to rumble and disintegrate as a gigantic arm slowly rose up. It was black and covered with scales, and only had four fingers. As it rose up from the ground, it left behind a gigantic pit. It was so long that it was almost impossible to see the entire arm, and

as it stretched out, its palm was so large that it seemed big enough to cover up the entire sky.

The arm stretched out, snatching toward the river of stars.

“Get back here!” said true spirit Night, its voice rumbling up into the Heavens. Meng Hao’s body was completely out of his control as it flew out, pulled from the river of stars to shoot toward the giant hand.

In the blink of an eye, shockingly, he was standing on top of the giant hand. Meng Hao’s face was pale white, and his eyes shone with a sharp light. Now that Meng Hao had left the river of stars, it trembled once again, and then slowly began to move once again. The South Heaven Cultivators were now once more moving off into the distance.

“Meng Hao!” Xu Qing’s face fell, and she struggled to fly out, but was incapable of leaving the river of stars. Fang Yu’s face was also filled with anxiety. As for most of the others, they seemed to be rejoicing in the misfortune of the others.

“He’s dead! That Demon beast specifically kept him behind. He’s definitely going to die!”

“He stole that thing’s precious treasure! How could it possibly let him leave!?”

The Cultivators continued to watch as they moved off into the distance. True spirit Night retracted its palm, upon which Meng Hao stood, until Meng Hao was directly in front of it. His face was pale as he stood there on the palm, looking up at the colossal head, and true spirit Night’s two eyes.

Meng Hao’s right hand rested on his bag of holding, and a cold glow could be seen in his eyes. He knew he was no match for true spirit Night. Even a single breath from it could completely extinguish the flame of his life force. However, until the critical juncture of life or death arrived, Meng Hao would continue to go all out.

“You have no aura upon you which I find familiar....” said true spirit Night, looking over Meng Hao. Its right hand began to close into a fist. As

it did, an indescribable pressure inundated Meng Hao. Cracking sounds could be heard, and blood sprayed from his mouth. His body seemed to be on the verge of completely collapsing; even his internal organs were on the verge of exploding.

However, there was still not even a scrap of fear in Meng Hao's eyes. Instead, a touch of madness could be seen burning inside, which then turned into ferocity. Finally, he took a deep breath and prepared to pull out the copper mirror.

However, it was at this moment that a white-robed figure suddenly appeared in mid-air. He strode out step by step; in one moment he was far off in the distance; in the next moment, he stood in front of Meng Hao. His back was to him, and he stood there protectively, looking at true spirit Night.

He wore white robes and had long, dark grey hair. He was indescribably ancient and old. This was... Ke Jiusi!

"You may not harm him," said Ke Jiusi calmly, staring up at true spirit Night, his voice filled with an incredible power. The energy caused Heaven and Earth to flicker with different colors, as if it was capable of fighting back against true spirit Night.

True spirit Night looked at Ke Jiusi. "I've awakened," it said, its voice a drone. "There must be extermination of life."

"He is a son approved by my father," said Ke Jiusi quietly. Behind him, a tremor ran through Meng Hao. As he looked at Ke Jiusi, the warmth between him and Ke Yunhai in the Second Plane suddenly filled his heart.

"That was a dream!" said true spirit Night, its voice cold.

"Since my father approved of him, it doesn't matter whether it was an illusion or not," said Ke Jiusi slowly, a mysterious light flickering through his eyes. "He... is my little brother. With me here, nothing in existence, not even you, can harm him in the slightest bit, or even dare to try!"

As he spoke, an indescribable aura rose up.

Meng Hao stood there silently, looking at Ke Jiusi's back. The hand that

gripped his bag of holding slowly relaxed.

“I’ll... I’ll hand over the continental mirror....” said Meng Hao with a soft sigh. However, even as the words left his mouth, Ke Jiusi turned his head and gave Meng Hao a profound look.

This was the first time Meng Hao had ever seen Ke Jiusi’s face. In that moment, he almost thought that he was looking at Ke Yunhai. He gaped in shock at the familiar features.

However, it only took a moment for him to see that this was definitely not Ke Yunhai.

“You don’t need to hand it over,” said Ke Jiusi. He had watched moments ago as Meng Hao showed no fear in the face of death. And yet now, he was willing to hand over the continental mirror. Ke Jiusi understood, and it caused a gentleness to appear in the depths of his eyes. “Since you were able to take it away, it shows that you were destined for such good fortune. Besides... the awakening of true spirit Night doesn’t mean complete catastrophe.”

Ke Jiusi gazed at Meng Hao. “Do you trust me?”

Meng Hao looked at Ke Jiusi, at the features which so much resembled Ke Yunhai. Without hesitation, he replied, “I trust you!”

“In the past, Lord Li laid down orders that whoever awakened true spirit Night would be given two options.” With another deep look at Meng Hao, Ke Jiusi turned to look back at true spirit Night. “Night, he is my little brother, so I will act on his behalf to make the decision. He will choose the second path!”

Night was silent for a long moment, its expression one of complexity. Finally, its gaze came to fall on Meng Hao.

Slowly, it began to explain. “Lord Li ordered that whichever life form wakes me up will be given two options. First option: return the continental mirror to me, and I will continue to sleep....

“Second option; do not return the mirror, and prepare yourself to acquire the qualifications to receive Lord Li’s legacy. Walk the three mountains,

pass through the Holy Lands, ascend to the Fourth Heaven... acquire the legacy of Lord Li! If you fail... then you will stay behind as a guest in my dream.”

As its voice echoed out, it was audible to even the South Heaven Cultivators in the river of stars. When they heard the true spirit’s words, they gaped in shock. That was especially true of the Ji Clan members and the Cultivators from the Northern Reaches. They looked back at the distant Demon Immortal Sect, their eyes wide with disbelief, and more so, intense jealousy and madness.

“Just... just... just what kind of good fortune is this?!”

“Dammit! How is this possible? That’s not a catastrophe! Isn’t there supposed to be a catastrophe? Isn’t Meng Hao supposed to be exterminated? How could such good luck as this appear?!?! Lord Li’s legacy! Seriously? The legacy of Lord Li?!?!”

“It was so overbearing before, like it could destroy everything. How could things turn around and... become such good fortune!”

“The legacy of Lord Li?! I can’t accept this!!”

Chapter 622: Three Mountains, Nine Bows

The South Heaven Cultivators watched on with wide, disbelieving eyes. Their hearts were filled with complexity and jealousy. The emotions continued to ripple out until, eventually, they turned into avarice.

There were only a few people who were actually happy to see Meng Hao run into such good fortune. Most were just jealous to the point of hatred.

“Dammit! Why does it have to be him!?!? In the Second Plane he was an Elite Apprentice. In the Third Plane, he stole away all our treasures! In the Fourth Plane he acquired that precious treasure, the continental mirror. And now here in the Fifth Plane... he’s acquired the qualifications for the legacy of Lord Li!”

“Why does it have to be this way? By what right of virtue or ability does he fall into such good luck?! I can’t stand for this!”

“Worst of all is that we still owe him a huge debt! I myself owe 800,000 Spirit Stones....”

“I owe him 1,000,000 Spirit Stones! Dammit! Why can’t he just die here!”

Other than Xu Qing, Fang Yu, and few others, all the Cultivators from South Heaven gnashed their teeth, their jealousy of Meng Hao having risen to the pinnacle.

“He’ll be going back to the lands of South Heaven eventually!” said Ji Mingkong suddenly, his eyes flashing. As soon as he spoke, the eyes of the others began to flash.

“That’s right. He will be back in South Heaven eventually. And it doesn’t matter what he acquired, we will still have to report everything that happened when we get back to our Sects and Clans.”

“Look, all he did was acquire qualifications to get Lord Li’s legacy. As to whether or not he will actually acquire the legacy remains unknown!”

As the South Heaven Cultivators spoke among themselves, the river of stars which surrounded them made its way off into the distance.

Gradually, they began to lose consciousness. Soon, all of their eyes were closed, and they were in a state of slumber, just as they had been when they arrived. The river of stars began to float back to the lands of South Heaven.

Meanwhile, back in the Demon Immortal Sect, Meng Hao stood on the palm of true spirit Night as it slowly lifted him up into the sky.

Ke Jiusi also stood on Night's palm, looking at Meng Hao with an encouraging expression.

"This is your opportunity. As for how far you can get, that will depend on your personal good fortune." With that, he flicked his sleeve and then stepped out and disappeared into mid-air.

Meng Hao's heart shook. He could never have imagined that in the end, he could acquire qualifications to try to acquire Lord Li's legacy. He panted as the enormous palm lifted him up into the sky. After that, shockingly... three inverted mountains appeared in front of him.

These were the three Greater Demon Mountains!

It was at this point that Night's voice rumbled out.

"The first stage of the legacy is the approval of the Seven Peaks. You have already passed that stage.

"The second stage is to awaken me. You... already passed that stage too!

"The third stage involves bowing nine times to the three mountains. If you acquire the approval of all three mountains, then you can break through to the Second Heaven!

"For Jiusi's sake, I will remind you... this stage can only be passed if you are destined to do so!"

"Destined...." thought Meng Hao, looking at the three inverted mountains up in the air. After a moment of silence, he closed his eyes, then opened them again. They shone with a brilliant light.

The first mountain was none other than the Frost Soil Demon Mountain. It was completely frozen over, and was filled inside with chaos, making it

impossible to clearly see the whole mountain. However, Meng Hao could definitely sense the freezing pressure coming from the mountain.

This mountain seemed to be the coldest thing in Heaven and Earth, something even flames could do nothing to melt. It was if any other freezing cold thing in the world wouldn't even dare to call itself cold while standing before this mountain!

If you looked closely at the decorations and patterns within the layers of ice, it almost looked as if they contained entire worlds. It was bizarre to the extreme!

Also visible on the mountain was a towering altar, upon which was a throne. Seated in the throne was what appeared to be a statue. The statue's features were unclear, but its upraised right hand was held up into the air where apparently an ice flame had once burned!

By this point, Meng Hao was already panting. He shifted his gaze to look at the next mountain.

The second mountain was completely crimson, as if it overflowed with fresh, red blood. An indescribable, monstrous killing intent seemed to fill it, as if an uncountable number of lives were buried inside the mountain. The vast number of people who had died led to the overflow of fresh blood, thus turning the mountain completely red.

Killing intent circulated around, to the extent that even a single glance would cause one's mind to fill with a mountain of corpses and a sea of blood.

There was also an altar on this mountain, upon which could be seen a blood-colored throne. A figure sat on this throne, its right hand raised up.

As soon as Meng Hao saw the figure, his mind trembled. A shocking scene appeared in his mind that was not exactly the same as this, but extremely similar.

"This is...." Meng Hao's mind shook, and his breath came in ragged pants. After a moment, his eyes flickered as he suppressed his thoughts and emotions, then looked over at the third mountain.

Upon this mountain, flames raged. The flames were dim, but seemed incapable of burning out. Even stranger, upon looking at the mountain, ghost images would spring up in the mind, as if countless volcanoes existed. It made it impossible to tell which of the mountains was real, and which was false.

Eventually, the image of countless withered figures could be seen on the surface of the volcanic mountain. They looked like evil spirits, emitting noiseless howls as they climbed, struggling amongst each other to be the first to reach the peak of the mountain and then throw themselves into the pit of fire there.

There was no altar, no throne, no figure. This third mountain was completely different than the other two!

Three mountains, three Greater Demons of Heaven and Earth!

Of course, the three Greater Demons had long since perished. But even Lord Li would not have been capable of making their essences fade away. Therefore, the three mountains existed as before!

Panting, Meng Hao once again focused his gaze on the Frost Soil Demon Mountain. He then clasped hands and... bowed deeply!

First bow!

"I am connected by destiny to Han Shan," he said. "I received his Immortal's sword and his bronze flagon. Therefore, I should bow first to the Frost Soil Demon Mountain!" As his words rang out, the Frost Soil Demon Mountain suddenly trembled.

Cracking sounds could suddenly be heard from the entire mountain. Originally, ice spread out across the mountain, a power of sealing. But when Meng Hao bowed for the first time, that ice began to crack and split. More and more fissures spread out, creating a roaring sound that lifted up to the Heavens as Meng Hao straightened back up.

Down below, Ke Jiusi stood on the head of true spirit Night, on the Fourth Peak. When he saw what was happening, a strange light began to shine in his eyes. Even the eyes of true spirit Night began to glitter. "His

first bow stirred up transformations in the Frost Soil Demon Mountain. He... truly is connected to the mountain by destiny. However, exactly how strong that destiny is remains to be seen. Can he ignite the Demonfire to illuminate the Third Heaven?!"

Meng Hao looked up at the Frost Soil Demon Mountain, then took a deep breath. He clasped hands and bowed again.

"My Earth-type totem is formed from Frost Soil. In the end, I created a Frost Soil Nascent Soul. this kindness, or destiny, leads me to bow again to the Demon Mountain!"

Second bow!

Boom!

As his voice rang out, a huge rumbling could be heard from the Frost Soil Demon Mountain. Even more cracks appeared on the layers of ice which covered the mountain. The cracks began to form together into something that looked like a face. The facial features were extremely lifelike; they were that of an old man, his face filled with ancientness as he looked at Meng Hao.

He seemed capable of seeing all of Meng Hao's past with a single glance, as well as his future.

At the same time, something changed about the figure seated in the throne on the altar. The previously empty spot in its right hand suddenly flickered as blue sparks appeared. It looked as if a flame wished to ignite there!

When he saw this, Ke Jiusi's eyes shone even brighter. As for true spirit Night, it said nothing, but a strange glow could be seen in its eyes.

Meng Hao looked up at the face of the old man in the layers of ice. He clasped his hands and bowed yet again, a look of determination in his eyes.

"I have an agreement with senior Han Shan. One day, when my Cultivation base is up to the task, I will return to the Realm of the Bridge Ruins to rescue him. That agreement is destiny, between myself and senior

Han Shan. It is also destiny between myself and the Frost Soil Demon Mountain. Today, I repeat the same oath as before! 1

“Demon Mountain, please bear witness. This bow is evidence of the determination of Meng Hao of the junior generation!”

Not even the slightest sound could be heard from the Frost Soil Demon Mountain. It seemed to have no reaction whatsoever to Meng Hao’s third bow. Meng Hao felt his heart pounding; he knew that he had tried to pull a bit of a fast one with the third bow.

However, all of a sudden....

“Agreed!” said an ancient voice. It echoed out from the Frost Soil Demon Mountain, almost from within the depths of time itself. As the voice spread out through the area, it carried with it endless coldness which caused the world to distort and blur.

The word was spoken by the face of the old man. He looked deeply at Meng Hao for a moment, and then began to grow blurry. Cracking sounds could be heard as the cracks which made up the face spread out. They formed together to make a huge rift that spread from the top of the mountain to the bottom. It created a massive, scar-like mark, which stretched across the entirety of the mountain.

The mark stretched all the way to the altar, and the figure on the throne. A bang could be heard. The blue sparks which danced above the right hand of the figure suddenly began to form together, transforming into a blue flame.

As soon as the flame appeared, it illuminated the face of the figure. That face was exactly the same in all respects as Han Shan’s!

The flame roared up, shining three portions of light into the sky up above.

Gradually, because of the light shone by the flame, two shocking, enormous objects became visible up in the sky. They floated high up above, looking even more majestic and shocking than the three Greater Demon Mountains.

A shocking, indescribable aura surround those two objects!

Meng Hao's mind trembled, and he closed his eyes. After calming himself, he opened his eyes again and then looked at the second mountain, the blood-colored Demon Mountain!

He clasped hands, looked at the Blood Demon Mountain, and then suddenly bowed. "I'm not sure if this mountain has anything to do with the ancient Temple of Doom. However, that is what this bow is for. If destiny exists, I implore the mountain to express itself!"

This was his fourth bow in total, and his first toward the Blood Demon Mountain!

Note from Er Gen: Yesterday was the funeral procession for my grandfather. According to tradition, tomorrow is the third day after burial, the time to revisit the grave. I'll try to post as many chapters as possible today, but tomorrow I definitely won't be able to post two chapters. I'll only post one.

Thank you for your concern, everyone. Thank you. I'm fine. I just have a sore on my tongue, which makes it difficult to eat. I don't want to think about the past.

Note from Deathblade: Er Gen's release schedule from so long ago doesn't affect mine. Usually his post-chapter messages aren't very meaningful, but this one was so I figured I would share it.

*

1. Han Shan was the Immortal Meng Hao met in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. In chapter 474, Meng Hao vowed to rescue him.

Chapter 623: Sky, ten. Meng Hao, seven!

The crimson Blood Demon Mountain was originally sealed as quietly as death. However, after Meng Hao's bow, an aura began to spread out from the figure on the throne.... It filled the entire Blood Demon Mountain, causing a bloody glow to shine up into the sky. In addition, an incredible rumbling sound could be heard.

Even as Meng Hao's heart trembled, his eyes began to shine with a strange light. Earlier, he had suspected that the Blood Demon Mountain had something to do with the Blood Immortal mask. After all, the figure on the throne looked very similar to the figure Meng Hao had seen in the Blood Immortal Legacy tournament all those years ago.

Most shocked of all, however, was true spirit Night. It looked up, its eyes seemingly filled with lightning, its expression one of disbelief. The fact that Meng Hao could acquire the approval of the Frost Soil Demon Mountain was shocking enough.

But now, it was obvious that he had a connection to the Blood Demon Mountain. The reaction of the Blood Demon Mountain caused true spirit Night to involuntarily tremble mentally.

"Three portions of light from the Frost Soil. One portion from the Blood Demon. Together, that is four portions! Could it be that he really is the person Lord Li has been waiting for?

"If he is, then how come I can't sense anything familiar about him?! He has no aura that I recognize, which does not conform with the requirements of Lord Li. That was why I didn't bestow him with the qualifications originally!" Night's eyes glittered as it looked at Meng Hao. It could clearly examine all of Meng Hao's person, but no matter how it looked through everything... it still felt that Meng Hao was full of mysteries.

"Are you, or are you not that person?" thought Night. "Regardless of whether you are or aren't, bowing nine times to the three mountains is not simple matter. He still does not have enough approval. The approval in

the beginning is only the first step.

“The approval of a Demon Mountain can give rise to three portions of light. The path to the Third Heaven depends on the approval of all three Demon Mountains. Three to nine portions of light make it possible for that path to appear!

“However... the path that appears with three portions of light is ordinary. Failure on that path will lead to the revoking of the qualifications. Only the path of six portions gives the participant three chances at the legacy, once every five hundred years!

“As for the path of nine portions of light... that is the legendary great circle. When it appears, failure still is followed by nine more chances, like a blessing from above. The path of nine portions is also called One Step to Immortality. If that person is already an Immortal, their Cultivation base can rise up to another realm. If they are not Immortal, they can achieve Immortal Ascension!

“I must see exactly how many portions of light this fellow will acquire!” Night’s eyes glittered as it looked at Meng Hao.

In contrast to true spirit Night, Ke Jiusi’s thoughts were not so complex. He watched on with an admiring smile, sincerely desiring that Meng Hao could acquire as many portions of light as possible.

Meng Hao took a deep breath as he looked at the quaking Blood Demon Mountain. Then he clasped hands and bowed for the fifth time.

At the same time, it was his second bow to the Blood Demon Mountain!

“Junior is connected by destiny to the ancient Temple of Doom. I formed a Blood Violet Nascent Soul. I gained enlightenment to realize that a boundless will of life exists within blood. Therefore, I bow to you, senior Demon Mountain.” Meng Hao’s bow was deep as he spoke these words.

Instantly, roaring could be heard from the Blood Demon Mountain. Bloody beams of light rose up into the air, interlocking to gradually form a blood-colored Demon flower. As soon as the flower appeared, a boundless radiance shone out. Crimson sparks suddenly appeared in the figure’s

right hand.

This was the fifth portion of light. Two Demon Mountains, five portions of light. It caused the scene up above in the air to grow a bit clearer. As of now, it was possible to see two enormous land masses floating in the air far, far up above.

Each of these land masses were matchlessly majestic as they floated there up above, like two Holy Lands!

They were high, high up, as if they were looking down upon the entire world. They... really were Holy Lands. It didn't matter if you were speaking of the Demon Immortal Sect or the Ninth Mountain and Sea as a whole, the Ji Clan and the Fang Clan Holy Lands were secondary only to the palace of Lord Li himself!

Even now as in the past, they were illustrious and famous throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea, these enormous land masses that had continued on down throughout the ages.

Five portions of light filled Heaven and Earth. Suddenly, though, the fifth portion of light suddenly flickered again. Next, something happened that exceeded even the imaginations of true spirit Night and Ke Jiusi.

Even as the sparks appeared on the hand of the figure on the Blood Immortal Mountain, the figure's eyes suddenly began to shine with a bizarre light. It stared at Meng Hao, then slowly lifted up its left hand and stretched it out, as if it were asking for something.

Meng Hao's mind shook, and he lowered his hand to his bag of holding. Immediately, the Blood Immortal Mask appeared in his hand.

As soon as Meng Hao took out the Blood Immortal mask, the figure on the Blood Demon Mountain slowly withdrew its hand. A voice suddenly echoed out that seemed to come from countless years in the past.

"Put on my mask."

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he placed the Blood Immortal mask onto his face.

Boom!

Redness instantly spread out to cover Meng Hao's entire body. His hair became red, his robe turned red, and in the blink of an eye, his entire body was surrounded by bands of blood-colored light. It looked almost like a sea of blood was raging around him.

In this instant, Meng Hao was the incarnation of the Blood Immortal.

Behind him, an image slowly came into being. An enormous throne was visible, seated upon which was a woman whose face could not be seen. Her hair swirled around her, and she seemed to be gazing off into the distance.

After the image appeared, the figure on the Blood Demon Mountain trembled. A huge roaring sound could be heard coming from inside it, and at the same time, a blazing tongue of Demonfire ignited. It instantly illuminated more of the sky above.

The entire sky was filled with the light of five portions of light, and now, close to six portions illuminated it even further. Within the light, an illusory staircase could be seen, leading up, up to the two Holy Lands and... the Third Heaven.

True spirit Night gasped. "He... he... he actually has destiny connecting him to the Blood Demon!!" Its face was a mass of disbelief. It could scarcely believe that Meng Hao would have destiny connected to both the Frost Soil Demon Mountain and the Blood Demon Mountain. It was really shocking good fortune.

True spirit Night looked at Meng Hao, its mind spinning. "The Demon Mountains lift the seal. They have spoken of their own volition, which could never happen unless a certain level of destiny existed. Since such destiny has clearly reached the necessary level, it shows that Meng Hao is none other than a successor of the Blood Demon!

"He formed a Blood Demon Divine Clone, has a treasure made of the skin of the Blood Demon, and has even formed what is essentially a Demon Nascent Soul. Is this person... a Cultivator, or a Greater Demon of my generation!?"

“Furthermore, he hasn’t even performed the sixth bow! And yet, the sixth portion of light has almost fully appeared already.”

Meng Hao clasped hands to perform his sixth bow, the third to the Blood Demon Mountain. “The kindness of the Blood Immortal legacy. The kindness of the Blood Mastiff in the way it escorted me. Junior will never forget these things for the rest of his life. Once again, senior, I bow to you, the essence of the mountain!”

After he bowed, the mountain rumbled. An endless echo could be heard, along with an ancient voice which slowly spoke out from within the Blood Demon Mountain.

“Agreed!” said the voice. A single word. However, as soon as that single word could be heard, the Demonfire towered up. This represented the complete and utter approval of the Blood Demon Mountain toward Meng Hao.

At the same time, light shone up into the sky. This was no longer six portions of light, but seven portions!

The sky had room for a total of ten portions, and now Meng Hao occupied seven!

The seven portions of light illuminated the majority of the boundless sky. The two Holy Lands were now even clearer. Gradually becoming visible were the restrictive spells which had sealed the Holy Lands for so many years. Also visible were countless vines hanging downward.

They looked as if they had been in confinement for far, far too long, and were finally being revealed at long last!

An unsightly expression appeared on the face of true spirit Night, and complex feelings arose in its heart. It knew that it was incapable of doing anything to revoke the qualifications of this person. Once six portions of light were revealed, a minimum of three chances were guaranteed.

Even if Meng Hao completely failed now, Night was incapable of harming him in the slightest, let alone demand the continental mirror be returned.

As long as Meng Hao had the qualifications, it was incapable of doing anything to him. It could only watch on helplessly as Meng Hao proceeded onward at will.

“Three mountains, nine bows. Already six bows have been performed. The final three bows are for the Withering Flame Demon Mountain. That is the most difficult mountain of all. Even if he already has seven portions of light, it will still be impossible for him to get nine total!” Night’s eyes flickered as it looked at Meng Hao.

Ke Jiusi also looked at Meng Hao, a thoughtful expression in his eyes.

Meng Hao closed his eyes and calmed his heart. Then he looked up toward the last of the Demon Mountains. This was the mountain of raging flame, with a pit of fire at its peak that countless withered figures struggled to enter.

It almost seemed to be a location of reincarnation. By leaping into the pit, they could release themselves from worldly cares, find their true bodies, then leave and be reborn anew.

However, what Meng Hao saw was that every person who leaped into the fiery pit would once again be born as a withered figure, who would then again begin to climb. It seemed to be an endless cycle.

The more he watched, the more he realized that this was reincarnation.

Actually, this mountain’s true name was Reincarnation Demon Mountain. As for the name Withering Flame, it fit with its appearance, but not the meaning of the mountain. Of course, the Greater Demon which had given rise to this mountain had a technique called the Withering Flame Demon Magic True Self Dao.

Therefore, the name Withering Flame was also not inappropriate.

Meng Hao looked silently at the Reincarnation Demon Mountain in front of him. He had been most confident regarding the Frost Soil, and secondarily, the Blood Demon. The only mountain he had no confidence in was this Reincarnation Demon Mountain.

If there was any destiny connecting him to this mountain, then at best it

would be the technique he had acquired but not mastered in the Second Plane, the Withering Flame Demon Magic True Self Dao.

Even as he hesitated, the Reincarnation Demon Mountain began to rumble of its own accord. Black smoke poured out from the fiery pit, rushing out to fill the sky, followed by endless flames.

Next, a voice spoke out from within, ancient and emotionless.

“Reincarnation Mountain needs no bows!

“Many years ago, there was a withered slave on this mountain who said that life is pain, and that he wished to free himself from the sea of bitterness. That sea is like an inescapable flame which can burn everything.

“Afterwards, he called this place Withering Flame, and made a solemn vow that he would eradicate the sea of bitterness. He would ensure that all living things no longer experience bitterness, but rather, freedom!

“If you were in his place, what would you do?!”

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Note from Er Gen (this was actually posted as an entire chapter, as Er Gen did not post any other chapters on that day):

It snowed today, quite heavily. After coming back from the funeral procession, I cried for a long time.

I’ve never cried like that before, and I don’t know why I did this time.

I don’t feel like writing now, nor do I want to do anything. I just want to have some peace and quiet.

Brothers and Sisters, this will be my last day off. I’ll get back to work as usual tomorrow.

Thank you for your understanding. Thank you.

Chapter 624: Lofty Aspirations!

As the archaic voice from the Reincarnation Mountain echoed out, the entire mountain filled with a roaring sound. As the black smoke rose up into the air, and enormous, burning incense stick flew out from the mountain. It stood straight up in mid-air, surrounded by mist.

The incense burned slowly, emitting a smoke that fused with the mist around it so that few would be able to tell the difference between the two. It made it impossible to tell if the mist was concealed within the smoke, or the smoke gave rise to the mist.

The archaic voice once again echoed out into the silence. "If you have not provided an answer by the time the incense burns out, then the fire of the Reincarnation Mountain will not give up even half a portion of light."

After that, the world was silent. Meng Hao stood in a daze, looking at the Reincarnation Mountain. He could see the black smoke and the dense flames spewing out of the mouth of the volcano. It made it seem as if the entire world was made of smoke and fire.

The sky had room for ten portions of light. He had acquired seven from the Frost Soil Demon Mountain and the Blood Demon Mountain. Right now, the remaining three portions were covered by the fire and smoke. Everything was dim and hazy....

Especially shocking was that the haziness affected the other seven portions of light up in the sky. At a glance, everything seemed to be covered with smoke. Trying to look up at the two Holy Lands was like trying to look at flowers in the fog, or at the moon in troubled waters.

"If I were in his place, what would I do?" thought Meng Hao. The Reincarnation Mountain did not require bowing, but rather, the heart and the mind. It required the essence of the person, something that could not be worn away by the passage of time.

Ke Jiusi watched on thoughtfully. Long ago, he had earned the same qualifications as Meng Hao. However, when facing the Reincarnation Mountain, he had only been able acquire two portions of light. That had

left him with a sky filled with eight portions of light. In the end, he had failed to reach the Holy Lands.

As he watched Meng Hao now, he was reminded of himself all those years ago, when he had awoken to find the Demon Immortal Sect in ruins, and himself alone.

True spirit Night's pupils constricted as it stared at Meng Hao. It knew that of the nine bows and three mountains of the Second Heaven, the Reincarnation Mountain was the most difficult! That was because... this mountain asked first regarding the heart, second regarding the Dao, and third regarding reincarnation!

"What will his answer be?" thought Night. According to its determination, Meng Hao was not the person it and Lord Li were waiting for. He was not destined to be the successor. However, Night was very curious as to what Meng Hao would say in response to the question from the Reincarnation Mountain.

As of this point, true spirit Night and Ke Jiusi had both noticed something, although they didn't seem to care. Far off in the distance, a figure had appeared in the air, and was gazing at Meng Hao.

It was a woman, somewhat flirtatious in appearance, and extremely beautiful. It was, of course... Zhixiang!

Everyone from South Heaven had left. Only Meng Hao and Zhixiang remained behind!

In contrast to Meng Hao, the reason Zhixiang hadn't left was because she had no intention of returning to Planet South Heaven. Were it not for Meng Hao suddenly acquiring legacy qualifications, she would have long since left.

She looked over at Meng Hao and the third Demon Mountain, her expression one of both blankness and complex emotions.

"The augury of the almighty members of the Sect, which came at the expense of generations of accumulated skill, indicated that the successor of Lord Li would rise up from Planet East Victory. Only a few people

within the Sect know of this.

“Meng Hao comes from Planet South Heaven. He is not the person decreed by fate to be the successor.” Zhixiang let out a soft, inward sigh.

A moment later, Meng Hao’s eyes glittered.

“There are many possible answers to the question posed by the Reincarnation Mountain,” he thought. “Many theories could be proposed. If I assumed the identity of that slave of the Reincarnation Mountain, then I would have many choices in front of me.” Hundreds of ideas flitted through Meng Hao’s mind. After all, he was a scholar, and he still vividly remembered the Imperial Examinations he had attended in the State of Zhao, despite the fact that they had occurred hundreds of years ago.

Subconsciously, he analyzed the clues provided by the words given him.

After a few dozen breaths of time passed, his eyes began to glitter brightly. He opened his mouth to speak, but then was shocked to discover that he was incapable of speaking out the answer he had formulated.

It was as if as of this moment, his mouth had been sealed up, and he was a mute!

Meng Hao’s mind trembled as he looked at the Reincarnation Mountain.

Ke Jiusi looked at Meng Hao and then slowly said, “Reincarnation Mountain asks three questions, and then seals your mouth. Any answer which does not conform to your soul, cannot be uttered. This first question is asked of your heart.

“Open your mind and heart. Search your soul. Find the true answer within you, and you will be able to speak it out. You are searching for your heart, your nature, your self.” A profound look flickered within Ke Jiusi’s eyes.

Meng Hao was silent for a bit longer. He looked at the incense stick, and saw that it was already one third burned out. His eyes filled with a complicated look, and then he closed them.

Everything was quiet....

“There was a withered slave on this mountain who said that life is pain,” thought Meng Hao. “He wished to free himself from the sea of bitterness. That sea is like an inescapable flame that can burn everything. Afterward, he called this place Withering Flame, and made a solemn vow that he would eradicate the sea of bitterness. He would ensure that all living things no longer experience bitterness, but rather, freedom!”

“That was his choice. Perhaps that person was none other than one of the illustrious three Greater Demons of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, Withering Flame Demon!”

“I don’t know how the other two Greater Demons of these Demon Mountains appeared, but as for Reincarnation Mountain, if even a single slave could become a Greater Demon... then this mountain is a defiance of the Heavens!” Meng Hao took a deep breath and then calmed himself inwardly.

“If I were him... facing the sea of bitterness, what would I do?” Meng Hao murmured. “Would I do the same as him, vow to eradicate the sea of bitterness? Or... would I make a different choice?” He gradually forgot that he was in the Demon Immortal Sect. He forgot everything as he immersed himself in his mind and heart, as he sank himself into his own soul.

He whispered to himself, seeking for the true answer within the depths of his own self.

Suddenly, a vision appeared to him. Within the vision, he was one of the slaves on Reincarnation Mountain. He climbed the mountain constantly, struggling to reach the summit and the pit of flames. Finally, he jumped in to be burned up by the flames and the molten rock inside.

When he opened his eyes again, he was at the bottom of the mountain, where he once again began to stride the same path as before. Over and over again, this happened, an endless cycle.

“He was right, but also wrong,” murmured Meng Hao.

“This could be viewed as a sea of bitterness, but also... not. If you believe everything to be bitterness, then it is. If you believe that everything is not bitterness, then it is not.

“Leaping into the pit of fire represents death. Reappearance at the bottom of the volcano represents birth. The climb up the mountain represents the process of life....

“I would not swear to eradicate this place. Nor would I sink myself into cowardliness. What I have... is the determination to set my foot where I wish to set it. I control my own fate. I may not be able to control my own birth, but I can decide how I die.

“And the final destination will definitely NOT be the pit at the top of the volcano.” Although he had been murmuring, Meng Hao’s voice actually echoed through the entire Demon Immortal Sect, even though he didn’t realize it.

As his voice echoed about, Meng Hao’s vision changed. His incarnation as a withered slave no longer conformed to the cycle. It did not leap into the fiery pit, but rather, stood outside of the volcano. Unlike the other withered slaves around him, he looked up into the sky, his expression no longer blank, but rather, awash with emotion.

It was as if... he had awakened. It was as if a black and white painting had suddenly been splashed with color.

He turned his back on the fiery pit and began to stride away from the mountain. He allowed himself to drop into the abyss, running counter to the fiery pit.... Finally, a smile appeared on his face.

“The path of life does not just run from the bottom of a mountain to its top....” he said lightly. In his mind, his incarnation as a withered slave fell off of Reincarnation Mountain. He did not turn to look back, but rather strode off into the distance.

Behind him, the countless other people on Reincarnation Mountain continued to repeat the same actions they did day after day. As for him, he drew further and further away from the mountain....

“If you believe it to be a sea of bitterness, then a sea of bitterness it is. If you believe it to simply be scenery on the path of life, then scenery it is.... The sea of bitterness never ends, but the scenery does.

“That is my answer.”

Meng Hao opened his eyes.

In that instant, he heard his own voice echoing out around him.

Ke Jiusi was shaken inwardly as he looked at Meng Hao. Meng Hao's answer far exceeded what he could have anticipated. He had assumed Meng Hao would chose to eradicate the sea of bitterness, and then be reborn.

“If he does not die prematurely,” thought Ke Jiusi, “then the possibilities for his future are incalculable!” The shock in his eyes gradually turned into admiration. “His Cultivation base is nowhere close to mine, but his heart... is far bigger!”

Even more astonished was true spirit Night. He stared at Meng Hao, his mind roaring. Echoing in his mind were Meng Hao's words: “The sea of bitterness never ends, but the scenery does.”

“Such a choice seems simple,” thought Night, “but if you analyze it carefully... his ambition far exceeds that of others! The makeup of his inner being is infinitely large!

“To him, the sea of bitterness can be likened to scenery on the path of life! The further he travels, the more scenery he will encounter!

“Reincarnation examines of the heart. It inquires of one's essence, one's nature and one's self. His answer cannot be false. This man's will... although spoken lightly, can shake the Heavens!”

Off in the distance, Zhixiang was breathing heavily. She had long since come to the conclusion that Meng Hao was beyond ordinary. But now that she had personally heard the expression of his heart, she suddenly realized that she had underestimated him.

“His choice represents his heart. It doesn't matter if you talk about South Heaven or the Ninth Mountain and Sea, if he can survive, then all of this here will be a mere rest stop on his journey.

“As he strides forward, everything in existence will be forced to do

nothing more than watch him walk off into the distance....”

As of now, no more mist or fire was visible coming out of Reincarnation Mountain. Even the incense stick had ceased burning. Everything was incredibly quiet.

Meng Hao looked at Reincarnation Mountain, and it seemed as if the mountain were looking back at him.

After the space of a few breaths, a shocking roaring sound could be heard that split Heaven and Earth. Everything began to quake and tremble.

“I shall bestow favor upon him with high aspirations!” said the grim, ancient voice. The voice words echoed out in all directions, a clear approval of Meng Hao.

At the same time, endless flames shot up into the sky, illuminating the firmament. Before, there were seven portions of light, but now, the light expanded as one more portion was added.

The entire sky was brightly lit by the eight portions of light which seemed to connect directly to the Third Heaven. The two Holy Lands were becoming increasingly clear.

There was also an incredible natural power that erupted from within the Reincarnation Mountain and then shot toward Meng Hao.

His body shook as his Cultivation base began to climb.

Chapter 625: I Am Still Searching!

Note from Deathblade: This chapter mentions “the Dao.” Instead of having a ton of footnotes, please take just a moment to read the following short bit of information about “the Dao.” In Chinese, the character dao 道, actually has a lot of different meanings. Here are some of the definitions of the character itself: road, way, path, course, direction, say, talk, speak, truth, principle, and of course “The Dao” of Daoism. Keep these things in mind as you read!

*

His Cultivation base instantly began to rotate, and his hair rose up into the air around him. Power of Heaven and Earth came out of the Reincarnation Mountain, filled with a unique aura, to pour into Meng Hao’s body. It entered through his pores, merging with him, causing his Cultivation base to spin more and more rapidly.

Meng Hao could hear his own heartbeat. Each thump gave rise to a rumbling that filled his body. Cracking sounds could be heard as his body gradually grew taller.

He became more slender, more charming, and as his hair danced around him, the Demonic air about him grew even more intense.

Meng Hao’s Cultivation base was already half a step into Spirit Severing. In fact, when he entered the Eighth Anima, he could be considered true Spirit Severing; his battle with the Patriarch Huyan had thoroughly established how truly powerful he was.

If he wanted to, Meng Hao could simply close his eyes for a bit and attempt his first Severing. If he succeeded, he would have a Domain.

However, the matter of a Domain was far too important. Spirit Severing was a demarcation between Immortal and mortal, so that decision was not one that Meng Hao would make lightly. He needed enlightenment, from his life force, from his life in general. He needed to search for the path that led to understanding, then naturally, gain enlightenment of his own Domain. When he took that first step from being a mortal to being

Immortal, that was the time for Spirit Severing!

In addition to those reasons, there was another reason. Meng Hao was very stubborn when it came to his Cultivation base. He did not want to use the Eighth Anima to enter Spirit Severing. He had a Perfect Foundation, as well as a Perfect Core. As for his Nascent Souls, he had used his own methods to acquire Perfection.

And yet, although merging his eight Nascent Souls into one seemed Perfect, that was not the limit!

“I need to form a ninth Nascent Soul!” A strange light gleamed in his eyes, and the ambition within him grew even stronger. He had started upon this path in his Cultivation, so he would do everything possible to acquire the pinnacle of good fortune.

Right now, his body rumbled as the power of Heaven and Earth from the Reincarnation Mountain’s aura surged into his body. His Cultivation base climbed up until it reached a certain point where it couldn’t go any higher. In accord with Meng Hao’s will, it settled and began to form together in his dantian region.

“My Five Elements Nascent Souls stem from my own enlightenment. Any outside power is auxiliary!” Within Meng Hao’s dantian region, the power of Heaven and Earth continued to surge in, slowly transforming into a vortex.

Surrounding the vortex were Meng Hao’s eight astonishing Nascent Souls!

“Wind power of the roc was gifted to me by the benefactor in the Rebirth Cave. It was hidden within my body for years, to eventually be refined into my sixth Nascent Soul!” A strange light shone in Meng Hao’s eyes. With every breath he took, more power of Heaven and Earth flowed into him.

“Lighting of Heavenly Tribulation. I experienced it on multiple occasions, starting with Foundation Establishment, all the way to the Nascent Soul stage. After enough accumulated within my body, I refined it into my seventh Nascent Soul!” Meng Hao’s insides rumbled as if with thunder, and the vortex in his dantian region spun faster and faster.

“Fleshly Sanctification allowed me to step foot into Spirit Severing. I congealed Qi and blood to form my eighth Nascent Soul!” The roaring grew more intense, causing Ke Jiusi to stare, and a strange gleam to appear in the eyes of true spirit Night.

A look of disbelief could be seen on Zhixiang’s face.

“This time, I will form a ninth Nascent Soul... purely with power from the outside.

“Now, if I want to make a ninth Nascent Soul purely from outside power,” thought Meng Hao, “well then... what I need to first do is reach... Qi Condensation, Foundation Establishment, Core Formation, and finally, concoct them into a Nascent Soul!”

Meng Hao’s hair whipped about in chaos, as if a wild gale was sweeping by. His clothes also fluttered madly. He was now thoroughly submerged in the power of Heaven and Earth from the aura of the Reincarnation Mountain, which surged around him in a vortex.

The vortex rapidly shrank, sucked in by Meng Hao. As that happened, his eyes grew increasingly radiant. Within his dantian region, a rumbling sound could be heard. The vortex was condensed to the maximum, to the level of the great circle of Qi Condensation. Then it began to form into Dao Pillars!

Dao Pillars indicated Foundation Establishment!

The sight of it caused Ke Jiusi to watch with even more concentration.

“He’s going to form another Nascent Soul. He’s cultivating... the Sublime Spirit Scripture!”

True spirit Night watched on silently, staring deeply at Meng Hao.

Most shocked of all was Zhixiang. Her eyes were wide as she watched Meng Hao absorbing the spiritual energy. She couldn’t help but clench her teeth, a pained expression on her face.

“That’s the aura of the Reincarnation Mountain. Meng Hao... is actually using that aura to form a Nascent Soul!! If I were able to absorb the aura,

it would be incredibly beneficial to my Demon Immortal Body!”

Even as desperate pain filled Zhixiang’s heart, the rumbling vortex around Meng Hao completely disappeared, having been fully absorbed by him. Meng Hao was now a full head taller than he was before. An illusory aura surrounded him, making his entire person seem as if he were alternating between reality and illusion.

He took a deep breath, clasped hands and then bowed toward the Reincarnation Mountain.

The mountain did not need bows, but Meng Hao bowed anyway, because of the kindness of the mountain.

When he rose up, the Reincarnation Mountain rumbled again. Black smoke roiled out, and flames shot up into the air, filling the sky. The smoke gradually formed together into a figure.

It was a man, wearing a black robe, his features unclear. However, he emanated a feeling of indescribable age that spread out in all directions.

He seemed to be looking at Meng Hao. After a moment passed, a hoarse voice could be heard, filled with cold emotionlessness.

“When Withering Flame left the mountain, he wished to borrow a Demon heart from me. At that time, I asked him a question.

“‘What is the Dao!?’

“I have asked the same question of many people, and only three have given me answers worthy of remembering. One of them said that the Dao is a path. There are three thousand great Daos, and thus, three thousand paths. Different paths for different people, nothing more, nothing less. One should continue forward, regardless of whether or not there is a path beneath one’s feet! The person who provided that answer... became Lord Li!

“The second answer was that the Dao is eternal and unchangeable. It is the only truth in Heaven and Earth. It is possible to look at it, but never touch it... to understand it, but never be able to explain it. If you understand, you understand. If you don’t understand... then even spending

your whole life searching will not gain you enlightenment. The person who spoke those words became Lord Ji.

“The third answer was provided by Withering Flame. He said that the Dao is the heart, and that the heart is obsession. His desire to eradicate the sea of bitterness was an obsession that took him over. It grew deeper and deeper. Were he to have truly eradicated the sea of bitterness, then his Dao... would be a natural law of Heaven and Earth!

“Eternity is always here. He may have perished, but the Dao exists forever.

“He said that all the rules and laws that exist in the world have their basis in the powerful experts that existed on the path, as well as the realization of their Daos!

“If a person’s Dao is the belief that the sky must be separated into periods of night and day, then the Heavens will provide such a cycle.

“Life can be extinguished, but the Dao exists forever. Life... is lived in order to leave a good name throughout the ages after one dies, to cause one’s Dao to remain, to transform into natural law, to be without regret.

“Because of his answer, he was able to borrow one of my three third-grade Demon Hearts.

“Now, you must answer me. In your belief, what is the Dao? You have the time it takes one incense stick to burn, and you may not refrain from answering.”

As Meng Hao listened to the words of the Reincarnation Mountain, his heart filled with great waves. He could identify with Lord Li’s answer. As for Lord Ji’s answer, it also contained truth.

As for the answer given by Greater Demon Withering Flame that year, it caused Meng Hao’s mind to tremble like a seething ocean. Perhaps that answer was also the truth.

“Is the reason that the Reincarnation Mountain can only remember these three answers, because those three answers fully explain the meaning of the character Dao 道?” He stood there silently.

“What is the Dao?” he asked himself. A glow appeared in his eyes, but he couldn’t think of an answer. He had heard many people use this character, Dao, but down to this day it only felt as if he were groping about on the edges of its meaning.

Even as Meng Hao sank into thought, a second incense burner appeared from within the black smoke. The smoke churned, and the incense stick began to burn.

Everything was still and quiet. The incense stick burned slowly, and time passed. However, Meng Hao still did not provide an answer. His eyes were filled with a blank look.

Soon, the incense stick was reaching its end. Ninety percent had burned. Ke Jiusi sighed as he looked at Meng Hao, a look of pity in his eyes.

True spirit Night was silent, but it also sighed inwardly. “So, it turns out he is not the person Lord Li is waiting for....”

Zhixiang’s heart was filled with complex emotions. She looked at Meng Hao, and then the incense stick which was almost burned out. She shook her head.

It was at this moment that Meng Hao’s eyes began to shine brightly. The blankness from before vanished. He looked up at the Reincarnation Mountain and slowly began to speak.

“I don’t know what the answer is,” he murmured. “My Cultivation base won’t permit me to understand what the Dao is....”

“To me, the Dao is very simple. It is talking, speaking, opening your mouth, and letting other people open their mouths. All of that is the Dao, speaking. Speaking the words from your heart, speaking out the thoughts you wish to express.

“It doesn’t require enlightenment, nor obsession. It doesn’t require a path beneath your feet. Perhaps it is the first voice of all living creatures, of everything under the Heavens.

“When that voice can be heard, it is the Dao, it is speaking!” Meng Hao had organized his thoughts and spoken out what he understood about the

Dao, based upon his current realm.

He didn't know if what he had said was true or correct. In fact, he hadn't wanted to speak at all, but he had no choice but to ignore those feelings. All he could do was explain what he understood about the Dao.

By this time, the incense stick had burned down to the end. It flickered, on the verge of being completely extinguished. "At the same time," he continued, "when that voice speaks, it represents a direction!

"The boundless Heavens and Earth are the final resting place of all living things. Life is like a journey, filled with various scenery, various paths.

"Sometimes, you might think there is only one path for you. Sometimes, your heart's obsession creates a path.

"As for the Dao, it is a direction. That direction can guide you through your life. When you are faced with countless decisions, it can lead you down the paths you must tread. In the end... it can help you pick which path to take!

"It is formed after one experiences the vicissitudes of life, the cleansing of time, and the understanding which comes from experiencing the world. It can be hidden in any time, place, direction, or action....

"That is my understanding of the Dao. It points in a direction, and gives me the strength to proceed onward. Perhaps it doesn't even exist, or perhaps it is everywhere.

"As for me, I am still searching for it...." He lifted his head up to look at the Reincarnation Mountain.

The Reincarnation Mountain was silent. Ke Jiusi was silent. True spirit Night was silent.

Zhixiang was also silent.

Chapter 626: Ninth Nascent Soul, Demon Nascent Soul!

The incense stick burned out!

An intense rumbling could be heard from within the Reincarnation Mountain, seemingly in approval of Meng Hao. The sound of it echoed about in all directions, causing Heaven and Earth to shake. The black smoke churned, and the flames within swept about in all directions. The light in the sky grew brighter to a shocking degree.

One and a half portions of light were added.

The sky had room for ten portions of light. As of now, the three Greater Demon Mountains were illuminated by nine portions.

The Heavens were filled with brightness, as if it were high noon. The two Holy Lands of the Third Heaven were now fully illuminated. The vegetation and buildings there were clearly distinguishable.

In fact, it was also possible to see that in one of the Holy Lands, an enormous pagoda rose up, upon which was carved a huge character.

Ji!

The character seemed ancient, although that was something that mortals would not be able to see. Even most Cultivators, unless they were sensitive to the power of Time, would have difficulty picking up any clues. However, to Meng Hao, that sensation was secondary to that of the Holy Lands themselves.

The Holy Lands had existed for tens upon tens of thousands of years before the Ji Character came to be.

That made sense according to the legends regarding Lord Ji. The Ji Clan originally did not have that surname. It was only after seizing Lordship of the Ninth Mountain and Sea that the name was changed, and the Heavens were placed onto top of the Li Clan.

An ancient voice spoke out from the Reincarnation Mountain. Although

the voice was cold, it seemed to be filled with sentiment as it slowly reverberated out.

“The Dao is a direction.... The words of an innocent child.

“I will remember this answer.” Even as the voice spoke, the power of Heaven and Earth contained in the aura of the Reincarnation Mountain erupted out from the mouth of the volcano. It was so thick that it seemed as if it would take on corporeal form, as if it were actually a waterfall. The sheer amount exceeded that of the previous occasion exponentially as it shot toward Meng Hao.

It neared and then surrounded him, rumbling as it formed into a huge vortex with Meng Hao in the very middle. He took a deep breath, like a dragon inhaling, and the power of Heaven and Earth poured into his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth, as well as all the pores in his body. It shot in and then began to accumulate in his dantian region.

It fused into the Dao Pillars, causing a surging power that pushed Meng Hao’s Cultivation base up. The Dao Pillars began to shine with endless light. At the same time, the Nascent Souls inside of him suddenly flew out one by one to float around him.

When the Eighth Nascent Soul appeared, it made a thoroughly astonishing scene.

As the eight Nascent Souls rotated around Meng Hao, shockingly, they too began to absorb the power of Heaven and Earth that contained the aura of the Reincarnation Mountain. It poured into Meng Hao’s body and continued the transformation process that would end with... a ninth Nascent Soul!

Boom!

The endless light from the Dao Pillars exploded into pieces, which then began to form together into a glittering core the size of a grain of rice!

Early Core Formation!

As soon as the core appeared, the speed with which Meng Hao absorbed the power of Heaven and Earth increased by more than ten times. By

adding in the eight Nascent Souls, it only took the space of a few dozen breaths for the boundless vortex surrounding him to rapidly shrink.

After it disappeared, Meng Hao's face flickered. He suddenly looked up, his eyes glowing. There in his dantian region was a core roughly the size of an infant's fist!

The Cultivation base of the core instantly shot upward. Mid Core Formation. Late Core Formation. All the way to... the great circle of Core Formation.

The core emanated colorful lights, and appeared to be a Mottled Core. However, inside of it was a unique aura.... As soon as Meng Hao sensed the aura, he approved it.

It was... Demonic Qi!!

This was a... Demon Core!

The Reincarnation Mountain was the essence of a Greater Demon. One of the withered slaves on the mountain achieved his Dao, then became one of the three Greater Demons who could rebuke the Heavens. From this it could be seen how shocking the Reincarnation Mountain was.

As of now, Meng Hao could see that the power of Heaven and Earth that contained the aura of the Reincarnation Mountain, was actually Demonic Qi. Since he had absorbed Demonic Qi for this cultivation, then naturally, he had produced a Demon Core.

That meant that his ninth Nascent Soul would obviously be... a Demon Nascent Soul.

Ninth Nascent Soul, Demon Nascent Soul!

"With one more round of this power of Heaven and Earth, I can cause my Demon Nascent Soul to appear." His eyes shone with a bizarre light, and he looked up at the Reincarnation Mountain with a look of anticipation.

He could sense the Demon Core within him, at the great circle of Core Formation. He was just one step away from forming a Nascent Soul.

The rumbling from the Reincarnation Mountain gradually faded away, and the mountain returned to normal. Black smoke surged out and flames rose up into the sky. The ancient, cold voice once again sounded out.

“No more questions are required of you.

“As you said, your current realm and Cultivation base do not permit you to know what the Dao is....

“Asking you the third question would result in nothing more but empty talk. You would neither move my heart, nor yours.

“Therefore, not asking the question is the most appropriate course of action.

“However, I am very curious. If your Dao is a direction, and you are still searching, then... have you found any traces of it?” The last question asked by the ancient voice echoed out in all directions.

Meng Hao was silent for a moment. His eyes glowed with reminiscence, but after a long time, he clasped hands toward the Reincarnation Mountain and bowed. When he straightened up, his voice was soft as he began to speak. “Many years ago,” he murmured, “on a night when snow filled the world, I sat together with someone in a horse-drawn carriage.

“It was bitterly cold outside, but there was an oven inside the carriage, making it very warm. It was as if there were two different worlds, separated from each other. At that time, I had just stepped foot into the Cultivation world. I was no longer a mortal, but a Cultivator. When I looked outside at the snow, I felt that I was looking at myself.

“The snow can only exist during the dead of winter. It may yearn for summer days, and for warmth, but if it nears them, it will melt. I am much the same. After striding forward into the Cultivation world, I could not turn my head back, nor could I ever experience the peace and tranquility I once had.” Of course, Meng Hao was thinking back to that year in the State of Zhao, when he had spent some time in the carriage with scholar Zheng Yong. 1

“I was once a mere scholar.... I remember how when I finally left my

hometown. It was raining.... 2

“My life is like snow. I can only exist within winter. I may wish to return to the sunny days of the mortal world, but that is no longer me....

“Life is like a journey, filled with countless different experiences. Perhaps it is best to say that different experience create different scenery on that journey. If you experience bitterly cold wind, you will become snow. If you experience the blazing sun, then you become rain....

“The type of life you experience determines what type of person you will be. That is what makes life wonderful.”

Ke Jiusi looked at Meng Hao, and many thoughts floated up in his mind. He thought of Ke Yunhai, and thought of his own life. What he saw was everything that had happened to him, and this world.

“I’ve already been here for a long time, filled with nostalgia....”

True spirit Night sighed. Meng Hao’s words did not contain some great Dao. However, the words had touched it nonetheless. Before this moment, it would never have believed that some tiny Cultivator who could not stand up to a single blow from it, would be qualified to move it emotionally.

Zhixiang looked at Meng Hao, once again experiencing how extraordinary Meng Hao was. It made her think back to all her own experiences in life.

“To me, the Dao is a direction,” continued Meng Hao. “I think... that such a belief sprouted during that time in the snow. It led me... led me to a place far away.

“Many years later,” he murmured, thinking back to Pill Demon, “I kowtowed to my Master in a world of illusory reincarnation. During that life, I kowtowed three times. The kowtow of Innocence, the kowtow of the Roaming, and the kowtow of Sunset Gazing. At that time, I was enlightened. 3

“In that moment, I understood that life is a journey. Every turn in the path leads to new scenery. My footprints exist on that path, and as to

whether they are deep or shallow, it doesn't matter. All the decisions were mine to make.

“Heaven and Earth are just resting places for the myriads of living creatures. Time represents the passage of hundreds of generations of passing travelers.” 4

Having spoken up to this point, Meng Hao's eyes suddenly shone with a bright light. It seemed that as of this moment, there was something clearly different about him than before.

“That is the direction I chose. Although the way is a bit unclear, there are traces visible.

“Whether you speak of our time on earth, or reincarnation, life is a journey. The sea of bitterness is only one bit of scenery, that's all. The most important thing is to leave our mark on the path that we have walked and experienced.

“As for me, I want to keep walking even further off into the distance!” With that, Meng Hao took a deep breath, clasped hands, and once again bowed deeply to the Reincarnation Mountain.

Laughter echoed out from within Reincarnation Mountain. The echoing laughter caused the black smoke to disperse, and the flames to die out, and the sky to be filled with ripples.

“The resting place for myriads of living creatures? Excellent. Hundreds of generations of passing travelers? Wonderful! And you want to walk further off into the distance? Well said!

“Well, you have answered my three questions. Allow me to provide you some assistance to walk further off into the distance!” As the voice faded away, the Reincarnation Mountain once again began to rumble. This time, the power of Heaven and Earth that exploded out of it was dozens of times stronger than before. It shot out from the mouth of the volcano, shooting through the air toward Meng Hao. It circulated around him and then transformed into a magnificent vortex.

The vortex spun rapidly and then began to pour into Meng Hao.

His mind rumbled, and the multi-colored Demon Core inside his dantian region instantly began to fill with cracks. They spread out, multiplying for the space of a handful of breaths. Finally, the core collapsed, and a tiny, illusory person appeared from within!

The person looked exactly the same as Meng Hao in every way. The only difference was that the Demonic air about it was more obvious. This was Meng Hao's ninth Nascent Soul, the Demon Nascent Soul.

As soon as it appeared, it appeared weak. Its eyes were closed and incapable of being opened, and overall it was completely incapable of even comparing with Meng Hao's eight other Nascent Souls. However, as more of the power of Heaven and Earth poured into it, it began to mature.

Peak of the early Nascent Soul stage!

Mid Nascent Soul stage!

Peak mid Nascent Soul stage!

Late Nascent Soul stage!

Meng Hao's hair whipped about his head and he began to float up into the air. His eight Nascent Souls rotated around him, while the Demon Nascent Soul remained inside, the vortex surrounding it rapidly shrinking. Soon, all of the power of Heaven and Earth was pouring into Meng Hao's body.

The Demon Nascent Soul sucked it all in. Suddenly, the aura of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage radiated out. At the same time, the ninth Nascent Soul flew out from his dantian region to fly around him.

It joined the other Nascent Souls to float in a circle around Meng Hao. Finally, its eyes, which had been closed the entire time, suddenly opened.

Its pupils were green and completely demonic.

Ninth Nascent Soul... Demon Nascent Soul!

Meng Hao's Cultivation base experienced an unprecedented explosion in power.

The wind whipped around him, and Heaven and Earth flashed with a

riot of colors. As of this moment, Meng Hao was the focus of attention of the entire Demon Immortal Sect.

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1. Meng Hao shared the carriage with scholar Zheng Yong in chapter 58.
2. When Meng Hao left for the Southern Domain in chapter 95, the last chapter of Book 1, it was raining.
3. The three kowtows were in the illusory life he lived during the Violet Furnace Lord trial by fire. That part began in chapter 289, and continued for several chapters after.
4. In this part, he is quoting and referencing what he said in chapter 291 in the illusory world of the Violet Furnace Lord trial by fire.

Chapter 627: A True Man!

“Agreed!” said the Reincarnation Mountain, its final word.

As the sound echoed out, a brilliant light surrounded the mountain. It pierced the sky, filling it with ten portions of light. Nine portions of light had already been bright.

As of now, the light was piercing, illuminating everything completely!

Light shone down from up above, filling the entire world with brightness, making the two Holy Lands completely clear.

Now, a tall pagoda was visible on the other Holy Land, upon which a large character could be seen.

Fang!

In the past, Lord Li had two great generals who were the basis of the two Holy Lands. In later generations, one of those generals came to be called Ji. The other was named Fang; had been, and always would be!

Meng Hao’s mind trembled and he took a deep breath. One by one, the nine great Nascent Souls that spun around him reentered his body to sit cross-legged in his dantian region. As they returned, Meng Hao’s Cultivation base climbed up again. He could sense that he now had the power to enter the Ninth Anima!

That would be fearsome power equal to 256 great circle Nascent Soul Cultivation bases, as well as an intense fleshly body power that could reach a shocking realm.

Meng Hao looked up. He saw the Reincarnation Mountain, and then, above all the three Greater Demon Mountains, the fully illuminated Third Heaven.

He could sense an enormous, terrifying pressure weighing down from the Third Heaven. Even with his nine Nascent Souls, it was something he couldn’t possibly even touch.

“Even Spirit Severing would be incapable of breaking through,” thought

Meng Hao, his eyes glittering. “Only a higher stage, higher than Dao Seeking, would have even a chance.”

The voice of true spirit Night suddenly could be heard echoing about, filled with complex emotions. “You acquired ten portions of light.... I never thought that could happen.

“If you acquired only six, I wouldn’t stand in your way. That would especially be the case if you acquired nine. But you acquired ten.

“The sky has room for ten portions, and you occupied them all....

“Nine portions of light qualifies you to have nine chances. As for ten portions of light.... you are qualified to unlimited chances. As long as no one acquires the legacy of Lord Li before you do, then most likely, that legacy belongs to you.

“However, I advise you not to attempt to break through to the Third Heaven before Immortal Ascension.”

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered as he looked up to see true spirit Night staring at him.

Ke Jiusi was silent for a moment, then looked at Meng Hao and quietly said, “Ten portions of light is the pinnacle. I also advise you not to attempt to break through this time. The Third Heaven is not a place for those who are not Immortals. Furthermore, the ten portions of light contain incredible good fortune that cannot be acquired unless you are Immortal.”

Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed to Ke Jiusi. As he rose, he looked at him and said, “I want to try.”

Ke Jiusi looked at Meng Hao. When he saw his staunchness, he held his tongue, and did nothing to block his way.

True spirit Night similarly said nothing.

Meng Hao took a breath and then flashed up into the sky, transforming into a beam of colorful light. He shot directly toward the Third Heaven, and the Fang Clan Holy Land.

As soon as he flew up into the air, everything began to shake. An

enormous pressure descended, causing Meng Hao's body to instantly stop in mid-air. It was as if all the bones in his body were making cracking sounds. His entire person felt as if it were being grabbed by a giant hand, and then crushed into pieces.

At the same time, something that seemed like a giant net wrapped him, causing his body to weaken rapidly.

All of this was when he had just started out! He was still far, far away from the Third Heaven!

Meng Hao's eyes flickered as, without hesitation, he entered directly into the Third Anima.

Three great Nascent Souls merged together. The fact that he had a Cultivation base equal to four great circle Nascent Souls was secondary; his fleshly body power was the key. Meng Hao lifted his head up and laughed.

Boom!

The pressure surrounding him quavered, and the force wrapping up his Cultivation base loosened a bit. Meng Hao once again flew upward, shooting up roughly 3,000 meters.

The sky was 30,000 meters high, which meant that Meng Hao had only forced his way ten percent of the way toward the Third Heaven.

In his position 3,000 meters up, Meng Hao began to pant. His body felt as if it were sinking into waters of weakness. The force wrapping around him emitted intense pressure, causing his body to distort.

"Fifth Anima!"

Boom!

Meng Hao's body shook. He now had a Cultivation base equal to 16 great circle Nascent Souls, and his fleshly body was close to Spirit Severing. He was able to cast off the pressure surrounding him, once again forcing his way up. Soon, he had reached the 6,000 meter mark.

At that point, the pressure in the area bore down with overbearing

aggression. It seemed ready to crush Meng Hao in an instant. His face flickered, but he didn't hesitate.

“Seventh Anima!”

After entering the Seventh Anima, the power of 64 great circle Nascent Souls filled him, and his fleshly body was at the Spirit Severing stage. Meng Hao lifted his head up and roared, then forced himself up, fighting back against the pressure. Roaring echoed out as he faced directly against the increasingly intense pressure to fly up another 3,000 meters. He had now reached a total height of 9,000 meters.

By this point, Meng Hao was panting. The pressure here was such that it would instantly destroy any Cultivator who was under Spirit Severing, exterminating them in mind and spirit.

As for Meng Hao, if he didn't have his incredibly power fleshly body, then he too would be destroyed. His face was now extremely unsightly.

However, a smile could also be seen on his face, and a wild determination appeared in his eyes.

“Eighth Anima!”

Boom!!

Meng Hao laughed toward the Heavens as his Cultivation base exploded up. His Cultivation base was risen up to a power equivalent to 128 great circle Nascent Souls. His hair whipped about and his clothes fluttered. His fleshly body grew even more intensely powerful. Cracking sounds could be heard as he seemed to grow taller. Within him, every inch of bone, flesh, and blood burst with endless power.

His fleshly body grew even more powerful than before!

The Eighth Anima was something that could imperil First Severing Cultivators!

Patriarch Huyan, who was of the great circle of the First Severing, couldn't stand up to a single blow when Meng Hao was in the Eighth Anima!

The pressure surrounding Meng Hao shattered, and his body flew up again. The sight of it caused Ke Jiusi to be moved visibly. A profound look appeared in the eyes of true spirit Night.

To them, Meng Hao's Cultivation base wasn't even worth mentioning. However, Meng Hao's will, his determination, and his decisiveness caused their minds to tremble.

Off in the distance, Zhixiang was staring fixedly at the scene. Her heart was also trembling, moved by Meng Hao's persistence, perseverance, and tenacity.

Although Meng Hao's Cultivation base was far from any of these people, he had already forced his way to the 12,000 meter position. Such a high position was nearly at the halfway point. The pressure was intense, and as Meng Hao neared, he coughed up a mouthful of blood.

His fleshly body was powerful, but underneath this pressure, it twisted and distorted, emitting groaning and creaking sounds. Even the Cultivation base power of 128 great circle Nascent Nascent Souls was defeated with a boom.

As of this moment, it seemed he had reached the end....

Meng Hao's eyes filled with an intense light. He could accept that he couldn't go further, but what he couldn't accept was that he couldn't reach the halfway point!

"Ninth Anima!"

As his voice rang out from the 12,000 meter level, his body suddenly shook.

White hair appeared on his head as his longevity was sucked away at a terrifyingly rapid rate. However, at the same time, his Cultivation base... began an unprecedentedly mad climb.

128, 151, 178, 193... all the way to 200!

Not too long ago, when he had acquired his eighth Nascent Soul, during the time when his Cultivation base climbed from the power of 64 great

circle Nascent Souls to reach the power of 100, he had felt as if he were equivalent to Spirit Severing.

If 100 great circle Nascent Souls was similar to Spirit Severing, well, as of this moment, he had 200!

After reaching the Cultivation base power of 200 great circle Nascent Souls, Meng Hao's energy changed in an earth-shaking way. The pressure around him once again collapsed, and was completely incapable of doing anything to stop him. Now, nothing prevented him from pushing onward, climbing up!

203, 210, 230... all the way to 256!

The power of 256 great circle Nascent Souls caused the sky and land to dim, and the wind to scream. Roaring echoed out, and Meng Hao's entire body turned into something like a shooting star that charged upward.

His fleshly body also experienced incredible growth. It was tougher and more powerful. Furthermore, it was at this point that gradually, complex markings began to appear all over his body!

The marks glittered brightly, and seemed to contain laws of Heaven and Earth. They appeared to be branded on him from the void, causing his energy to once again shake everything.

13,000 meters. 13,500 meters. 14,500 meters... all the way to 15,000 meters!

15,000 meters in the air was the halfway point!

Meng Hao's body trembled, and blood oozed from his mouth. His hair was now more than half white. His body was tall and slender, and his energy intense. As he hovered in the 15,000 meter position, he did not wipe the blood from his mouth, but instead lifted his head up and laughed.

Then, he raised his foot and... moved forward once again, by an entire three meters!

Meng Hao's imposing manner, his demeanor, and his appearance in this

moment caused Ke Jiusi, true spirit Night, and Zhixiang, to all be shaken.

When was a man most attractive?

In a moment like this!

When was a man the most righteous hero?

In a moment like this!

There is an expression that describes a person as being ‘indescribably beautiful and striking.’ That is usually used to describe women. There is another expression. ‘Who can do it except for me?’ That expression is used to describe a true man!

At any time or place, a true man who stands out from the crowd, a passionate, true man, is like a hero, a person just as attractive as the most beautiful woman!

Regardless of man or woman, anyone would be drawn to such passion and ardor!

Zhixiang’s heart shook. Even she didn’t notice that the image of Meng Hao was being burned deeply into her heart in an unprecedented way. This was not to say that it caused romantic love to appear, but rather, she would now be incapable of forgetting him.

“Pressing forward with indomitable will,” she murmured. “That... is a true man.” She looked at Meng Hao, and suddenly realized that this scene really was indelibly etched on her heart.

Chapter 628: The Path of Spirit Severing!

As he hovered there at the 15,000 meter mark, Meng Hao took a deep breath. To him, the Ninth Anima was a state of rapid depletion. That was especially so considering the position he was in, halfway to the two Holy Lands and surrounded by incredible pressure. He could feel the terrifying pressure pushing against him from all sides.

That pressure weighed down on every strand of skin and muscle, on every bit of flesh and blood. Cracking sounds could be heard from within him, as if his bones were chafing together. Despite the incredible power of his current fleshly body, he was still incapable of moving forward even a pace.

The power of 256 great circle Nascent Souls continued to fight back explosively against the pressure; however, it continued to be defeated, and would clearly be extinguished soon.

The intensity of the pressure was such that, if Patriarch Huyan hadn't died, and was suddenly next to Meng Hao here, he would be destroyed in an instant, his body completely exploded into countless pieces.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and looked up at the two Holy Lands 15,000 meters away. His eyes gleamed.

Based on his current Cultivation base, he was incapable of treading that path. That was what Ke Jiusi had said, as well as true spirit Night. However... Meng Hao's personality was not the type to just accept what others said.

Although he trusted Ke Jiusi's opinion, he couldn't rest until he tried it out for himself. It didn't matter if the difficulty level was obviously high, he had to take a shot personally to see exactly how difficult it was.

"So this is the limit, huh?" he murmured hoarsely. Underneath the pressure, his eyes were now bloodshot, and veins bulged out all over his body. The blood in his veins circulated sluggishly, and his life force was showing signs failure.

He looked down silently at Ke Jiusi, true spirit Night, and Zhixiang, who he had long since already noticed. They were 15,000 meters below him. If he wanted to give up now, all he had to do was relax, and he would descend down into safety.

“But,” he thought, his eyes glittering with determination, “I want to do one more test to see... if this is really my true limit!” With that, he looked up, and his energy exploded out. His half-white hair danced about him, and his clothes whipped in the wind. He lifted up his leg and, viciously forced himself higher by a large measure.

Another three meters!

Boom!

A tremor ran through him. His fleshly body emitted cracking sounds, and his Cultivation base was under enormous pressure. His Cultivation base of 256 great circle Nascent Souls was under so much pressure that it was about to disintegrate.

Meng Hao's face was pale. However, it was at this point that he noticed something. He noticed something that quickly caused his face to fill with excitement and joy!

He almost didn't dare to believe it. However, his eyes filled with determination and, underneath the intense pressure, coughed up a mouthful of blood and forced himself forward by another measure!

In total, Meng Hao had now moved nine meters away from the 15,000 meter mark!

A rumbling sound filled his body, and he swayed back and forth. Blood sprayed from his mouth, and his face was pale white. Marks of blood were now visible, tearing through his skin. It seemed that the incredible pressure was just on the verge of tearing him apart.

However, Meng Hao's eyes were filled with wild joy nonetheless. His shocking discovery just now left him panting heavily.

“I never imagined... that there could be such a transformation!!” Inwardly, he still found it hard to accept. However, he was unable to think

about the matter calmly. That was because he had found that underneath the incredible pressure, the power of the 256 great circle Nascent Souls was fusing together!

In any other place, such a thing could never happen. There wasn't a place Meng Hao could think of that would produce results like this. Only in this place, right here, could something like this happen!

That was because the pressure here came from the three Greater Demon Mountains and the two Holy Lands. You could say that in all the Ninth Mountain and Sea, few places could display such overbearing power. And yet, at the same time, there was a gentleness within the pressure.

Perhaps there might be places more powerful than this, but they would not be suitable for anyone under the Immortal realm. This place, however, housed a legacy; therefore, there was a gentle side. To Meng Hao, a place like this was the perfect place to... fuse together his Cultivation base!

A Cultivation base of 256 Nascent Souls seemed terrifying, but by fusing them together, he could explode with... something that far, far exceeded the past level of power. That would be... true Spirit Severing power!

Meng Hao had considered this matter before. He had thought about Spirit Severing, and how one aspect involved enlightenment and another involved transmogrification of the Cultivation base. However, he had never been able to consolidate his thoughts. It had all been a waste of time, and he ended up slowly suppressing his Cultivation base until he could naturally arrive at a target transformation.

Right now, though, this pressure had an effect that Meng Hao simply couldn't NOT be excited about. Instead of focusing on the legacy, he was focused on his path of cultivation, and that next, most important step!

If he succeeded, then he would be able to enter Spirit Severing even faster. It meant that he would be able to directly enter Spirit Severing without even having practiced cultivation for three hundred years.

"My fleshly body can also be tempered here!" he thought. Taking a deep breath, he sat down cross-legged in mid-air, using the pressure pushing against him to begin to compress his Cultivation base.

Zhixiang's eyes went wide with disbelief. "He's actually practicing cultivation!"

Ke Jiusi watched on seriously, although a smile quickly began to tug at the corners of his mouth.

Time passed slowly, enough for an incense stick to burn. Finally, a tremor ran through Meng Hao's body, and his eyes snapped open. They were bloodshot, but they shone with a radiant light. He slowly stood up, and as he did, an incredibly intense energy exploded out from him.

As of now, he did not have the power of 256 great circle Nascent Souls. He had 10 less! And yet, despite the reduction, in terms of energy, he had much more than before.

"This is a Blessed Land for me!" His eyes shining strangely, he once again moved forward another measure.

Boom!

The pressure became more intense, and Meng Hao's body shook. However, his Cultivation base was reduced by five Nascent Souls. Now, only the power of 241 remained.

It was a reduction of a mere five, but the intense fluctuations which emanated out of his Cultivation base supported him, allowing to move forward again!

Once, twice, three times....

His body trembled violently, as if he might explode at any moment. However, he continued onward relentlessly. As he did, his Cultivation base continue to shrink down and down.

236. 226.... All the way to 180! By this point, Meng Hao was now at the 16,000 meter mark!

If a Cultivator of the Second Severing reached this position relying only on Cultivation base as a protection, he would quickly become unstable and then be destroyed. Meng Hao felt like his body was exploding. The fleshly body exists outside of his cultivation, like a shell. In this aspect,

Meng Hao was different from a Second Severing Cultivator. He was using his fleshly body to protect his Cultivation base.

Relying on the power of his fleshly body, he was using this place to pressure his Cultivation base into solidity. However, streaks of blood were appearing all over him as his skin split. He seemed to be on the verge of collapsing apart. Even the bloody flesh inside of him was becoming visible.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered. Without hesitation, he slapped his bag of holding to produce vast quantities of medicinal pills. He consumed them to stem the wastage of his fleshly body. At the same time, he took longevity-increasing medicinal pills.

Of course, the main purpose had nothing to do with longevity. Instead, the life force contained within the medicinal pills nourished his fleshly body, causing it to be able to endure for even longer!

He took a deep breath and then once again proceeded forward. This advanced him to the 16,200 mark. A bloody haze exploded out around his body, and his trembling reached a pinnacle of intensity.

As of this moment, he had shrunk his Cultivation base down to only 163 Nascent Souls.

"This is going too slow..." thought Meng Hao. The struggle was clear on his face, although it was quickly replaced by determination.

"Rewards come only with risk. If I give up this chance, I won't be likely to find another place that can exert such pressure on my Cultivation base. Next time I come here will be hundreds of years from now. I... can't wait that long!" Without any further hesitation, Meng Hao began to rapidly rotate his Cultivation base. At the same time, he transformed into a green smoke, within which was a black moon. From his position at 16,200 meters, he instantly rocketed up.

The sight of it caused Ke Jiusi to be visibly moved. He instantly flew up into the air.

"Are you crazy!?" thought Zhixiang, her eyes wide. It was like watching a

moth fly directly into a flame.

Meng Hao really was like a moth flying into a flame, although he was even crazier than that moth. As he sped upward, he began to burn. His fleshly body burned, his blood and muscles burned.

To him, it felt as if he was being hacked to pieces by tens of thousands of blades. Vast quantities of flesh and blood were destroyed. He looked like a shooting star made of blood. However, that bloody shooting star quickly advanced 1,800 meters. When Meng Hao reappeared, he was at the 18,000 meter mark.

He instantly coughed up a huge mouthful of blood. His body was mincemeat, and he was on the verge of completely falling apart.

“Violet Pupil Transformation!” In the instant in which his body was about to collapse, his eyes suddenly turned violet. His longevity was reduced, but in exchange, his shattering body was sustained for an extra breath of time! 1

During that breath of time, Meng Hao’s Cultivation base shrank down at a shocking, wild speed.

Boom!

It went from 163 to 98. Then it dropped to 32. The speed with which this happened was shocking to the extreme.

Meng Hao’s energy rocketed up, but even still, he had no way to prevent his fleshly body from nearing collapse.

“I can still hold on a bit longer!” he thought, once again employing the Violet Pupil Transformation. He sacrificed more longevity, causing his hair to turn white and his body to tremble, all to gain another breath of time.

Roaring filled his body. No outsider could hear it, but to Meng Hao it couldn’t be clearer. The power of 32 Cultivation bases dropped to 16. More pressure bore down, and then, it was 8!

At this point, Meng Hao couldn’t hold on any longer. His body began to grow limp, and he started to fall. From his position at 18,000 meters, he

shot down at high speed. In the process of falling, the pressure lessened, and thus, his flesh and blood began to recover.

When he finally landed back down onto the hand of true spirit Night, he coughed up a mouthful of blood. However, he appeared to be completely restored to normal. The only difference was that the long hair which floated in the wind behind him was now gray.

As for his Cultivation base, its explosive growth caused the wind and clouds in the entire area to surge into motion, forming a twisting vortex around him.

As of this moment, Meng Hao was now far more powerful than before!

*

1. Meng Hao learned the Violet Pupil Transformation when he was in the Violet Fate Sect in chapter 242.

Credits

Translator: [Deathblade](#)

Epub: [Estevam](#) / [dotNOVEL](#)